

# *“The Lord Looks At the Heart”*

## 18

### *From Glory to Glory*



Character development is said to be the most important work ever entrusted to human beings. During the next hour, we will explore both our privilege and our responsibility to become Christ-like in character. Join us now for this powerful time of personal renewal as Pastor Stephen Wallace takes us "From Glory to Glory."

Good morning, good morning dear friends, and happy Sabbath to you. What a beautiful winter day you have here. Did you get here without mishap on the slippery roads? Thank you for the commitment level that is manifested in your presence. Thank you for resisting the temptation to stay home on account of the weather, and take the Sabbath rest perhaps a little too literally. Thank you for being willing to come and **diligently study together the most important work ever entrusted to human beings.** {Ed 225.3} And what is that, my friends? Character building.

Now some of you are new, you've just come on board, and I'm really worried about you because we have been diligently developing a context and foundational principles and understanding upon which we are presently building. And what lesson are we on today, class? Those of you who have been with us. It's 17... It's 17. You see we're up on the seventeenth floor of this building. And for those of you who have just joined us, you're... You're way upstairs over a vacant lot, and I'm concerned about you. But I've got to trust the Holy Spirit, to make up, as much as possible, an understanding that you might appreciate and be able to personally apply what we're sharing in today's studies. We are studying together the most important work ever entrusted to human beings, which is character building. And we have been looking at the Holy Spirit's work in our hearts, last night.

And this morning, we have made a transition and we have come to focus on our cooperative role, with the work of the Holy Spirit. And this morning's study was entitled: "**Keep Your Heart With All Diligence.**" {Pr 4:23} And that really sums up very concisely and very accurately our cooperative role. After all what is character? It's "**as a man thinketh in his heart.**" {Pr 23:7} And remember that word heart is better translated soul, and it comprehends both the intellect and the affections... Both the thoughts and the feelings, in other words. And in the words of inspiration, **Testimonies, Volume 5, page 310: "The thoughts and feelings combined make up the moral character."** It's what goes on in our hearts that determines what we really are. You see, character is what makes us what we really are. A lot of us have ourselves fooled into thinking we're something we're not. Because we behave well, we think we're good people, and we might even think we're Christians. But we may not be what we think we are. But I assure you, we are what we think. Do I hear an "amen"? {Amen} What makes you, what makes me what we really are is what goes on between the right and the left ear, where only you and God know what's happening, my dear friends.

It's not what goes on out here. That may or may not be an accurate portrayal or representation of what goes on up here. Hypocrisy: that's putting on a good show, a good religious facade, and we can fool others, we can even fool ourselves into thinking that we are Christians because we have a form of godliness. But my dear friends, it might all be motivated by a selfish old man. A white-washed tomb, or a **whited sepulcher** {Mat 23:27}, in the old King James English, has a beautiful exterior. In fact the Lord said it's beautiful on the outside. But what's behind it all? A dead old man. We're doing all the right things but for all the wrong reasons, motivated by selfishness.

So that which makes us what we really are is not what goes on out here. It's what goes on up here between the right and the left ear. And that's why, if we are going to cooperate with the transforming power of the Holy Spirit, we need to learn to do much more than just keep the lid on our behavior. We need to keep the heart with all diligence. Do I hear an "amen"? {Amen} We need to learn to keep our thoughts and feelings in compliance with the spirit of the law, not just our words and actions in compliance with the letter of the law. And that requires all diligence. **"Keep your heart with,"** what? **"...all diligence."**

And we were noting five reasons why it is our duty, our responsibility to do that. Number one reason was, what? Come on class, those of you who were here, what's the first reason we must **"keep the heart with all diligence"**? **"For out of it are the issues of life."** {Pr 4:23} You see the heart, the mind, is the spring or the fountain of all of our words and acts. All of our behavior issues forth from what goes on in the mind. And therefore that which issues forth, if it's going to be genuine and pure and Christ-like, that which goes on up here must be genuine, pure and Christ-like. Amen? That only makes sense. It's the condition of the spring that determines the condition of the water that issues forth.

The second reason we must keep the heart with all diligence, what was it? It's because what goes on in your heart determines what you really are. **"As a man thinketh in his heart so is he,"** {Pr 23:7} the wise man tells us. And on account of that my dear friends, it's imperative that we carefully govern what goes on in the mind. That's what we really are. We're oh, so prone to overlook that. We're so prone to evaluate ourselves on the basis of our behavior, and as we noted this morning, we tend to do that because we ourselves are evaluated on the basis of our behavior, all the way through our lives. And then we tend to use the same criteria to evaluate the genuineness of our Christian experience.

