

Christ Before and After Creation III

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[0 : 0 0] Gary and his wife Carolyn are away for the weekend, so I will be leading you in the Scripture reading. If you would turn, please, to John's Gospel, Chapter 3. While you are turning there, let me just remind you that this encounter that our Lord had with Nicodemus is certainly one of the most famous and popular in all of Scripture, and it seems to rank right up there with what is commonly referred to as the Lord's Prayer.

In Matthew, Chapter 5, and in the Old Testament with the Lord's Prayer or the Shepherd's Psalm, and perhaps the thing that makes this particular passage so endearing to so many people is that monumental 16th verse of John, Chapter 3, that has been described as the Gospel in a nutshell, and that, of course, is John 3, 16.

So, we're going to be looking around at a couple of different verses in John. I'm embarrassed to tell you that the last series of studies I brought at Grace before I retired the first time was the Gospel of John, and we spent five years in it, if you may recall.

Five years of Sunday mornings in John's Gospel, but I did not then see some of the things that we will be discussing this morning. So, let's just read this very familiar passage, if we may, in the third chapter, and you follow along, if you will.

It's a fascinating passage. There was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews, and this man came to him by night and said to him, Rabbi, we know that you have come from God as a teacher, for no one can do these signs that you do unless God is with him.

[1 : 5 9] Jesus answered and said to him, Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

Nicodemus said to him, How can a man be born when he is old? He cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born, can he? Jesus answered, Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

And our target verse for the morning is verse 6, and the implications thereof. Christ said, That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

Do not marvel that I said to you, you must be born again. The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but do not know where it comes from, and whether it is going.

So is everyone who is born of the Spirit. Nicodemus answered and said to him, How can these things be? Jesus answered and said to him, Are you the teacher of Israel, and do not understand these things?

[3 : 2 2] Truly, truly, I say to you, we speak that which we know, and bear witness of that which we have seen, and you do not receive our witness.

If I told you earthly things, and you do not believe, how shall you believe if I tell you heavenly things? And no one has ascended into heaven, but he who descended from heaven, even the Son of Man.

And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes may in him have eternal life.

For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish, but have eternal life.

For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world should be saved through him. He who believes in him is not judged, but he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

[4 : 36] And this is the judgment, that the light has come into the world, and men love the darkness rather than the light, for their deeds were evil. For everyone who does evil hates the light, and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed.

But he who practices the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be manifested as having been wrought in God. Now keep your place there, if you will, because we will be journeying away from John 3, but not very far away, so we will be coming back here.

The issue that we want to focus on is related to that which we considered last week in our ongoing study of Christ before and after Bethlehem.

And we cited a number of instances where we believe our Lord Jesus, who as he existed in a pre-incarnate form, and by that I mean what was Jesus Christ, what was the Son of God like in his form before he was incarnated?

He was the eternal Son throughout eternity, but in what form was he? I have no conclusion to reach or to offer other than that he was in spiritual form.

[6 : 02] I'm not real sure what that means, but I know it means nothing material. So we have the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit subsisting as three persons in one God, all possessing a spirit-being kind of manifestation.

There was no physicality at all. Nothing physical existed. No universe, no planets, no stars, no angels, no people, no anything.

Just these three beings comprising the eternal Godhead. Father, Son, Spirit. All in spirit essence. Now, how the Holy Spirit was different from the spirit of the Father and the Son, I have no idea.

All I know is the Holy Spirit is designated as spirit, but I am suggesting that before his incarnation, the Son of God existed in spirit form also, as did the Father.

Now, if you look over at John chapter 4, right nearby, and our Lord's encounter with the woman at the well, in verse 23, in verse 23, Jesus said, an hour is coming, when, the hour is coming and now is when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth.

[7 : 45] For such people, the Father seeks to be his worshippers. God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship him in spirit and truth.

I do not begin to understand what this verse is all about. I do understand just a small part of it, I think, but I certainly don't understand all of it, that's for sure.

