

2 Corinthians 8:9 (K Rawlings, S. Francis, Robert (Bob) Thoney) 210774

Walla Walla Conference: 2005, 2 Corinthians 8:9, Genesis 26:12-19 Wells, Heb 12:1-4 Focus on Jesus (8:9)

Open—K Rawlings, S. Francis, R. Thoney

Encouraging it to me in Romans chapter 10. I'm thinking I can find it easier in my heart that I can find it in black and white, the same Lord over all. Is rich unto all that call upon him. You know the grace. Of our Lord Jesus Christ. He was rich when he was. He that was rich made himself poor, that we might be made rich. I'm sorry, I need to turn to that page. 2 Corinthians. Chapter 8, verse nine. For ye know that grace. Of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich. Yet for your sakes, he became poor. That ye, through his poverty, might be rich. Remember how on the cross? There's an expression or two, they expressed that poverty. I thirst. And. They gave him vinegar to drink. Well, how many hearts here would be so glad now to give them a drink? Well, you can still do that. You know, time doesn't mean that much. To God in that way. Well, there is time for you and me under this day of grace. Does God want you to be rich? Let's turn to. Revelation chapter 3. I'll just start with verse 14. And unto the Angel of the lay of the Seans, right these things saith. The Amen. The faithful and true witness the beginning of the creation of God. I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot. I would thou Wert cold or hot. So then, because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold or hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth, because thou sayest I am rich and increased with goods, and have need of nothing, And knowest not that thou art wretched and miserable, and poor, and blind and naked. I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich. That I counsel thee, that thou mayest be rich. Oh, how he loved. Oh, how we lost. Verse 19 As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Be zealous therefore, and repent. I counseled thee to buy of me gold, tried in the fire that thou mayest be rest. Well. He knows what it is. To go through the fire, he knows what it is. Come out after that Rich. Raised by the glory of the Father. Seated in glory. The highest glory. It speaks of Him having passed through the heavens. And I have enjoyed something in Hebrews 1. That. Tells to my heart how much God. Appreciates his beloved son, how much he honors him. With all his heart and soul, if I could put it that way.

Uh, Hebrews 1. It says. Verse 5. No, that's not the verse I'm looking at wanting to look at here. Verse 8 But unto the Son, this is God speaking here, But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever. A scepter of righteousness is the scepter of thy Kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity. Therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows. Wonderful things expressed here. Does God worship? It looks like it to me. Here it's. It looks like here in this verse, God has set his son. The glorified man above him. I thrown Oh God is forever and ever. Exalted him to the highest place in heaven. When Jesus was here, he said my Father is greater than I. My father is greater than high. And he lived for his father's name. And now the father exalts the name of the son for us to appreciate. And eternal life, what is that? He defines it for us in that verse in John 17. And this is eternal life, that they might know these the only true God and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent. May we seek him to know him. It will certainly enrich our souls. That's what made David. Such a great man as he was, he had. A heart to seek God. He would seek to know God right at the very heart. And that's how he was such an overcomer. In a day like when Ziklag was burned, he came back and his own men were about ready to destroy him. He knew the heart of his God. He'd proven his God, just like he'd proven the stone and the sling before he ever met Goliath. And so he'd proven the heart of God. Before he ever came to that surprise attack of the Malachites, there to Ziklag any recovered awe. The same Lord overall is rich unto all that call upon him. Remember what a brother Dave said yesterday about David David's name occurring? More times than Scripture. And any other name that I can think of in mankind. I don't know that for sure myself either, but I wouldn't doubt it. Last week I was. I wanted to know something about David, and I started looking. I thought it'd be easy to find this first about David. And I could not believe my strong concordance. How many times the name David, How many verses David was found in? But what a man he was. He is. I I, I believe I truly admire the man because I see my Savior and him. And how beautiful it is. That God wants to see his Son manifested in people. He honors a man like David, a man like Abraham, a woman like JL or Deborah. And in a certain sense. Then we know what we ought to know, how dependent we are on God, but the sovereign, Almighty God. Has chosen in a dispensational way. In this creation, to make himself dependent on the creature. Isn't that a wonderful thing? It depends on our faith. To see Christ manifested on earth, He depends upon our faith and obedience. Or we know it comes from him originally. It does. But you know, how can we have fellowship with God really, if we are not like Him?

