

THE WORD OF GOD AND THE PROMISED LIFE (Supergrace)

Hebrews 4:9, 11-12 There remains therefore a Sabbath rest for the people of God. . . . Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall through *following* the same example of disobedience. ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

Jesus Christ, the Lord of the ἐκκλησία.

Religious word – from *kirche* (German), and *kuriakon* (GNT), 1 Cor. 11:20; Rev 1:10.

Non-religious word

Church

New Testament = 114X ; from simple non-technical meaning to full-blown technical description for the special people of Christ; philologists, modifiers & content: “My” ekklesia; local assembly (Heb. 10:25) vs. universal assembly.

Illegitimate = Ek + Kaleo
Does not mean to call out a special people of God

Broad Greek usage: assembly, confused mob (Acts 19:32, 41); never for religious group

LXX: primary influence (Deissmann); 600 verses in NT; 100x (Qahal); untechnical, any type of gathering, fallacy of OT church, no spiritual connotation in the OT.

ἐκκλησία = assembly

Difference this makes?

Richness of Christ’s assembly: Elect of God, saints, members of Christ, believers, disciples, Christians, brothers, body, temple of God, stones, priests, bride, flock, branches, beloved, one another, et al.

Psalm 56:13 ¹³ For Thou hast delivered my soul from death [sin unto death], Indeed my feet from stumbling [into greater sin-evil], So that I may walk (לְהִתְהַלֵּךְ) before God (לְפָנַי אֱלֹהִים) In the light of the living (בְּאֹר הַחַיִּים).

1. God's purpose in delivering believers is so that they would genuinely return to Him and be zealous about Him and the Plan of God. He delivers us so that we would return to the spiritual life and advance up the Glory Road---"to walk before God in the light of the living."
 - **Titus 2:14** who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds.

2. God does not deliver the believer so that he would simply return to sin and parlay more sin into greater evil. It was sin parlayed into evil that lead David to forsake his first love of the Lord. David parlayed the sin of worry and pride into evil (HV), which eventually led him into the arms of his enemies the Philistines. Confession apart from **μετάνοια** would not have delivered David, cf. the commands to repent (not confess/**ὁμολογέω**) for churches in Rev 2-3.

3. Both sin and evil will suck the spiritual life out of the healthiest believer. That is why the believer must be quick to recover from personal sin through confession and return *diligently* to divine viewpoint through Bible doctrine.

Hebrews 4:11 Let us therefore be diligent (Σπουδάσωμεν) to enter that rest, lest anyone fall through *following* the same example of disobedience.

4. The life of carnality that is only occasioned by confession of sin has ceased from applying the Word of God to the issues of life thereby ceasing from a *sustained* walk with the Lord required for progressive sanctification----regardless of how much doctrine they listen to or can quote, cf. Rev 2:2-4.

5. While we all sin---and all sin has negative consequences with regard to our spiritual lives---it is evil that is the great spoiler of life. An act of sin is one thing, evil is a way of thinking and way of life that is the result of lack of vital contact with God, His Word and the Holy Spirit.

6. When acts of sin are parlayed into evil, there is a complete change of attitude with respect to Bible doctrine (don't love it or need it), the nature of God (don't understand, don't trust Him, agnosticistic) and the POG (not important), cf. Israelites vs Moses, Caleb, & Joshua, David with Bathsheba, Rev. 3:14-20.

7. Scripture warns us about hardening effects of the deceitfulness of sin.

➤ **Hebrews 3:13** But encourage one another day after day, as long as it is *still* called "Today," lest any one of you be hardened (σκληρυνθῆ) by the deceitfulness (ἀπάτη) of sin.

8. What is Christ's attitude toward a believer who simply returns to sin after deliverance? John 8:1-11.
- ✓ The trap: contradict the Law of Moses by taking pity on her or His pattern of mercy, upholding the written Word? Either way they win and He loses.
 - ✓ He found a third response, and this spelled disaster for his foes, 7. He demonstrated the mercy of Yahweh.
 - ✓ After saving her when she was within an inch of her life (like David), He gave her a mandate: 'leave your adulterous ways & live in purity/sanctification the rest of your days.'