But I do have a handle on this much, I am confident, that Jesus is saying that God is not material, he is immaterial.

Whatever it is that comprises the person and being of God, it is not stuff, it is not physicality, it's not blood and bones and tissue.

And here, by the way, is where we really differ in our theology from the Mormons and the Mormon church who believe that God is physical. God is not physical.

[8 : 49] Christ makes it quite clear that God is spirit. However, this spirit being God is able and has on occasion manifested himself in a physical form.

That is precisely what happened in connection with the incarnation. when the word was made flesh and dwelt among us.

That is speaking of the incarnation in John chapter 1. So here we have an instance where deity in the form of the son of God in spirit being took upon himself flesh.

And I do not know this for sure but I assume this to be the case that throughout eternity future the son of God will be manifested and will be known in the body that he has assumed in his resurrection body.

He came into this world and was born of the virgin Mary in the same way that you and I were born. There was nothing supernatural about the birth as far as we know but there was everything supernatural about the insemination the divine insemination however that occurred into the womb of the virgin Mary.

[10 : 15] So the conception of Christ is where the miracle is not the birth although we commonly refer to it as the miracle of the virgin birth because everybody understands what you mean by that.

But as far as we know there was nothing unusual particularly about the birth it was the conception that was the miracle that holy thing which shall be born of thee that which was deposited in her by the spirit of God.

So as far as we know throughout eternity when you and I are dwelling with the Lord he is going to be manifested in that physical form that he took upon him beginning in Bethlehem that was subjected to crucifixion and death and was later resurrected in this glorious resurrected body which is in some respects the same body that went in the tomb but in other respects it's a completely different glorified body that came out of that tomb.

So and that's the kind of body we are going to have our body will be fashioned like unto his glorious body. So what we're really talking about here has to do with the connection or lack thereof between flesh and spirit.

And there are a number of problematic passages and we're dealing with some of them. Come back if you will while we're nearby to John chapter 1 John chapter 1 and verse 18 and the text says no man has seen God at any time.

[11 : 59] Well what does that mean? We saw in our consideration last week that Moses saw him and the text in Exodus even says that Moses talked face to face with God as a man talked with his friend.

Then why does John say no man has seen God at any time? Hmm. Do you remember when Moses went up to the mount in Exodus and I don't want to get sidetracked there or that'll be the rest of my message and I don't want it to be.

But Moses went up into the mount and he asked to see God and God said you cannot behold me. you cannot look upon my face.

And the idea the conception that we get of that is that anybody to look upon the face of deity upon the face of God would not be able to sustain that. It would mean certain death.

I don't know if we would melt or what but nobody has ever seen it and when the text says that no one has seen God at any time and then we know that Moses God said I will make a cleft in the rock and put you in the rock in that cleft of the rock and I will pass by and you may see my hinder parts in other words he's saying you may see my backside but you'll not be able to look upon my face and Moses did that and when he came down out of the mount we are told that his face was glowing was lit up he didn't know it but everybody there knew it and they said whoa what is this well Moses just came out of the presence of the the the the shekinah the shekinah glory the glory that is characteristic of God that was manifested by Jesus when he went into the mount of transfiguration and was transfigured before them and the light was so blinding and dazzling

[14:10] Moses was there and Elijah was there remember and Peter James and John witnessed that and John later writes about it and says we beheld his glory the glory as of the only begotten of the father full of grace and truth but I'm back to this puzzle that again about no man has seen God at any time and I'm wondering this is just a wise man wondering it's not even a wise man conclusion but that makes it worth even less I guess we've got the Elohim mentioned 31 times I think it is in Genesis chapter 1 alone the Elohim which is a plurality of the person of God remember in the beginning God and that's plural in the Hebrew and it's plural 2,570 times in the Old Testament that speaks of the three person manifestation of God and I'm wondering if the theos in John 1 where it says no man has seen God at any time and the word in the