In so many ways. And as Jesus is the express image of his person, His purpose is that we be conformed to his image. It's that we might know Him and as such be able to serve Him. And know Him and enjoy Him for all eternity. That is eternal life. About 10 years ago I was at a conference like this, but with a different. Group of brethren. And I remember a brother getting up at an open meeting like this and he spoke on a portion in this chapter. I was saved about 10 years ago and I remember at the time when I was saved. That I was on fire for the Lord, but I didn't know. As much about scripture as I do now. But I remember what this brother spoke about. I remember specifically. What he talked about, and I've never forgotten what he said about this portion. I remember what was happening at the time in the meeting. I remember and I at the time I didn't know why he gave this message. And spoke about this portion. So I'm going to begin reading. Verse 12. Genesis 26:12. Then Isaac sold in that land. And received in the same year, and hundredfold. And the Lord blessed him, and the man waxed great, and went forward and grew, until he became very great, for he had possession of flocks. And possession of herds and great store of servants. And the Philistines envied him, for all the wells which his father's servants had digged in the days of Abraham his father. The Philistines had stopped them and filled them with earth. And Abimelech said unto Isaac, Go from us, for thou art much mightier than we. And Isaac departed fence and pitched his tent in the valley of Gerar, and dwelt there. And Isaac digged again the wells of water which they had digged. And the days of Abraham's father. For the Philistines have stopped him after the death of Abraham, and he called their names. After the names by which his father had called them and Isaac's servants. Dig in the valley and found their wealth of springing water. So this is the portion. That the brother spoke about and he specifically mentioned. Or focused on Isaac renaming the wells? So Isaac had to dig the wells again that Abraham had done, because they were filled in with earth. The Philistines filled in the wells with earth. What names did Isaac give the wells? What names? Did he give those wells? He gave them the same name and his father had given them the same names. I think didn't have to use. Same names, he could have came up with something new. Came up with something new, maybe that's something we would have done. But

Isaac didn't. He didn't come up with new names. He used the same names. At that time. Ten years ago, I remember a lot of new ideas were coming in to the meeting, a lot of new things. I saw some of those things. I remember being in those things for a number of years at conferences. Like this? And the brother that got up. Didn't feel that those things were according to scripture and so he brought out this passage.

