

Opening Passage

1 Peter 1:24-2:2 For, "All flesh is like grass, And all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers, And the flower falls off, ²⁵ But the word of the Lord abides forever." And this is the word which was preached to you. Therefore, putting aside (Ἀποθέμενοι) all malice and all guile and hypocrisy and envy and all slander, ² like newborn babes, long for the pure/ἄδολον/unadulterated milk of the Word, that by it you may grow in respect to deliverance (αὐξηθῆτε εἰς σωτηρίαν).

Christ's ἑκκλησία and Biblical Philosophy of Ministry

Review

1. The critical important of context in preparation of WOG to avoid the deconstruction of Christianity.
2. Job of undershepherd/PT is ποιμαίνειν by teaching the Word of God, Acts 20:28; cf. Acts 6:2-4.
3. The nature and need of ἐπισκόπος, Acts 20:28, 1 Pet 5:2.
4. The whole counsel of God, biblical philosophy of ministry, and the “problem” of offending people in these areas.
The need to stay balanced and keep sheep growing!
5. The metaphors of the church and the significance.
6. The meaning of “ἑκκλησία” in Greek world, LXX, and throughout the NT.

Christ's ἐκκλησία & the “One Another” Body Life Commands

- Be at peace with one another, Mk 9:50
- Love one another, Jn 13:34-35; Jn 15:12, 17; Rom 13:8; 1 Jn 3:11,
- Be devoted to one another, Rom 12:10
- Honor one another, Rom 12:10
- Live in harmony with one another, Rom 12:16
- Stop passing judgment with one another, Rom 14:13
- Accept one another; then, just as Christ accepted you, Rom 15:7
- Have equal concern for each other, 1 Cor 12:25
- Serve one another in love, Gal 5:13
- Carry each other's burdens, Gal 6:2
- Be patient, bearing with one another in love, Eph 4:2
- Be kind and compassionate to one another, Eph 4:32
- Forgiving each other, Eph 4:32
- Bear with each other, Col 3:13
- Make you love increase and overflow for each other, 1 Thess 3:12
- Encourage each other, 1 Thess 4:18; 5:11; Heb 10:25
- Pray for each other, Js 5:16
- Love each other deeply/ἐκτενῆ/faithfully, 1 Pet 4:8

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 us and providing for us day in and day out is to get us back to a relationship with Him---"to walk with Him and before Him."
2. Walking with and before God falls under the theological rubric known as sanctification/holiness, which is the critical issue of the believer's spiritual life. It is the only sphere of true blessedness. It is why we study Bible doctrine and the only way to escape the blindness of licentiousness, legalism, apathy, and problem of parlaying sin into evil and thus living in the dungeon of kosmos diabolicus.

3. We have noted the effects of the deceitfulness of sin and how licentiousness can destroy sanctification, Heb 3:13 (ἀπάτη τῆς ἁμαρτίας). As doctrinal believers, we have been so blessed to have been taught the wonderful grace provision of confession of sin for restoration. However, we must avoid at all costs the temptation to use it to parlay sin into evil and thus destroy sanctification as a way of life--- i.e. destroy our ability to have a sustained walk with God.
- ✓ Deceitfulness of sin = brings satisfaction, does not lead to evil, will not lead to more or greater sins, will not enslave, degrade, or humiliate, will not affect my spiritual life, will not hurt others, no serious consequences, it's OK, I am still positive to BD, et al.

4. We have noted the effects of legalism. Legalism is far more subtle & destructive (w/God and in marriage). Legalists come in many stripes: they are grace killers, uptight, judge & jury, governed by Law---they call grace, self-absorbed in their SR, controlling, often religious, shackled by legalistic “+R” list, little to no mercy, use guilt & shame to motivate and control others, major on the minors, judge externals, everything is about them, blind to their own deficiencies, threatened with any notion of being wrong, unbalanced due to myopic SR. The core problem is the inability to connect and have a two-way relationship because something else (a “righteous” standard) is more important than the relationship.

5. The nature and depth of real relationships:

- If you were asked, “tell me about your **relationship** with God,” what would you say? Steps to improve?
- If you were asked, “tell me about your **relationship** with your spouse,” what would you say? Steps to improve?
- If you were asked, “tell me about your **relationship** with a friend,” what would say? Steps to improve?
- Depth of relationship with God is reflected in the daily life of worship of God---or lack thereof. Worship: terms (προσκυνέω, σέβω, λειτουργέω), environment of Truth and Spirit---not experience/imaginings (Jn 4:24), theocentric, when: everyday, your total life as sacrifice to Him in response to Bible doctrine, Rom 12:1.