Greek there and we have to look to the Greek because the Greek is what the New Testament was written in the Hebrew is what the Old Testament was written in and the Old Testament for God is Elohim the New Testament equivalent seems to be theos from which we get the word theology and if those are to be equated and I'm not positive that they are but it's an interesting thought it may very well mean that no man hath seen Elohim at any time no man has seen the manifestation of the triune God at any time men have seen that which represents the deity in one of the persons of the God head for instance a Christophany in the Old Testament and we pointed out to you I'm not going back to the Genesis thing but if you weren't here last week and this is all a puzzlement to you I suggest that you get the CD from last week because we cover these things in

Genesis where God is manifested I believe in the flesh as a Christophany it is a pre incarnate appearance of the Christ all the way back to Genesis when he's communicating with Adam and Eve in the garden in chapter 3 and later in chapter 6 in chapter 19 of Genesis all of these I believe are Christophanies they are pre Bethlehem pre incarnate manifestations of the Christ and they are commonly called Christophanies so we are dealing again with this issue of flesh and spirit and with that in mind come back to our text if you will in John chapter 3 where this encounter is taking place and I want to call your attention to a couple of real problematic situations in this verse or in this passage and

I want you to apply your best mind to that you did bring your best mind with you this morning didn't you I don't want any Monday morning minds here because they don't work all that great but if you got a Sunday morning mind here I want you to apply it to what we're going to be talking about in this encounter in verse verse 5 Jesus said unless one is born of water and the spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God there is so much that needs to be said about this verse but we must limit ourselves to our focus this morning so I'll try not to stray from this but it gets very tempting sometimes I think there is a distinction being made here that ought to be rather obvious on the surface and it is a distinction that Jesus is making between the physical and the non physical between the spiritual and the material and these are really radically different but they are both very very real and the tendency of many people is to relegate anything that doesn't have physicality to being almost a non entity as if it doesn't even exist if you can't measure it weigh it evaluate it see it feel it hear it or something it doesn't have any existence but that's the very nature of spirit and it corresponds to the spirit the human spirit that

God has put in us there is inside the body of every living human being an unseen entity of that person all we see is the outward manifestation but we never have seen the real you because the real you dwells inside the real you your spirit is where your secrets are kept that's where nobody can get into and God designed it that way so that every person has secret territory and that's in your human spirit and in your spirit there are a whole host of other things that are contained there but the main thing about it is it does not have physicality and this passage as many other passages that Jesus is used in highlights the distinction between the material and the non material he does that with light he does it with water he does it with bread he does it with life and he does it with death all of those things have a physical reality and a spiritual reality when somebody says when I came to

[20 : 25] Christ as my savior I don't mind telling you I really saw the light what are they talking about they're not talking about these lights they're not talking about fluorescent and incandescent lights spiritual light you can't see spiritual light some say if you can't see spiritual light then it doesn't exist but we know better there really is that existence of the spirit and I think this is what we have contrasting here in this verse where Jesus said unless one is born of water I've come to a conclusion at least it's a settled conclusion in my own mind and I've been all over the map on this I've held about every position that can be held regarding the interpretation of water here the only one I never did embrace was the idea of baptism and yet you know what that's the most popular opinion some some people some people are so they come from a liturgical church where there's a great deal of emphasis placed upon spiritual anytime they find water in the Bible it's baptism and there's no talking them out of it and they see it here too they see this as baptism because didn't John baptize yes didn't Jesus baptize well he didn't but his disciples baptized under his authority yes and wasn't baptism a really big deal in the gospel yes it was and it was considered part of the gospel today that's different but I won't get into that now however I do want you to notice something here that if you allow the context to be the determining factor and I think we should because we always ought to pay close heed to the context the context simply those verses that immediately surround the verse in question and more often than not they're the ones that provide the proper interpretation of the passage look at the context what is the subject matter what's being discussed where is it being discussed why is it being discussed here at this time why did he say what he said at this time ask yourself these kinds of questions and the contrast I believe as is indicated here by the context is they're talking about a spiritual birth and a physical birth when Jesus told Nicodemus a man must be born again and by the way the word again in the Greek is the word anōthen anōthen English spelling would be a n o t h e n and it means from above except a man be born from above he cannot see the kingdom of heaven and that being from above is a contrast of being born from below where we were all born we were all born from below here this earth this world of a human parent and when he says in response to Nicodemus's question because Jesus opened himself for a question like this from Nicodemus when he talks about a man being born again or being born from above he's puzzled and he says I don't get it how can a man be born again how can a man be born anew or be born over again or be born another time even from above he can't enter into his mother's womb and be born again that's ridiculous everybody knows that that can't happen and what Jesus answers is I think in keeping with the statement that Nicodemus made he is picking right up on that and he says unless one is born of water and the spirit what is being born by water that's the physical birth when you were conceived God began an incredible undertaking of a very complex operation