But is that a safe criteria to use? No. Why? Because, bless your hearts, you can be doing all the right things for all the wrong reasons. You can be living a life in compliance with the letter of the law. In fact, as Saul of Tarsus could say regarding his "B.C." experience - before conversion, before he met Christ on the road to Damascus - in Philippians, he said of himself before conversion that he was, **"by the deeds of the law,"** what? **"...blameless."** {Phil 3:6} As an unconverted man, he had his act together. Scary what sufficient ego motivation can pull off, isn't it? A good German will helps too, mind you. But the point is, you can do it, I can do it, if we have sufficient ego motivation. That is precisely why, it is never safe to evaluate our Christian experience on the basis of our behavior. That is not a sufficient criteria to use.

We must look deeper, because it's what goes on up here that determines what we really are. And we closed this morning's study with a little open heart surgery. We let the scalpel of truth lay open the inner recesses of our being, and we took a close look, didn't we? And maybe some of us were a little dismayed at what we discovered. Oh, my dear friends, I've got to continue to challenge you to do some open heart surgery with me today. And let me just forewarn you, this is not going to be all that comfortable an experience. But bless your hearts, if I were only to share with you that which would be comfortable to you, I would be doing you no favors. Do I hear an "amen"? {Amen}

You see, we pastors, we've got to love you enough to tell you like it is. And then we've got to trust you and the Holy Spirit to respond aright to the truth. So please don't hold it against me if I inflict a little pain. It's not me; I'm just His messenger boy today. Please let Him speak to your heart, your mind. But you see fellow Laodiceans, those who are so self-deceived that we think we're what? **"Rich and increased in goods, and have need of nothing,"** {Rev 3:17} and we don't even know that we're what? **"wretched, poor, blind, miserable and naked,"** That's pretty serious self-deception, isn't it?

Why we are so terribly self-deceived? Because we evaluate ourselves on a false criteria, our relatively good behavior. And because we behave better than almost everybody else, of course we must be God's chosen people. Be careful, you may not be what you think you are. But you better believe you are what you think; you are what you think. **"As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he."** {Pr 23:7} And

what do we need in order to see the way it really is with us fellow self-deceived, self-righteous Laodiceans, what do we need? We need the eye salve. Do I hear an "amen"? {Amen} The True Witness specifically encourages us to **receive from Him** what? Eye salve, **eye salve that we might** what? **See. {Rev 3:18}**

What is the eye salve? That's the supernatural, spiritual discernment that is ours by the power and the gift of the Holy Spirit. You see, only eye salve can help us see past white-wash. Did you hear what I said? Only eye salve can help us see past white-wash, and recognize what's behind it. So would you pray with me this morning for the anointing of the eye salve? Would you please? On your own eyes... And would you pray for me, as you pray for yourself that the Holy Spirit will anoint this poor earthen vessel that he might speak the truth and only the truth, even if it might hurt, and even if it might make him unpopular. Would you ask Jesus to give me enough love for you to run the risk of offending you? Would you please? Would you join me on your knees for few moments of silent prayer?

*My Father in Heaven, I thank you so much for the quietness of this beautiful Sabbath morning. I thank you for each one who has come. And regardless of the motives or reasons they're here, I pray that You would bless them, please Lord. Maybe some are here because they've been required to come, maybe some are here because they've got a reputation to maintain, and if they weren't, people would wonder about them. Maybe some are here because they really love You, and want to worship You, and want to come to know better how to be more like You. But for whatever reason we're here, Father, I just pray that You would open our eyes, and help us to see truth that will set us free, that will sanctify us that will make us much more like Jesus who is the Truth. Help us to behold the truth, that in beholding we might be changed by the truth, by the Spirit of Truth, into the likeness of Him who is the Truth. Please Father, make this much more than just an intellectual exercise today, make this a life changing experience. I pray that you'd give me the strength: poor, earthen, sin-damaged, weak, incapable in and of myself, vessel though I am, please use me, by a miracle of grace, to lift up Jesus. Give me the strength to lift up Jesus, and I claim His promise: "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all unto Me." Bring us closer to Jesus and closer to each other for having spent this time together in the study of His Word, is my prayer in His name. Amen.*

In our printout, we only got to the bottom of page 37 of Lesson 17. By the way, if you don't have a printout, you could have, had you come. And you can get one this afternoon if you come back. They'll be available out on the table. But they are for those who intend to come regularly, at least from this point on, okay? It's a binder that I hold in my hand.

We got to the second reason why we must keep the heart with all diligence. And that is because it's what goes on in the heart that makes us what we are. There's another statement under that heading that I just must share with you; I can't skip over it. It's found in "Messages to Young People."