So there is a danger, there is a danger that new ideas can come in to the meeting, ideas from the world. This reminds me of the children of Israel I believe when they were in the wilderness. They grew tired of the manna and they started doing or creating. New things, I'm not sure if they added to the manna, but they did new things with the manna. They retired with the same old manner. So there is always a danger. There is a danger of going along with the world of. Of bringing in new ideas. But Isaac Isaac used the same name. The same names. We're told not to remove the old landmarks, and we shouldn't. Believe we're doing what we're doing because of tradition. You know, I'm, I'm a young person and there are young people here and maybe even older ones. Maybe sometimes we think we do what we do because of tradition, like the way we gather, maybe certain things that we do in the meeting, do we do them because of tradition? I hope not. I hope that's not what we think because they're not because of tradition. You know that what I went through and what my family and I went through there with that other group. Led me to ask questions about why we do things the way we do. What authority, Why? Why do we gather the way we do on Lord's Day? How come we don't gather like other Christians? You know, that's an important issue in the day in which we live now. Maybe not much of an issue during New Testament times when there wasn't different ways or other ways. But now in the day in which we live, Christians are scattered, are scattered, and they worship in different ways. But why do we worship the way we do? It's a good question to ask. We shouldn't rely upon our families. We shouldn't think that. OK, well, I was born into the meeting. Well, then this is just the right thing to do. Because my parents believe this, we'll all believe this too. And it's easy to fall into that. It's easy to fall into the situation where we don't want to want to be curious, don't really feel like asking. We just kind of go along with things. But that's not the way the Lord would have us because. We all know that Christianity is a very individual relationship, that we were born into this world alone. And I don't mean born lonely. That's not what I mean. I don't mean that God wasn't with us when we were born. What I mean is we were born alone as individuals into this world. And if we don't see the Lord come in our lifetime, we're also going to leave this world as individuals alone. So it's a very individual relationship. But Isaac was happy to rename the wells. Or give them the same names. Give them the same names that his father gave. Three years ago or so, Two or three years ago at the Burbank conference. I heard a brother get up at A at a meeting like this. It was Brother Heinz Heinz Brinkman. Got off it during an open meeting and spoke on this same passage. But he spoke about something different. He didn't speak about Isaac giving the wells the same names that his father gave. He spoke of Isaac having to re dig the wells. Isaac had to re dig the wells himself. So what does that mean for me? For what does that mean? For you. That Isaac had to own the truth for himself. That he had to dig and own the truth for himself. That's something that we're all going to have to do, if we haven't done it already. We're going to have to own the truth for ourselves. We can sit in meetings. And listen to it. But how about when we're at home? Are we curious? Do we read on our own? We don't have to go through difficult trials in order to find out for ourselves, in order to have curiosity. We should have that curiosity anyway. Curiosity for the truth, to own it for ourselves. And what does that mean? It means not to have it all up here, but to.

Have it in our hearts to hold it and value it in our hearts. And that is a big difference because once we have it in our hearts, then it begins to change our lives. Once we value it, but we have to re dig it ourselves. We can't rely on the brethren of old and say, well, they dug the wells and we don't have to dig them anymore, but we have to re dig them ourselves. We have to ask the same questions that they ask, the same questions that led them to read on their own. And to discover. The truth. And if we have that curiosity, God will show us. God will reveal us. The truth. Does God want us to have that curiosity as individuals? Of course he does. And he gives us the invitation. Well, one of them is in Isaiah chapter 55. Let's turn to Isaiah chapter 55. Isaiah 55 and verse one. Oh, everyone that hurts him, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money. Come eat, buy and eat. Yeah, come buy wine and milk without money. And without price, wherefore do you spend money for that which is not bread in your labor, for that which satisfy it not Harken diligently unto me, and EE that which is good, and let your soul delight itself. And fatness. So there's the invitation, everyone that thirsted come you to the waters, and he that has no money come and buy and eat. So we don't need the money of this world. To receive it. We don't need the money of this world. It's free. All we need to do is ask. To reach out and take it, but we have to wonder for ourselves. We can't just go along with the way things are because. Because they've been done for many years. I don't think God wants us to have that attitude where we should understand for ourselves why and re dig and learn the truth for ourselves. You know that in that portion that our brother just read there in Revelation 3, the Church of Laodicea, it was a letter to the Church of Laodicea. And towards the end of that the Lord says that he stands at the door and knocks. Well, what does that tell us? Standing at the door of our hearts and he's knocking. Well, it tells me that the door is closed. And that I'm not near the door. He's knocking, so why is the door closed in the first place? Why is the door closed and he's knocking? So the Lord is coming to us. He's knocking on the door of our hearts. And all we have to do is open that door. So Isaac had to re dig the wells just as we have to. Re dig them ourselves. I have a question. Does the truth have the power to keep us? The truth that we know doesn't have the power to keep us in our walk? It doesn't. The truth by itself has no power to keep us. Only God has the power to keep us, that we can have all the truth in the world and still we cannot. It will not, it will not keep us by itself. Only God can keep us. He's the one that keeps us from falling. And that's why we depend upon Him. That's why we depend upon Him in prayer. That's why we pray that God will keep us and preserve us in our walk, because it's not about the truth that we know. It's about God's grace in our lives. It's preserving grace. But we should be curious and re dig the wells just as Isaac. Redignant. Book of Hebrews, chapter 12 brethren. Quite a well known chapter. Just to go over some things that I think are so important for us.