in the body of a very complex operation in the body of your mother and one of the things he did was he created an ammoniac sack in which you would be formed this is a sack it's like a it's like a big bubble and you are inside this big bubble and this sack is full of fluid that cushions and protects and protects and protects and protects and provides all kinds of incredible things that we don't even understand yet for you but mainly it is an environment that is safe and that is efficient and that is just amazing and you live in that sack of liquid even though you're not able to breathe because you don't have gills and you can't live underwater like a fish but you are getting everything you need while you are getting everything you need while you are being nurtured in that and you live in that for nine months and when the time comes for you to make your exit into this world the bubble bursts the sack is ruptured and all this water comes pouring out this has happened to the embarrassment of a number of women in a taxi cab or in a police car or in some friends trying to make it to the hospital in a car or in some friends trying to make it to the hospital in time oh the water broke and that means the baby is not far behind when the water breaks so what's taking place here this is the water birth and this is commonly understood and expressed in Jewish culture particularly in the Mideast in this time and it was common knowledge and everybody referred to that as the water birth that's the natural birth that's the way you get into this world and Jesus is what Jesus is what Jesus is what Jesus is what Jesus is talking about and Jesus is talking about and Jesus is talking about and Jesus is saying no no no except a man is born of water and the spirit in other words he's saying you have to be born physically and spiritually in order to enter the kingdom of heaven so the context I think rules out other possibilities there is no baptism here he's not talking about being baptized not being immersed or sprinkled or anything else water here has got nothing to do this is not a baptism this is a birth and that's what the subject is talking about in the context it's birth there is a physical birth there is a spiritual birth Jesus said you need both well I know and this is one thing that I know you've all had a water birth everybody here has been born of water you wouldn't be here that doesn't mean everybody here has had a spiritual birth because we do not have the ability to look inside people and see what's in the heart and see whether they really know the Lord but the text goes on to say do not marvel that I said to you you must be born again or you must be born from above and the wind blows where it wishes and you hear the sound of it I've often asked myself in reading this passage do you suppose do you suppose as Jesus and Nicodemus were talking together and we know it was night time we don't know how late at night but it was night time it was dark and isn't it often characteristic wherever you live that once the sun goes down sometimes the wind comes up a breeze and I've often asked myself do you suppose that as Jesus and Nicodemus were there talking there was just a nice gentle breeze that just blew over them at that moment I think that's probably very believable and our Lord picked up on it and this breeze came through especially if you're on a high hillside there in Jerusalem and it's as warm as it often is many times people would seek the higher elevation

elevation for the breeze for the breeze that was available they always built the threshing floors on the high elevation because that's where the breeze would come and when they would thresh their grain they would separate the wheat from the shaft they'd have it in a big basket and they would just throw it up in the air just have this big basket of grain and just pitch it up in the air as high as they could and the wind would come along they would make it up in the air as they could and then they would have it in a big basket of grain and then they would have to fall back down on the floor that was the threshing floor and then they would gather up the wheat once the chaff had been blown away very possibly they might have been near one of these threshing floors where there was a breeze and as the breeze wafts by them Jesus mentions to Nicodemus of course it exists.