I've got some young people here this morning I've noticed; welcome. Good to have you on board; I'm expecting you this afternoon. Amen? Come on now, a little response... Okay. And by the way, if you need to have permission to come, you talk to me, and we'll work that out; okay? We'll work that out.

**Messages to Young People, page 144:** Quote: **"As a man 'thinketh in his heart so is he.' Many thoughts,"** listen closely. **"Many thoughts make up the unwritten history of a single day; and these thoughts have much to do with the formation of character."** Listen: **"Our thoughts are to be strictly guarded;" "Our thoughts are to be,"** what class? **"...strictly guarded."** What does that sound like? **"Keep your heart with all diligence."** Why are our hearts to be strictly guarded? Listen: **"Our hearts are to be strictly guarded for one"** how many? **"...one impure thought makes a deep impression on the soul. An evil thought leaves an evil,"** what? **"...impress on the mind."** Wow... How many evil thoughts does it take to leave a deep, evil impression on the soul and mind? One... One.

And by the way, every time that evil thought is indulged anew, what happens to that impression? Come on, what happens to it? It's deepened, and deepened, and deepened, until it can eventually be permanently and indelibly engraved upon hearts of stone and that's what the mark is really all about. Oh friends, no wonder we must **keep the heart with all diligence**. One impure thought leaves a deep impression.

But praise God the converse is true. Pure thoughts leave pure impressions, amen? And each time we **bring our thoughts into captivity to the spirit of the law {2 Cor 10:5}**, what happens to that impression? It's deepened and deepened, and this is precisely how we cooperate with the re-engraving process that God, by His Spirit, is doing in our hearts, on the fleshly tables of our hearts. We cooperate with this process by bringing our thoughts and feelings into harmony with the spirit of the law. And more and more fully, God's law, which is the transcript of His character, becomes the foundation upon which we build a character temple to the glory of God.

And what is character? Our thoughts and feelings combined. As we bring our character, our thoughts and feelings, more and more consistently in harmony with the spirit of the law, we are more and more fully transformed by the renewing of our minds. We get these programs, my young friends, we get these computers reprogrammed. Reprogrammed - we get a whole new operating system. You see, the computer that we get as a natural inheritance from our human parents, is programmed with the operating system of selfishness. But when we are born again, we get a new heart, and that is programmed by what operating system? The operating system of love. And as we learn to handle God's software, particularly His Word, our minds are disciplined to function in harmony with the spirit of the law, which is love, and that's how our computers are reprogrammed, that's how we are transformed by the renewing of our minds. And when we learn to think and feel, motivated and governed by love, then our words and actions will be genuine expressions of love for the first time, amen?

You see, if we try to do quote "loving" end-quote deeds with a selfish heart, it is only hypocrisy; it is only hypocrisy. But when we do loving things because we really love God supremely and others unselfishly, then it is a genuine revelation of the love of Christ, and then it becomes attractive and winsome and beautiful. And that's what makes us effective soul winners, amen? You see, genuine love is such a rare commodity these days, that whenever people see it, they really sit up and take note. Almost without exception today, in the world, when people do good deeds, it's because they have a hidden agenda. Come on now, you know that! They have ulterior motives. They're doing it so that they will be admired. They're doing it because they can get a tax write-off anyway. They're doing it because it'll be written up in the local newspaper. All selfish motives. But my dear friends, when people start doing good deeds just for the sake of blessing someone and require no credit for it, people sit up and take note, don't they? That's pretty rare.

And by the way... I've got to probe you a little bit on this. One of the best ways we can determine what our motives are when we do good deeds, is to analyze how we feel about it if nobody notices. Do you hear what I'm trying to tell you to do? Inevitably my dear friends, if you and I get upset when no one notices what we did, what's our agenda? What's our motive? It's selfishness. You know that; I'm telling you the truth, you know that. If you do a good deed because you really love someone, then you find your joy in just doing it... And rightly representing Christ in the process, even if no one appreciates it other than Jesus. By the way, for a man, for a woman who really loves Jesus, His approval makes up for the disapproval of the rest of the world. Amen? The rest of the world. Search your heart, my friends. What's the motive? What's the motive?

The second reason, no third, third... The third reason we must keep the heart with all diligence is because if we don't, Satan will. Did you hear what I just said? The third reason you and I are duty bound, under obligation, to govern the mind with all diligence is because if we don't, who will? Satan will. I want to read to you the statement from which we take our working definition for character. And you'll

hear the phrase... Remember character, what is it? **"Thoughts and feelings combined."** I want to read that statement, but with a little more of the context. It's found in **Testimonies Volume 5, page 310**; top of page 38: **"Even your thoughts..." "Even your,"** what? **"...thoughts must be brought into subjection to the will of God, and your feelings under the control of reason and religion. Your imagination was not given you to be allowed to run riot and have its own way without any effort at restraint or discipline. If the thoughts are wrong the feelings will be wrong, and the thoughts and feelings combined make up the moral character."** I've got to pause there.