I suppose this is a chapter that we've all gone over many times, that, you know, the word of God is living and operative and for as much as we go over it many times. If the Spirit of God leads us to go over it once again, there's profit there for us. Let's just read. I don't know if we'll get through the whole chapter, but there are things I would like to focus on in this chapter. The beginning at verse one, it says, wherefore seen, we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses. Let us lay aside every weight and the sin which does so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus. The author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. Four, Consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your mind, you have not yet resisted unto blood striving against sin. Here the apostle is speaking about the cloud of witnesses that we have in Chapter 11. But he says. Given those cloud of witnesses, they are a great encouragement. We go back to the Old Testament scriptures and read those stories of those Old Testament witnesses to the faith. What an encouragement they are, What a help they are. What lessons we learn from those scriptures. And he says in verse two, looking unto Jesus. And I understand that the thought there in looking is looking away unto Jesus. In other words, really focusing on the Lord Jesus Christ. And brethren, we do need that. We need to have our focus right. There are. Examples in Scripture we have when the

Lord Jesus took the three disciples up to the Mount of Transfiguration, you remember there appeared with him in glory Moses and Elias. Those two men were men that God mightily used in Israel in Old Testament times. Moses took the children of Israel from Egypt to the borders of the land of Canaan. What a man. What a tremendous man. Elijah was a prophet that God used in the mighty way to turn. The children of Israel back to the Lord God of Israel again. And these three disciples, Peter, James, and John, had never seen these two men before, and they stood in awe of these two men. But what they did not realize was that in looking at these two men, they had taken their eyes off the one that God meant for them to be occupied with. And that happens in our experience, brethren, we tend to look at brethren who perhaps the Lord has used in a very helpful way. And we become occupied with them. The Lord help us to not do that, brethren, to look away unto Jesus. You remember what happened. Peter gets his mouth in gear before he really thinks about it. It says he didn't know what he was saying, and he says Lord. It's good for us to be here. Let us make 3 tabernacles, one for thee. He put the Lord first. At least one for Moses and one for Elias. But what he didn't realize. That he made a bad mistake in putting the Lord Jesus on the same level. As those other two. And immediately a cloud covers them. Those two, they disappear. And a voice comes out of the cloud that was the Shekinah cloud, the presence of the Lord, and that voice said, This is my beloved Son, hear ye him. Oh, how important it is to have the focus on the Lord Jesus Christ. You know, we so tend to become occupied with brethren for good or for bad.

And the enemy doesn't care in what way he does it. Just so you get your eyes off of that one that God means you to be occupied with. That's the way He does it, brethren. I just say that because I do believe that sometimes we focus so on perhaps brethren that are useful that we are a stumbling block to those brethren themselves. Thank God for them, pray for them. But don't focus on them. Focus on God's beloved Son looking away unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. It's looked at as a Christian race here. It's a race. And it's a long distance race. It's a matter of endurance. That word patience in verse one could be endurance. It's continuing and I know sometimes when things get tough in our lives, the tendency is to say. It's just too hard. I'm not going to be able to keep up the pace. I'm going to lay down. You're not going to win that way. What we are encouraged to do is to think of the Lord Jesus. It says in verse three. Consider him that endures such contradiction of sinners against himself. Lest you be wearied and faint in your minds, consider Him. I love the way it says it in the old Spanish translation. I can translate it literally. It says in verse three, Reduce your thoughts to him who endured such contradiction of sinners against himself. Reduce your thoughts to him. You know, sometimes we have weight reduction programs. And they're fairly good I guess. But we need sometimes thought reduction programs. Our thoughts go helter skelter in One Direction in another direction. We need to gird up the loins of our minds. What does that mean to control your thinking? Bring your thoughts back to Him. He endured such contradiction of sinners against himself. Whether Bill was talking about the problems that arise amongst God's people, how sometimes we get offended by one thing and another and a brother doesn't do us right. You know why we think those thoughts is because we're self-centered. We're thinking about ourselves. He did me in. I can't let him off the hook. Until he apologizes properly. Reduce your thoughts to him who endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest you be wearied and faint in your minds. Oh, and I think of him how he suffered from the hands of his creature man, how when they were pounding those nails through his hands, indeed, he said, Father, forgive them, they know not what they do. He relegated that awful sin they were doing to a sin of ignorance. That's why there's mercy. If he hadn't done that, there wouldn't have been mercy, because in the Old Testament times, the sin of doing it knowingly was not forgiven. There could be, if it was a sin of ignorance. Mercy Extended. So the Lord now relegates that as a sin of ignorance. And there's mercy. Oh, how important these lessons are. How we need to reduce our thoughts to Him. I have to confess, brethren, and please don't get the idea that I'm pointing my finger at anybody out there because I find so much fleshliness in my own heart that I hesitate to point the finger in any other direction. I know that there's a lot to be judged right here, but we live in a culture that is self-centered.