And so it is with the Spirit. You do not hear the sound of it. The wind blows where it wishes. You hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from and where it is going.

So is everyone who is born of the Spirit. Nicodemus answered and said to him, How can these things be? And Jesus said, Are you the teacher of this?

[30 : 23] Jesus is chiding him here. He is bringing him up short. He is saying as much as, Nicodemus, you are in an official teaching capacity here in the state of Israel.

You are considered one of the principal teachers. And you don't understand that? And he chides him for it. Truly I say to you, we speak that which we do know and bear witness of that which we have seen and you do not receive our witness.

If I told you earthly things and you do not believe, how shall you believe if I tell you heavenly things? And the heavenly things have to do with the Spirit.

The Spirit that is placed within you as a human being, which is standard equipment for every human being, regardless of who they are or where they live. If you are a human being, you have a human spirit.

And that being the case, that is that which God has provided. That's that which is from above. That which is from below is frankly what your mother and father provided.

[31 : 27] Your mother and father provided the sperm and the egg that it fertilized and God provided, heaven provided, the spirit part of your being.

That's the intangible inside part of you that is the real you. And both of these have real validity. And he's trying to communicate to Nicodemus the reality of the spiritual.

And you know, I am satisfied that that we have really not not done at all a good job of showing the world, even the western world for sure, that man has a spirit component to his being.

And I don't know if you've particularly taken note of this or not, but I have. And I think there is a connection between the denial of spirit reality or the ignorance of it that greatly contributes to the suicide rate in our population.

Most people, most people who commit suicide who are not out of touch with reality, and I'm talking about people who are not mentally ill, but commit suicide, usually do it for one of two reasons.

[33 : 05] One is they have an ongoing agonizing physical condition that has been unsuccessfully treated and the pain level is just so bad and so constant that they just cannot bear it any longer.

and many people just because of the excruciating pain. Now you and I, we've no idea of what, it's easy to be critical of people, but if you have not lived with excruciating pain 24-7, you really don't know what we're talking about.

And most of us don't. But I can understand how it could lead someone to take their life because they just feel that I can't go on any longer.

And sometimes it is emotional pain. Sometimes they are dealing with an issue that they just simply cannot tolerate or will not tolerate and they see they're only out as being suicide, taking their own life.

But I dare say that none of those people who really do that have given all that much thought and consideration to the spirit component that is in them because this is where eternity comes from.

[34 : 35] And eternity is where that spirit part of our being is going. And yet if you don't believe if you don't believe that you have an eternal spirit if you believe all you are is a piece of flesh and that's it.

And when you die it's all over and there isn't anything else. There is no heaven. There is no hell. There is no consciousness. There is nothing.

If you believe that and you have a body that is wracked with excruciating pain suicide could be pretty attractive. Couldn't it? try to visualize that scenario if you will.

Now for those of you who are really convinced that there is an afterlife and that you do have a spirit it's not at all appealing to you and it shouldn't be. But for those who believe that when you die that's it just like a dog bury you and that's the end you return to dust and that's all you ever were and that's all you ever will be and there is no hereafter anywhere.

Yeah that could be pretty attractive. The same way with emotional pain. So one of our most alarming suicide scenarios is with the military today.

[36 : 01] United States Marines particularly and the U.S. Army have been especially exercised over the high suicide rates among our servicemen.

I mean much higher than in civilian life. And it is only within the last few years that this new phenomenal thing has come into being that we now are beginning to get a handle on.

It's called PTSD post traumatic stress disorder. it is exactly what it says post traumatic in other words it means that people who have PTSD and there are a lot of people who do and they're not all in the military but it means that you were subjected to some kind of an experience that traumatized you.