Please notice, what makes up character? Thoughts and feelings combined. But of these two, which is the most important? Thoughts. Did you notice that, **"If the thoughts are wrong, the"** what? **"The feelings will be wrong."** And by the way, let me just slip this in. In part two of the *"Glory to Glory"* series, that we won't even be getting to in this session that we have together, we have a study that focuses on the governance of feelings. It is important to govern our feelings? Oh yes, it is. But for now, please understand that if you and I are going to learn to govern our feelings, we have to recognize that the problem... What is the source of the problem with out-of-control feelings? It's wrong what? Wrong thoughts. Are you with me? So if you have feelings that you shouldn't be having, what you need to do is ask God to help you identify the wrong thoughts that lead to them. Then bring those thoughts into captivity to the obedience of Christ, and He will captivate your feelings in the deal. Do I hear an "amen"? {Amen} Close that parentheses; somebody needed that this morning. If the thoughts are wrong, the feelings will be wrong, and the thoughts and feelings combined make up the moral character, okay?

Now, here's why I am sharing this paragraph though, next sentence: **"When you decide that as Christians you are not required to restrain your thoughts and feelings, you are brought under the influence of evil angels and invite their presence and their control."** Do you hear that, brother, sister? Please don't decide that you are not required to restrain your thoughts and feelings, because if you do... You are brought under the influence of evil angels and invite their presence and their control.

By the way, do you have actually to invite Satan, *"Listen, come in and control my thoughts?"* No, he will do so by default... By default. And my dear friends, it's not really tough for him to do so. Because naturally, hear me, your mind is in harmony with his anyway. Did I say that? Yes, I said that. On what basis? On the basis of Scripture. Bless your hearts, I don't dare say anything to you except on the basis of Scripture. **Romans 8:7: "Because the carnal mind..."** by the way, what is the carnal mind? That's the natural mind. **Whatever is born of flesh is flesh,** carnal. {Jn 3:6} And that's the only mind we have until we're born again, born of the Spirit. Then we get a spiritual mind. But until we're born again, **"the carnal mind is,"** what? **"enmity against God; it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be."** Really? Yes, really.

Why is the carnal mind so at odds with, indeed hating God and resenting and rebelling against His law? Why is the carnal mind doing that? Because the carnal mind is governed by the law or the spirit of Satan, which is selfishness. And at the fall, my dear friends, the natural man not only fell out of harmony with God, but fell into harmony with who? Satan. And that, by the way, is precisely the reason that the first promise God gives in the garden is what? **"I will put enmity between you and the woman."** {Gen 3:15} Enmity... You see our natural enmity is towards who? God. But, praise His name, what does He promise to do? He promises to put enmity between Satan and us.

But please know that He has to put it there supernaturally, because it's not naturally found. Are you with me, class? And I must confirm that from inspiration. **Signs of the Times, June 11, 1894: "We are to know the meaning of the words: 'I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise His heel.' The enmity that exists in the heart against evil has no natural existence, but is an enmity that has been created through the agency of the Holy Spirit."** It's supernatural in origin, in other words. Do I hear an "amen"? {Amen} Reading on: **"As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the**

sons of God, even to them that believe on His name." {Jn 1:12} Now listen to this last sentence: "The natural man is in transgression, and his nature is in harmony with that of the first transgressor. There is no natural enmity between fallen men and fallen angels; both are partakers of the same spirit through indulgence in evil." What is that spirit that we are partakers of with fallen angels? It's the spirit of selfishness. And it is that spirit that governs the natural heart. Are we all together on this? Praise God for the promised gift of enmity. Do I hear an "amen"? {Amen}

We would be utterly helpless to do anything but go on as willing slaves to the tyranny of sin, self and Satan until we finally self-destructed through self-indulgence. And by the way, that's what the vast majority of the human race is busily doing. Come on now, do you hear me on that? I need to hear an "amen;" you can respond. {Amen} The vast majority of the human race is busily self-destructing through self-indulgence because they are slaves to sin, self and Satan. Why? Because they are tyrannized by the law of selfishness. But praise God we can be set free from that tyranny, amen? Praise God we can receive a new heart that's governed by the law of love. And we can start living for others instead of for ourselves. And that's why Jesus says in **Ezekiel 18:31 and 32**, "**Cast away from you all the transgressions which you have committed, and get yourselves a new heart and a new spirit.**" Do you hear His earnest plea? "**Get yourself a new heart and a new spirit. For why should you die, O house of Israel? For I have no pleasure in the death of one who dies,' says the LORD. 'Therefore turn and live!'**" He's saying, *"Please come back to Me before you self-destruct through self-indulgence. Please! Get a new heart... I've got one. I want to give it to you, but you've got to turn and ask Me for it. I can't force it on anyone. Will you please let Me give it to you?"*