Everything makes you do things for yourself. The advertising system is built that way. I like to go to Burger King. They have a saying. Have it your way. That's all right. If you don't like it with onions, that's fine. Don't get it with onions. But that type of thinking permeates our culture. And we need to realize that so often we are thinking with ourselves at the middle of our thoughts. And the exhortation of Scripture is, Reduce your thoughts to him who endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest you be wearied and faint in your mind. We haven't striven against sin unto blood. We have not given our lives for the principles we hold. Then we have nothing to claim against somebody else. Brother can't do it. The next section here in this chapter speaks of discipline. And verse five says, You have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children. My son, despise not thou the chiding of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of Him. For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth and scourge up. That's even a stronger term, Every son whom he receiveth. Everywhere I go in my visits around, I find real trouble and problems and trials and sickness and accidents. Why? Because we have a father that loves us. He loves us so much, he's not going to let us go on the way we do. Without intervening in our lives. What I feel is so important, brethren, whatever area trouble arises to afflict me. Is to accept it from his hand. He's allowed it. Brother Dave spoke of. David two days ago when he was escaping from Jerusalem. And how he accepted that from the hand of God. It's beautiful. You remember there was a man called Shimmy Eye who cursed him and throws stones at him. And Abishai, one of David's nephews, said, let me go take off his head. And David said, don't you do a thing God has said to shimmy. I cursed David, let him curse. I think it's so beautiful to see how he accepted that negative reaction from that man, from the Lord. Do we know how to do that? I sometimes think we look at each other and we say that brother did that to me. That sister, she didn't really consider me. Brethren, if we're looking at each other, we are short sighted. We need to look beyond that brother or that sister. We need to look up into the throne of God. There is One who loves us and orders every single circumstance in our lives for our own good and blessing. Oh, how important it is to accept it from the Lord. Remember one of the lessons the Lord taught? And really ingrained in my own soul. And I went back to work in Chicago. I worked at Bible Truth Publishers for a while. And then I was called into the service, the government and served two years in a hospital. And in the hospital, there was an accident right in front of my eyes. One of my fellow workers got killed, pinched between 2 trucks. And if that wasn't enough. They there was a course of lawsuits afterwards, the widow of the man was a young man, sued the trucking company and the trucking company turned around and sued myself and the hospital has jointly responsible for the death of that man.

And I still remember how my head was going around in circles. Couldn't figure out what was going on. But a little quote from one of Mr. Darby's books set me at peace. He says this one of his practical volumes. He says every single circumstance in the light of a Christian comes directly from the hand of God. Looking at second causes is the basis of practical infidelity. Was that mean? I'm looking at second causes, not recognizing that the Lord was saying something to me in that. It was practical infidelity that hit me like a sledgehammer. I still remember going to my bedside and kneeling down and said, OK, Lord, you've got something to say to me. I don't know what it is, but I want to understand. I'm here. I hope I'm in the listening mode right now. And the peace that the Lord gave me. Was tremendous. The trial lasted for four years. After that finally settled and the Lord completely delivered me, but He had something to say to me. It took a pretty hard blow to get me to listen. Why is it that we don't listen? Every single little circumstance is ordered by that man in the glory. He has something to say