I mean it really did a job on you emotionally and psychologically and it haunts you. You know we had thousands probably tens of thousands of troops come home after World War II and I remember because I was 10 years old in 1945 when the war ended and I remember between 1945 and 1950 I remember my parents talking about people one of them was my uncle and they would say things like this well you know he really got messed up from the war when our boy Johnny came marching home after the war he was never the same he was different just really different they didn't know what to call it but it was

PTSD it was post traumatic stress syndrome and it means that you had experiences you were subjected to things that just traumatized you and made such an impact an indelible impression on your psyche and on your mind and on your memory you can't get it out you can't eliminate it and they have flashbacks that are so real they're just there living that whole thing again and they saw things they saw carnage and brutality and bloodshed they witnessed things the likes of which no human being should ever have to look upon this goes on every day ask any large police department who has a homicide division when they have to walk in on a murder scene where an irate or drug crazed father took a shotgun and murdered his wife and five kids and you have to go into a crime scene like that and investigate it you think that doesn't impact you you think that doesn't make an impression on your mind of course it does of course it does you can't get it out you relive it there are the nightmares the recurring now they've got all kinds of special programs that they try to make available to our veterans and you know this goes all the way back we didn't even know what this was what because we started understanding more and more of these things in

[39 : 55] Vietnam and the brutality and the things that some men over there saw I've talked with some people who were there in the midst of the combat and the impressions and the things that they had to witness and the things that they had to deal with were just beyond description just beyond description and it impacts them for the rest of their life but even in the midst of that even dealing with those kind of issues if you are committed to the idea that you are a spirit being as well as a physical being and that there is an afterlife you will struggle and do what you have to do to get through that thing but if you are of the opinion that you've got all of these horrible images in your mind and embedded in your psyche and you can't get rid of them then yeah suicide might seem to be the way out and I would submit to you that this has a large influence on many of our military personnel who have taken their own life now not all of them are

PTSD not all of them have even been in combat but many of them have and if you really are committed to the idea that there is an afterlife you're going to think twice about how you enter it because if you think there is an afterlife you are probably also of the opinion that wherever and whatever it is there is no exit that wherever that's going to be it's going to be for the duration well that's the flesh and spirit and this thing really has to be faced but it's a wonderful provision that God has made for us and I want you to look at this text a little bit further here in John 3 and I'm not focusing on verse 16 although it's the most familiar verse but

I want you to think in terms of well you probably have how many red letter Bibles do we have here most of them mine's red letter too I've got here in front of me I don't particularly care for that but down through verse 12 if I told you earthly things and you do not believe how shall you believe if I tell you heavenly things and you see the red letter continues right on and we are supposed to know that the red letters represent the words spoken by Jesus well who says well the Holy Spirit says he's the one who inspired the Bible that's true he did inspire the

Bible but the Holy Spirit did not inspire the red letters man put those in there much later so just as an aside and something that I think is of interest and I'd like you to apply your mind to it's very possible that verse 12 is the end of Jesus speaking well then who is speaking the rest of it John is and John is saying in other words Jesus ends his discourse with Nicodemus at the end of verse 12 and that's where the red letters ought to stop the black letters then begin with verse 13 and no one has ascended into heaven but he who descended from heaven even the son of man doesn't it make more sense for John to be saying that than for Jesus to be saying that and those who opt for the latter do so because they say well but

Jesus has the capacity to be omnipresent so he was both in heaven and on earth at the same time he said this well I think that's a stretch to me it seems more logical and is demanded more by the context if we end the sayings of Jesus with verse 12 and then John continues on by saying no one has ascended into heaven but he who descended from heaven even the son of man period and as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness even so must the son of man be lifted up that whoever believes may in him have eternal life and if that's true then it makes John not Jesus uttering these immortal words verse 16 but really try and lay aside your bias which I know you have as well as I have and see if it wouldn't make as much or more sense for