- ✓ What would have happened if the very next morning the religious leaders brought this same woman back to Jesus after catching her in the acts of adultery *again*?
- ✓ Would the Lord have been *pleased* if she simply returned to sexual sins?
- ✓ What if she turned away from sexual sin only to replace it with the murder of the man who dragged her out in public to begin with?
- John 5:7-9, 14.
 - ✓ Strong words, “do not sin (ἁμάρτανε) anymore.” What does it really mean?

- Matt. 5:29, 30; 9:43, 45, 47, 48; 18:7-9.
 - ✓ Strong , radical, extreme words. Chopping square?
 - ✓ Hands = what we do; feet = where we go; eyes = what we see and desire.
 - ✓ Losing a hand, foot, or eye is tragic, but for the unbeliever, losing the soul is a million times more tragic. For the believer, it is better to lose a body part, than forfeit the supergrace life for reversionism, cf. Lot.
 - ✓ The radical language demonstrates the *importance* of staying away from sin-evil. Sin-evil are to be severed from your life, amputate it from your soul, gouge it from your heart---regardless of the consequences.
 - ✓ These things are only possible through biblical sanctification, 2 Pet 1:3, 4.

9. The distinction between continuous sin due to lack of genuine fellowship life with God versus iterative sin that interrupts fellowship.
- **2 Peter 2:14** having eyes full of adultery and that never cease from sin, enticing unstable souls, having a heart trained in greed, accursed children;
 - **Psalm 78:32** In spite of all this they continually sinned, And did not believe in His wonderful works.
 - **Romans 6:1-2** What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace might increase? ² May it never be! How shall we who died to sin still live in it?

- **1 Cor 15:33** Do not be deceived: "Bad company corrupts good morals." ³⁴ Become sober-minded as you ought, and stop sinning; for some have no knowledge of God. I speak *this* to your shame.
- **Hebrews 10:26** For if we go on sinning willfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, ²⁷ but a certain terrifying expectation of judgment, and the fury of a fire which will consume the adversaries.
 - ✓ It is one thing to struggle with sin, it is quite another to be a rebellious, willful, continual sinner living apart from God on a daily basis, cf. Lot, Saul, Demas.
 - ✓ The terrifying judgment is the sin unto death.

- **2 Peter 2:21** For it would be better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known it, to turn away from the holy commandment delivered to them.
²² It has happened to them according to the true proverb, "A dog returns to its own vomit," and, "A sow, after washing, *returns* to wallowing in the mire.
- ✓ Better = in this life. Unbeliever can get away with a lot more than a believer.

10. God's grace saves us from the condemnation of sin as well as from the domination of sin over our lives, Rom 6-8.
- **Romans 6:6** knowing this, that our old self was crucified with *Him*, that our body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin;
 - **Romans 6:11** Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus.
 - **Romans 6:12** Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body that you should obey its lusts,
 - **Romans 6:14** For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under law, but under grace.

11. The great danger of sin is in its seductive ability to harden us to the POG---it is the hardening that parlays sin to evil.

- **Hebrews 3:13** But encourage one another day after day, as long as it is *still* called "Today," lest any one of you be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. Deceitfulness of sin:
 - ✓ Does not satisfy, leads to more sin, leads to worse sins, enslaves, degrades, humiliates, steals joy, steals confidence before God, brings divine discipline, grieves the Holy Spirit, hurts self and loved ones, brings reproach upon the Lord and the church, saps the spiritual life, steals time, mocks God and the POG, has consequences both now and forever, deceives you into thinking that it is OK, unchecked destroys the spiritual life, et al.

12. While sin/evil slays thousands of spiritual lives, it is legalism that slays its tens of thousands, cf. Galatians.

- There are countless *kinds* of legalism.
- All legalism is anthropocentric.
- A person can listen to BD and still be very legalistic.
- A legalistic person: joyless, judge & jury, governed by law, SR, controlling, often religious; grace killer, shackled by legalistic list of dos and don'ts, little to no mercy, self-absorbed, never relaxed, uptight, use guilt and shame to motivate and control others, i.e. religion.
- The essence of all legalism is religion/rules without the divine relationship, emphasizing standards more than the Savior and His grace.
- No grace – “get yourself right first . . . ”

- Legalism is easy to spot. It judges almost everything by externals, quickly condemning those who don't immediately conform to a person's or group's outward norm.
- Legalists end up in despair or just more arrogance. They either give up or become stuck-up. They think they will never make it, or they think they are the only ones who'll ever make it.
- Legalists try to change a person from the outside in, whereas God deals with us from the inside out
- Legalists fail to provide a balanced view of God, grace, and the POG---they emphasize "righteousness."
- They focus on personal effort instead of the Lord's supernatural empowerment.