The fourth reason... The fourth reason we must **keep the heart with all diligence** is because it is in the heart that God looks for and requires obedience of us. Are we all together? What's the fourth reason that we must **keep the heart with all diligence**? Because it is in the heart that God looks for and what? Requires obedience of us. He requires obedience of us where? Between the right and the left ear, first and foremost. It's called spiritual obedience. It's called what? Spiritual obedience. And what is spiritual obedience? It's learning, for the love of Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit, to bring our thoughts and feelings into harmony with the spirit of the law, which is love, amen? God requires this... God requires this.

Note how clearly Scripture brings this out. **1 Samuel 16:7**; you know the story. Samuel, the prophet of God, is commissioned to go to the house of Jesse, and anoint among his sons Saul's successor. And so the boys come, and they present themselves before the prophet in order of their age. Firstborn presents himself first: handsome specimen, 6 foot 5", long dark hair, broad at the shoulder, narrow at the hip, obviously kingly material. And Samuel reaches for his flask, and he's just about to anoint him, this obvious candidate for Saul's replacement, when God has something to tell him. What is it? *"No, not too fast..."* **"But the LORD said to Samuel, 'Do not look at his appearance or at the height of his stature, because I have refused him.'** Really? But God, he looks so good, and he's so polite and he's so well behaved. No... **"I have refused him."** Why, Lord? **"For the LORD does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks,"** where? **"...at the heart."** Therefore my dear friends, **keep the heart with all diligence.** Do I hear an "amen"? {Amen} God is looking; He sees every thought that flits across the conscious screen of your thought life, just as clearly and as surely - in fact even more so - than you see my arm waiving back and forth. God doesn't see like we see. We only see outward things. He sees inner things. There's never a thought that you or I think that God is not fully aware of. Do I hear an "amen"? {Amen} His eyes penetrate to the very core of our being. He is omniscient; He knows everything.

David, the scrawny little shepherd boy who wasn't even in the lineup because he was out taking care of the sheep. His big brothers left him there to do the job so that they could go in and present themselves to the prophet. David is the one that God selected because of what? His heart. He had a heart to know and love God. This same David before he turned over the reins of kingly authority to his son,

Solomon, what did he have to tell him? **1 Chronicles, this time, 28:9: "As for you, my son Solomon, know the God of your father, and serve Him with a,"** what? **"...a loyal heart and with a,"** what? **"...willing mind."** Where's David's emphasis? Is it on obeying Him out here at the level of behavior? No, it's on obeying Him up here between the right and the left ear. And when we do it there, then the behavior will take care of itself. Amen? {Amen} Yes... Yes. Why does he exhort him to serve Him with a loyal heart and with a willing mind? **"...for the LORD searches all hearts and understands all the intents of the thoughts."** **"All the,"** what? **"...the intents of the thoughts."** What are the intents of the thoughts? Those are the motives behind the thoughts. God understands all those, my dear friends; He understands all those.

Jesus was constantly trying in various ways to help His chosen people of old, the Jews, to come to understand the spiritual nature of the obedience that He desires. You see, they had gotten to be professionals at complying with the letter of the law, hadn't they? And just to make sure that they were doing so, their scribes and Pharisees, their rabbis spent lots of time minutely detailing what constituted correct behavior. In fact, there were volumes written on just how to keep the Sabbath holy, down to the finest details of what was and was not appropriate behavior for the Sabbath. And by the way, hear me; the less you have the spirit of the law to govern your heart, the more you need the letter of the law to govern your behavior. Whereas the more you have the spirit of the law to govern your heart, you don't even need the letter of the law because your behavior will naturally be in compliance with it. Do I hear an "amen"? {Amen}

But because the spirit of the law was not governing their hearts, they really got serious about defining down to the remotest, the minutest details, what determined correct and incorrect behavior. And because they were so good at complying with these, these multitudinous dos and don'ts, these rules and regs, they had themselves convinced that they were what? **"Rich and increased in goods and had need of nothing."** {Rev 3:17} Oh, does that sound familiar? Is it possible that we have, some of us, gone that route as well? So how is Jesus going to help these self-deceived, self-righteous scribes and Pharisees out of their ditch, the ditch of legalism?