[45 : 16] John to be saying verse 16 than for Jesus to be saying it now you understand of course regardless of which one says it doesn't alter the truth of it it's just as true regardless of who says it but for John to have said for God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life and then all the rest of it is John as well so I think that makes a lot of sense but the thing that I want to emphasize is the importance that Jesus places upon the existence and the reality of the spirit it is not enough that does not make you a child of God what makes you a child of God is to be born of God if you're a child of man you are born of man and woman to be a child of God you need to be born of God and that's where the spirit comes in because when you receive

Jesus Christ as your personal savior it is that internal part of your being called the human spirit that's what is regenerated that is what is made new that is what is born from above that is born of God and it has as I've said nothing to do with water Titus tells us in I think it's 3:5 not by works of righteousness which we have done but according to his mercy he has saved us by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit what is it the Holy Spirit renews he does not renew your body if you have aches and pains before salvation you've got the same aches and pains after salvation nothing has changed there but the internal part that spirit part that we've been talking about that we've been emphasizing that is so important that's what is born anew that's what is regenerated that's what is changed and because that is changed inside of you that's where all of your thinking processes are it is in your human spirit that's where you do your thinking your rationalizing your reasoning that's where your imagination is that's where your memory is that's where your norms and standards are all of these things are immaterial that's where your creativity is that's where your temperament is that's where your personality is none of those things are physical they're all spiritual but nobody denies the reality of them and they are all housed in your human spirit so when your human spirit is regenerated that's what provides the basis for new norms and standards new ideas new values new interests that's what's changed it is the immaterial part of your being that's what's changed and that's what

Christ is talking about and this is what Paul was talking about when he says if any man be in Christ he is a new creation not the body but the spirit old things have passed away that's condemnation judgment death the penalty for it and all the rest all of those things passed away and behold all things have become new that's new life in Christ new values new interests new norms and standards you see the world differently after Christ than you do before Christ that's what's changed everything nothing has changed but your perspective has changed it's like you put on a different pair of glasses oh wow where did all this come from well it's been there all long but you didn't have the wherewithal to see it until you got these new glasses and then everything became different and new and changed that is just a small portion of what is involved when you are born of the spirit of God made new it's amazing and you know what

I just explained to you I don't understand I don't understand that I don't have a clue how God himself comes in to this being and takes up residency what know ye not that your body is the temple of the spirit of God which you have in you and you are not your own you are bought with a price therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit which are God's amazing I wish I understood it better but I'm starting to get just a little bit of a grip on the handle and it is fascinating stuff we don't know the half of it it is just amazing I'm not finished but I quit we got two whole minutes for questions and answers or at least questions probably have questions and no answers anybody

I hear all those Bibles zipping up that tells me that tells me you're ready for lunch any comments or questions anyone boy I sure have some where where oh okay Ruthie here here's a here's a microphone right here how do we glorify God in our spirit how do we glorify God in our spirit good question I think the best way in fact as far as I'm concerned the only way that we can glorify God in our spirit is by and now here's another supposition I don't know this for sure no I can't give you a chapter and verse but this is what I think okay I think that your volition which is your will which is your ability to make choices good or bad or whatever

[52 : 02] I think it resides in your spirit in your human spirit I think your mind resides in your human spirit and I am making a distinction between your brain and your mind they are not the same the brain is very physical the mind is not but the mind and the brain work in concert we don't know how they work because we cannot conceive of a mind brain bridge for the mind and brain to get together one is physical and one is not physical how do you make a connection between two things when one is physical and one is not physical I don't know I don't have a clue but I am convinced that the mind uses the brain and the brain uses the mind and they work in wonderful cooperation and sometimes there is a breakdown with brain disease and

Alzheimer's some kind of birth defect some kind of neurological problem that short circuits the whole system and we just don't understand much about this not at all and I'm currently going through some brain science things now by people who know a lot more about it than I do and it's still way over their head and it's over my head as well but if and this is a big if but if your volition is in your make choices make decisions is in your spirit then you use your mind to initiate action to decide on a course of action you think in your mind you process information and you make a decision in your mind as to what you're going to do and then you follow through with that decision by doing something whatever the action is and