- A legalist loves to mock others who are not as “good”
- A legalist majors on the minors.
- A legalist often has passion about something in the Word---the passion of an modern day inquisitor.
- A legalist often has confidence he is right b4/God.
- Legalism is driven by the flesh, not the Holy Spirit
- The legalist decides it is his job to change people
- For the legalist, nothing is free – always tit for tat
- Legalism is man-centered---all activity is in “power” of flesh, often under religious or moral guise

- Legalists are grace killers
- Legalists who give up or those under their tyranny often turn to licentiousness in reaction
- The core problem with all forms of legalism is lack of close relationship with the God of the Bible.

13. The only cure for any and all spiritual maladies (licentiousness legalism, apathy, materialism, mammonism, carnality, reversionism) is getting back to a sustained living fellowship with the Lord.

14. Getting back to a transforming sustained relationship with the Lord, falls under the rubric of holiness.

15. Biblical holiness is nothing less than the flow of divine presence, goodness, character, and power from a moment by moment encounter with God (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) through His Word, Gal 5:22-23.
16. Holiness, AKA sanctification, is demanded in Scripture and the issue in our temporal lives, Rom 12:1; 1 Cor. 3:16-17; 2 Cor 7:1; 1 Thess 4:3-5; Heb 12:10; 1 Peter 1:14-19; 2 Pet 3:10-12. Nothing is more important!!!
17. It really is all about connection with God (fellowship) through the Word of God. The best way to examine your own life is through the three lens of salvation, fellowship, and spiritual growth.

18. Threefold solution to forsaking the first love for Jesus Christ, Rev 2:5. No existentialism here!

- ✓ 1) “remember where you have fallen.” This requires some serious reflection of your life before the Lord. What if David remembered his victory over Goliath and the Philistines?
- ✓ 2) “change your mind,” seriousness about changing your thinking, i.e. who am I living for?
- ✓ 3) “do the first deeds (τὰ πρῶτα ἔργα).” What are some of the first deeds? Why didn’t the Lord provide some emotional or existential instructions?

19. The solution to sin-evil is not guilt, shame, and some type of religionism but true recovery through confession of sin followed by learning and applying the doctrinal resources before the Lord, which alone makes it possible for the believer to consistently abide in Him (sustained fellowship) and thus overcome the temptation/evil the next time, e.g. FR, reckoning, growing in grace, becoming an overcomer, learning more BD, living in the mandates of God through power of the HS, Rom 6:1-14; Gal 5:16-22; 2 Pet 3:18; Mat 4:6; Heb 10:25.

20. The Church Age believer has far more opportunities for much deeper fellowship and connections with God and walking in the light of spiritual life than David or any OT believer.
21. After Christ's death, resurrection, and ascension, He poured out the HS *into* believers to take up residency inside them--- prior to that the HS was only outside/alongside believers,
✓ **John 14:17** *that is* the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not behold Him or know Him, *but* you know Him because He abides with you, and will be in you (ὅτι παρ' ὑμῶν μένει καὶ ἐν ὑμῶν ἔσται).
22. the HS takes up residence within the life of the believer, not only thereby to unite him to Christ but to experientially work the sanctification of Christ in his life.

23. Now Christ lives in the CA believer through the indwelling Holy Spirit, Jn 14:16-20.

✓ John 14:18, I will not leave you as orphans; I come to you.

24. The inner presence of the Holy Spirit gives the believer the supernatural dynamics for the unique spiritual life of the church age.

✓ **John 14:16-17** "And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; ¹⁷ *that is* the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not behold Him or know Him, *but* you know Him because He abides with you, and will be in you.

25. It is the ministry of the Holy Spirit to point to (and make a home inside of us for) Christ just as it is the ministry of Christ to reveal God/Father.