Well, what do you preach to legalists? What do you preach to legalists? Do you preach the gospel? Careful, this is a trick question. Do you preach the gospel to legalists? No, you don't, not until you've first preached the law. Really? Yes, really. Why? Well, what is the gospel? The gospel is the good news that there is a Savior from sin, who forgives us for our sins. But any good legalist hasn't sinned for a long time. Come on now! So he doesn't need forgiveness for sins; he's quit that a long time ago. But those nasty heathen over there, living across the borders, who are, you know, in all this gross behavior and aren't keeping the Sabbath, they're the ones that need forgiveness, not me! You see, my friends, the gospel is the good news that there is a Savior, but a legalist is quite convinced that he is capable of saving himself. And to tell him that he needs a Savior is kind of offensive to him. Are you hearing what I'm saying? So before you can even hope to get to first base with the proclamation of the gospel, you have got to help a legalist recognize his need for a Savior - his "sinnerhood" in other words. Are you following this?

And how do you help him understand his sinful, fallen, needy condition? **"I would not have come to know sin except by the law."** {Rom 7:7} You see, this is why Paul says **the law is our schoolmaster to lead us to Christ that we might be justified by faith.** {Gal 3:24} Are you with me? All of us are naturally trying to be justified by what? By works. And the scary thing about it is that if we get good enough at complying with the letter of the law, we fool ourselves into thinking that we're saved on the basis of our good works.

So the Master Preacher, when He preaches to scribes and Pharisees, what does He preach? He preaches law... Yes, He preaches law. And if you don't believe it, read it with me. Matthew chapter 5, Matthew chapter 5, the Sermon on the Mount. The classic record of His most frequently proclaimed

discourse. **Matthew 5**, let's pick it up at **verse 20**. "**For I say to you, that unless your righteousness exceeds...**" ...unless your righteousness what, class? "**...exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.**" Please notice, the scribes and Pharisees had a righteousness; what was it? Letter-of-the-law obedience, compliance with the letter of the law. Does Jesus say you don't need that? Does Jesus say you don't need that? No, Jesus says you need, what? More than that. Are you with me? "**Unless your righteousness exceeds**" the external compliance with the letter of the law, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven. Why? Because **without holiness no man shall see God. {Heb 12:14}** And if we're going to be holy, where have we got to be holy? Well, where are we? "**As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he.**" {Pr 23:7} So if we're going to be holy, we've got to be holy between the right and the left ear. We have got to have thoughts and feelings that are in compliance with the spirit of the law, as well as words and actions that are in compliance with the letter of the law. This is why Jesus says in the same sermon, "**Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.**" {Mat 5:8} Do you want to see God? By His grace you've got to become what? Pure in heart. That's not optional: "**Without holiness no man shall see God.**" Please know that, dear friends.

You know the thing that scares me so much is that there's going to be so many conscientious, letter-of-the-law keeping Seventh-day Adventists who are going to have to hear that terrible verdict when Jesus comes, "**Depart from Me, ye workers of iniquity; I never knew you.**" {Mat 7:23} And they're going to stagger back, and they're going to say, "*Wait a minute, you've got the wrong guy. I kept your law for oh, so many years. I went to church every Sabbath! And I managed to keep from doing any bad things on Sabbath! I even kept from watching TV on Sabbath. Come on, You've got the wrong guy.*" "**Depart from Me, you workers of iniquity.**" You see, my dear friends, if we do the right things for the wrong reasons, in God's eyes, it's iniquity. Did you hear me? I don't care how conscientious your compliance with the letter of the law is, if you're not doing it for the love of God, it isn't even obedience, it's iniquity. And I beg of you to realize that now while there's still a chance to get real if you're not. Do I hear an "amen"? {Amen}

God forbid that we should go on in self-righteous, self-deception until it's too late to get genuine. That's why you can't, please you mustn't, resent what I'm doing here. I know this isn't comfortable to have anybody suggest that you might not even be converted, even though you've got silver hair and you've been sitting in the same pew with your shirt and tie on for umpteen years. Nobody who's been such a conscientious letter-of-the-law keeper likes to have anybody suggest to them that they aren't even converted. But my dear friends, it's quite possible! Please don't discover that when it's too late to do something about it. Please. For your sake and for Christ's sake, please. God requires more, more than the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees. Yes, letter-of-the-law obedience is required, but my dear friends, we've got to have more than that. We've got to have spiritual obedience. We've got to be in love with the Lawgiver if we're going to really keep the law. Do I hear an "amen"? {Amen}

You can't possibly keep the Sabbath unless you love the Lord of the Sabbath. I don't care how technically correct your behavior is. If you're not here because you love Jesus, you aren't keeping the Sabbath holy. I've got to tell you the way it is. Young friends, please hear me. For those who truly keep the Sabbath, they delight in the Sabbath. Why? Because they delight in the Lord of the Sabbath. And they look forward much more eagerly to sundown Friday night than they do to sundown Saturday night. Quite different from the rest of us. Are you hearing what I'm telling you? {Amen} I'm talking straight to you, my dear friends. Please don't resent me for it. If you look forward more eagerly to sundown Saturday night than you do to sundown Friday night, I'm here to tell you, you haven't kept the Sabbath, you haven't. I don't care how appropriate your behavior was for 24 hours, you haven't kept the Sabbath. Why? Because Sabbath-keeping is primarily to you a duty, and you're so relieved that it's over for another week. And now you can get back to what you really wished you could have been doing for the

last 24 hours, but deprived yourself of because you had to keep the Sabbath. And you know I'm telling you the truth.