6. There really is only one cure for all spiritual maladies (i.e. libertinism, legalism, apathy, materialism, carnality, and reversionism) and that is staying out of the OSHGEN and kosmic system by a sustained fellowship with God in the divine dynasphere.

7. Getting back to a transforming sustained relationship with the Lord, falls under the rubric of biblical sanctification/holiness. Sanctification/holiness is connectedness to God that purifies, sanctifies, ennobles, and empowers the life. It is the sacred romance, the *hagios* life of relationship.

8. Threefold solution to loss of 1st love relationship with JC as outlined in Rev 2:5. Note the absence of emotionalism or existentialism.

1) **“remember where you have fallen.”** This requires some serious reflection of your life before the Lord.

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?

9. Biblical holiness/sanctification is nothing less than the flow of divine presence, goodness, character, and power into the believer from a moment by moment sustained fellowship with God, Gal 5:22-23; Philip 2:13.

➤ **Philippians 2:13** for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for *His* good pleasure. ¹⁴ Do all things without grumbling or disputing; ¹⁵ that you may prove yourselves to be blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you appear as lights in the world, ¹⁶ holding fast the word of life

10. Progressive sanctification is not optional: it is required and the basis for the rest of what Scripture is telling us! It is the central issue in each life. There is absolutely nothing as important as staying connected to God.

➤ **Romans 12:1** I urge you therefore/οὖν brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy/ἁγίαν/set apart sacrifice, acceptable to God, *which is your* ~~spiritual~~ τὴν λογικὴν/logical/intelligent service/ λατρείαν/priestly service/worship service.

- **1 Corinthians 3:16** Do you not know that you [as a gathered local church] are a temple of God, and *that* the Spirit of God dwells in you? ¹⁷ If any man destroys the temple of God, God will destroy him, for the temple of God is holy/ἅγιός, and that is what you are.
- **2 Corinthians 7:1** Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting/ἐπιτελοῦντες/progressively completing holiness in the reverence of God.

- **1 Thessalonians 4:3** For this is the will of God, your sanctification; *that is*, that you abstain/keep away from sexual immorality; ⁴ that each of you know how to possess his own vessel [manage sexual impulses] in sanctification and honor, ⁵ not [giving into] lustful passion, like the Gentiles who do not know God;
- **Hebrews 12:10** For they disciplined us only for a short time and only as best they could; but he disciplines us in a way that provides genuine benefit to us and enables us to share/μεταλαβεῖν in his holiness.

- **1 Peter 1:14-15** As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lusts *which were yours* in your ignorance, ¹⁵ but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all *your* behavior; ¹⁶ because it is written, "You shall be holy, for I am holy." ¹⁷
- **2 Peter 3:11** Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, ¹² looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, on account of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning, and the elements will melt with intense heat!

11. It really is all about connection with God (fellowship) through the Word of God---learning and applying Bible doctrine. The best way to examine your own life is through the three lens of salvation, fellowship, and spiritual growth.

- ✓ Salvation: understanding of grace, gratitude for grace, and desire to tell others of this grace
- ✓ Spiritual: confession, recovery, intake of BD, application for sustained fellowship, relationship with a local church—other believers, overcoming kosmos diabolicus.
- ✓ Spiritual growth: continued edification in the grand truths of the faith. Move out of narcissistic, self-serving attitude to Bible doctrine.

12. Progressive sanctification is the only solution to the problem of parlaying sin into evil. There is no other way (cf. religion, tenacity, human good, or any type of human works system). The solution is recovery through confession of sin followed by learning and applying the doctrinal resources as unto the Lord. Sanctification alone makes it possible for the believer to consistently abide in Him (sustained fellowship) and thus overcome the temptation/evil the next time. Resources for sanctification: 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.

13. The Church Age believer has far more opportunities for much for greater sanctification and thus divine power, virtue, wisdom, and capacity to “walk in the light of lives” than David or any OT believer.
14. After Christ’s death, resurrection, and ascension, He poured out the HS (τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον) *into* believers to take up residency inside them---formerly, the HS was only “alongside.”
- ✓ **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).

15. The *Hagios* Spirit 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.
16. Now Christ lives in the CA believer through the indwelling *Hagios* Spirit, Jn 14:16-20.
 - ✓ John 14:18, I will not leave you as orphans; I come to you.

17. 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.

18. 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 '?"

19. 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 (αῖρει); 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 Rom 7:15-25.