I think this relates to what our Lord said when what he meant when he said let your good works so shine before men that they may see your good works and let your light shine before the world that men may see your good works and glorify your father which is in heaven I think the way we glorify God far and away anything else is being responsive and obedient to his will and his will is all spelled out in scripture in so many places just doing the will of God as you know it and as scripture reveals it there isn't any way that you can glorify God more than that and there isn't any way that you can make God pleased more than that than by just doing his will and you do his will through a conscious decision that you make and you have the power to make that decision so plan carefully someone else anybody in the back

Mike has a question it seems that you described how it happens that the spirit is quenched in some folks sometimes leading to suicide it seems like a small step for me to take to picture someone who views garbage on videos etc essentially quenching their own spirit and ending up murdering on their own well that's a very good question that's a very good question you see what you feed on what you take in helps determine what you are and there is a common expression among our nutritionist friends that goes something like this you are what you eat you eat nothing but junk food and things that are bad for you your body is going to pay a price for that because physically speaking in your physical body there's a lot of truth to that you are what you eat if you eat good nourishing food that will be reflected in your body but spiritually and

I'm talking about spiritually even though a person doesn't have a personal relationship with Christ at all they are still a spiritual being because they have a human spirit they are not saved they are not believers but they have a human spirit that's what enables them to connect with God but that doesn't mean they are connected it just means they can be connected they have the potential to be connected so in your spirit everything that you take in you take in into your mind and into your spirit if you feed on these kind of things pornography and and filth and stuff like that don't think that it has no impact on you it has an enormous impact on you it is supposed to that's the way the human spirit works it is available to whatever is out there and you have to in that human spirit of yours you have to exercise your will your volition to make choices that you will not imbibe that kind of thing because of the negative effects it will have on you and it isn't just pornography

[58 : 31] I just say that because it's a sterling example and there is so much pornographic filth out listen think of the NBA the National Basketball Association all of the teams involved in it all of the receipts all of the attendance all of the TV revenues all of the money it is hundreds of millions of dollars okay now add to that the NFL professional football coming up pretty soon on Super Bowl think of all of the money think of the money that is generated just by jerseys that are sold and t-shirts that are sold with team logos on it's in the millions of dollars now add to that add to that major league baseball and all of the millions of dollars what

I'm saying is you can take all of the money generated from professional basketball from professional baseball from professional football from NASCAR and from professional hockey all of the money generated by those doesn't equal the money that is generated through the pornographic industry does that give you an idea how pervasive it is and people men particularly men and boys give their minds over and feed on this stuff and then they wonder why they can't have a decent relationship with a woman or with their wife it's because their minds have been so contaminated dominated by this filth and yet it is their mind and their volition that makes the decision to go that way and one wonders if you do not give vent to this to a certain extent and you go so far that you go far enough that you cannot you cannot you cannot pull back and then it's called an addiction it gets a hook in you and it's a bigger thing than just your will you can't just say

I'm not going to do that anymore it doesn't work that way it's paralyzing it is so incredible and it's all part of this mix that we're talking about about our immaterial being and I'm already over on my time we've got to quit let's stand please father we don't know very much about these minds that you've given us even though each of us possesses one but we must confess that there are times when we just don't seem to even know our own mind and we are at a loss to even explain some of the things we do or think but we know that you have given us this capacity this ability and you've also made us stewards of it because along with that we are not robots nor automatons we have the ability to make choices and we are so grateful that you have entrusted this to us that we want our gratitude to be reflected in a judicious use of these abilities you've given us it's an incredible privilege to be a human being made in the likeness and image of the one who created us the very least we can do is return to you something honorable when we have it within our power to do that thank you for this passage of scripture and thank you even for the things we don't understand they just excite us and insight us to further study we bless you for it all in Christ's name amen