And if that's anywhere near your experience, my dear friends, please know that you're not going to be ready to go home to the Father's house to keep the millennial Sabbath. We talked about this last night. The millennium, what is it? It's the seventh-day Sabbath in God's reckoning. **With God a day is as a what? A thousand years. {2 Pet 3:8}** How old is planet earth? 6,000 years. Well, what do you know? What do you suppose the millennium is? The seventh-day Sabbath in the salvific week. And my dear friends, you need to be real honest with yourself. If you can barely make yourself keep a 24-hour Sabbath, are you going to be happy keeping a 1,000-year Sabbath?

And as I've said before, hear me: God will not take anyone to heaven who wouldn't be happy there. You see, we're going to be in heaven a long time. Do I hear an "amen"? {Amen} And I don't know about you, but I don't believe in a God who believes in eternal torment. But I'm here to tell you that if God were to take an unconverted person to heaven, it would be for them hell... It would be hell. And we're going to be there a long time My young friends, my older ones too, please, please I beg of you, learn how to be happy in holiness now, because holiness is what heaven is all about. And if you haven't found your happiness in holiness, you're not going to be a happy camper there, and you won't be able to go because without holiness, no man shall see God. Have I made this clear? {Amen} We've got to have more than just outward compliance, dear fellow Laodiceans... We've got to have more.

And after saying this, what does Jesus proceed to do? He proceeds to expand on the spiritual nature of the law. And here we go; this is not going to be fun, but we've got to do it. Let's start with His dealing with our feelings, our feelings. Let's start with our feelings first. He wants to help us see how the law has jurisdiction over our feelings. What law does He pick? **Matthew 5:21: "You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not,' what? '...murder,' and whoever murders will be in danger of the judgment."** Now the self-righteous scribe, Pharisee listening did a quick review of his life, *"Have I ever put a knife in anyone's back? No. Have I ever clobbered anyone over the head and knocked the life out of him? No, therefore as far as that law is concerned, I am righteous."* You see, if you just take the letter of the law, there's probably no one in this room that's broken the law that says, **"Thou shalt not kill."** {Ex 20:13} Are you understanding what I'm telling you? But what does the Lawgiver proceed to do? Come on now, watch Him, listen to Him. What does He proceed to do? He proceeds to tell us what He really meant. And by the way, does He have the authority to do that? Yes, He's the one that wrote it with His finger in the tables of stone. He has a right to tell us what He meant. And listen to Him. **"But I say to you,"** I, the Lawgiver, **"say to you ...whoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment. And whoever says,"** stage two, **"...whoever says to his brother, 'Raca!'"** ...loosely translated stupid, **"...shall be in danger of the council. But,"** stage three, **"...whoever says, 'You fool!'"** ...very strong words meaning **"you godless reprobate..."** **"...whoever says, 'You fool!' shall be in danger of hell fire."** Please notice that the guilt increases the more outwardly and overtly and strongly the anger or the hatred is expressed.

But please know that even at stage three we're still significantly this side of actual murder, aren't we? But the thing you've got to recognize with me this morning, bless your hearts, is that we, in God's eyes, can break the law that says, **"Thou shalt not kill,"** even if we only have feelings of anger, even before we express them by a single word, *"stupid."* That's stage two. Why? Because the law is spiritual, that's why. It has jurisdiction over our feelings, our innermost feelings... not just our behavior. Some of you might be saying, *"Oh, come on now, take it easy on us. After all it does say, 'Whoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment.' That lets me off the hook; I'm never angry without a cause. I always have some real good reason to be angry with him. I mean, he said something really nasty, did something mean, that's why I'm angry. This certainly doesn't apply to me, does it?"* Listen, dear fellow loophole-seekers... Listen to me, please.