- ✓ **John 15:26** "When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, *that is* the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, He will bear witness of Me,
- ✓ **John 16:14**, "He shall glorify Me; for He shall take of Mine, and shall disclose it to you.
- ✓ **John 14:8-9** Philip said to Him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us." ⁹ Jesus said to him, "Have I been so long with you, and *yet* you have not come to know Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; how do you say, 'Show us the Father '?

26. Christ is our life and the beauty and need for a living vital union between Christ and the believer is expressed by a number of metaphors. **Colossians 3:4**, . . . *Christ, who is our life* (ἡ ζωὴ ὑμῶν)

- **The Body of Christ** metaphor emphasizes the CA believer's dependence upon the leadership of Christ as the Head, & His sustenance.
- Col 2:19b . . . holding fast to the head, from whom the entire body, being supplied and held together by the joints and ligaments, grows with a growth which is from God.

- **The Temple of God** metaphor emphasizes the CA believer as being the habitation of God.
- ✓ **2 Cor 6:16** Or what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; just as God said, "I will dwell in them and walk among them; And I will be their God, and they shall be My people.
- ✓ **1 Peter 2:5** you also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

- **The Priest** analogy emphasizes the CA believer's access to God, the service of sacrifice, and the service of witness.

- ✓ **1 Pet. 2:4** And coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected by men, but choice and precious in the sight of God, ⁵ you also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

- ✓ **1 Peter 2:9** But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for *God's* own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;

- **The Bridegroom-Bride** analogy emphasizes Christ's love for the CA believer as manifested by loving, nourishing and cherishing her. Marriage is an exclusive devoted love. There were 3 stages of marriage in the ANE.

1st Stage, betrothal (church age),

- **2 Cor 11:2** *For I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy; for I betrothed you to one husband, that to Christ I might present you as a pure virgin.*

2nd Stage: Rapture. The bride is taken to the Groom.

- **1 Thess 4:16-17** For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of *the* archangel, and with the trumpet of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up (ἄρπαγησόμεθα) together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and thus we shall always be with (πάντοτε σὺν) the Lord.

3rd Stage: Consummation of the marriage (Marriage Supper),

- **Revelation 19:7** "Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready." ⁸ And it was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright *and* clean; for the fine linen is the righteous acts (τὰ δικαιώματα) of the saints. ⁹ And he said to me, "Write, 'Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.'" And he said to me, "These are true words of God."

- **The outworking of the husband's love via JC**
 - ❖ **Ephesians 5:25,29** Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her . . . Nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ also does the church.
 - ❖ **1 Pet 3:7**, You husbands in the same way [!], live with (συνοικοῦντες) your wives in an understanding way (κατὰ γνῶσιν) as with someone weaker (certainly not weaker mentally, spiritually, or socially).

- **The outworking of the wife's submission via JC**
 - ❖ **1 Pet 3:1, 6**, in the same way [!] . . . just as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord (κύριον) . . .

- **The Shepherd and His flock** metaphor emphasizes the believer's dependence upon the sacrificial love, tender care, protection, and nourishment from the Chief Shepherd.
 - ✓ **Psalm 23:1** The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want.
 - ✓ **Psalm 79:13** So we Thy people and the sheep of Thy pasture Will give thanks to Thee forever; To all generations we will tell of Thy praise.
 - ✓ **Psalm 100:3** Know that the LORD Himself is God; It is He who has made us, and not we ourselves; *We are* His people and the sheep of His pasture.

- ✓ **John 10:9** "I am the door; if anyone enters through Me, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.
- ✓ **John 10:11** "I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep.

- **The Vine and the branch metaphor** emphasize the organic union of the CA believer with Christ. Abiding in Him means life and fruitfulness; apart from Him there is worthlessness/deadwood/spiritual barrenness.
- ✓ **John 15:1-5**, "I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. 2 "Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He lifts up (αἶρει); and every branch that bears fruit, He prunes it, that it may bear more fruit. 3 "You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken (λελάληκα) to you. 4 "Abide in Me (μείνατε ἐν ἐμοί), and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you, unless you abide in Me. 5 "I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me, and I in him, he bears much fruit; for apart from Me you can do nothing." Compare Romans 7:15-25.