That phrase, "**without a cause,**" is not to be found in some of the most ancient, and thought to be most accurate, manuscripts. It's not there, it's not there. And some of the newer translations honoring those ancient manuscripts just read like this: "**Whoever is angry with his brother shall be in danger of the judgment.**" And by the way, if you want the same basic concept but without the loophole, and I'm sure you all do, right? Good, close all loopholes to yourself. Turn to **1 John 3:15: "Whoever hates his brother is a murderer..."** Have any loopholes in that one? No. You can transgress the law, I can transgress the law that says "**Thou shalt not kill,**" if we only harbor feelings of hatred towards our brother. Do you see that my friends? Are we all together on this?

Now this "**without a cause,**" if you want to insist on including that, please recognize that the only thing that it allows for is what? Righteous indignation. Is there an anger that is not sin? Yes, it's called righteousness indignation. But what is righteousness indignation? Be very careful what you try to get under the heading of righteousness indignation. What is righteousness indignation? It's hatred for sin. Did Jesus hate sin? Oh, He hated sin with a perfect hatred, but all the while he loved the sinner with a perfect love. Do I hear an "amen"? {Amen} We get that a little backwards, don't we? We love sin and hate the sinner and we call that righteous indignation? No, no don't go there. Please don't go there. **Child Guidance, page 95: "It is a sin to speak impatiently and fretfully or to feel angry - even though we do not speak."** That's what Jesus is saying in the Sermon on the Mount. So, bless your hearts, just because you're able to bite your tongue and keep from saying, "*stupid,*" doesn't necessarily mean that you haven't transgressed the law that says, "**Thou shalt not kill,**" does it, does it? No.

And be careful here, be careful that you don't get into carnal reasoning. You know, the carnal mind might say, "*Well, if I'm guilty of transgressing the law that says, 'Thou shalt not kill,' when I only have feelings of anger and hatred towards a brother, I might as well go ahead and get all the mileage out of it and punch him out; I'm guilty already. Or do him in.*" Oh, my dear friends, please know that your guilt significantly increases, doesn't it? It significantly increases, so don't let yourself go that route.

Here's another one: **Signs of the Times, June 5, 1901: "Christ, in His teaching, fully developed the principles of the law, making it plain that it does not concern the outward actions merely, but has to do with the,"** what? "**...the heart, reaching even to the unspoken thoughts.**" Yes, it's better to bite your tongue and not say "*stupid,*" but the law reaches to the unspoken thoughts and emotions in the privacy of the heart, and if you have harbored feelings of hatred and anger towards a brother, you have transgressed the law that says, "**Thou shalt not kill...**" and that's because the law is spiritual.

**Ephesians 4:26 says, "Be angry and,"** what? "**...do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your wrath.**" What are we talking about here? **Review and Herald, February 18, 1890: "It is a righteousness indignation against sin, which springs from zeal for the glory of God, not that anger prompted by self-love or wounded ambition, which is referred to in the Scripture, 'Be ye angry, and sin not.'"** What is the only anger that is not sin? Righteous indignation. Do I hear an "amen"? {Amen} Oh my friends, God help us learn to govern our feelings by the spirit of the law, which is love. Do I hear an "amen"? {Amen}

And I am here to tell you that as we learn to do that, we are much happier people anyway. Is it pleasant to feel angry and have feelings of hatred towards others? Is it? No, it makes you miserable; it makes them miserable. Sin makes you miserable. Is it pleasant to have feelings of love towards others? Yes, it is. Do you want to be happy? Then learn to be holy. Learn to be holy between the right and the left ear. Learn to **keep your heart with all diligence.** Learn to bring your thoughts and feelings into compliance with the spirit of the law.

Bless your hearts, we've run out of time. So we're going to have to turn our attention to the law that applies to our thoughts as we come together again after our fellowship meal, and you're all going to be back, aren't you? {Amen} That was not a unanimous "amen;" I'll give you a second chance. You're

all going to be back, aren't you? {Amen} If you don't come back, then I have to have my brother put in another tape and we've just got to keep on preaching now. So you will come back, won't you? Let's stand for closing prayer.

*Father in heaven, I thank You so much that You are helping us to understand our cooperative role in the development of a Christ-like character. It involves keeping the heart with all diligence. That's our duty; that's our obligation. Because the law is spiritual, we must learn to bring our thoughts and feelings into harmony with the spirit of the law, which is love, not just our words and actions into compliance with the letter. But Father this may be a whole new concept to some of us here, but it's one that we have to not only understand, but it's one we have to experience, if we're going to be ready for Jesus to come. Thank You, Lord, that You will, with a new heart and with the power of the Holy Spirit, and with the motivation of love, You will enable us to keep our thoughts and feelings in harmony with the spirit of the law. And we will thereby experience greater joy and happiness, as we experience greater holiness. And we will thereby make ourselves fit citizens, indeed happy citizens for heaven. Please may this be our experience, is my prayer in Jesus' name, and everyone said: "Amen." God bless you, my friends; God bless you.*