to us. Let's listen to him. Don't be pointing the finger and blaming this brother or that brother or this set of circumstances. Don't do that. Look beyond to the God who's the God of circumstances and who controls every circumstance he's behind. Says here in verse 5 two things that we are not to do. Not to despise the changing of the Lord. Nor faint when thou art rebuked of him. Those are the two natural reactions of our hearts. And I think it is. So important to. Listen to this you're not going to get the blessing if you despise it. What's despising it? If you have an accident, Oh well, that happens to anybody. We've got insurance, they'll take care of it all and it'll all be settled. Careful not to despise the chasing of the Lord. If we don't listen to Him in that small accident, He might have to allow something a little larger so that we will listen. Despising we're not to do that nor faint fainting is saying to the Lord basically this is just too much. I can't handle this. I can't handle this anyway that's fainting anymore. Neither one or the other brings positive results. Don't do it. What it then should we do when there are trials in our lives and we all have them brethren, I know we do verse 11 notice. No chastening, for the present seemeth to be joyous. But grieve us. Nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the priest always for correction of something bad that we do. We find in Second Corinthians that Paul received a thorn in the flesh so that he would not be exalted. He had been in heaven, he had seen the Lord, and there was a tendency in Paul that the Lord saw. That he might become exalted. And so that that would not happen, he gave him a thorn in the flesh. Somebody has called it preventative discipline, not for some bad thing that Paul had done. So we don't have to think that it's always for something bad we've done. It may be, but it may be preventative too. Also in John 15 it tells us. That the father is the husbandman of the vineyard and he comes in and he prunes his vineyard. And that pruning process is not a very pleasant process, but it's a necessary process so that there will be fruit and more fruit.

So perhaps that's why the Lord disciplines us sometimes too. It's productive discipline. But here the important thing is, brethren, that we are exercised thereby if there is something that is unpleasant that is happening in your life, caused by either circumstances or people. Look up to the hand that is permitting it. Be exercised the Lord. Will then be able to show you, and you will find that it will yield peaceable fruit of righteousness. Verse 12 Says lift up, Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees. It's a picture of discouragement, and often this happens when we are under the discipline of the Lord. We need to encourage a brother that there is the evident passing through real trial in his life. Go to him and say, brother, don't get discouraged, it's the Lord. He means good for you. Lift up the hands which hang down the feeble knees, and it says, Make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way, but let it rather be healed. Oh, how important it is. You know young people, you have an influence on all those around you. You don't understand young people have tremendous influence on those around him. You can be an influence for good or you can be an influence in the wrong direction. If I would ask your companions what kind of an influence? Is that brother or that sister? What would they tell me? I can say that in my youth there were two or three that were a tremendously positive influence in the right direction. There were other influences around as well. And I could have gone other directions. Thank God for those that were helpful to me that were careful how they walked. So that I wouldn't be turned out of the way. Verse 14 says, Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord. Brethren, we are called to peace, not at the expense of holiness, but we are called to peace. Ephesians chapter 4 says keeping the unity of the Spirit in the uniting bond of peace. Verse 15. Looking diligently, lest any man fail of the grace of God, lest any root of bitterness springing up, trouble you, and thereby many be defiled. Well, I think this is such an important verse, brethren, looking diligently. Suspiciously, but diligently, lest any man fail. Or you could put lack the grace of God. God has shown Himself to be the God of all grace, and that's the characteristic of the dispensation in which we live. We often call it the dispensation of the grace of God and all the wonderful grace He has shown us. Brethren. That's the only standing we have before God. That's the only basis upon which there can be. Blessing. And now in our relationships, one with another, we are to look diligently. Lest any man lack or fail of the grace of God. Oh how we need to be exhorted about this, brethren. You know, I find in my own soul that the natural tendency is to revert to law. You do this, you get what you deserve.

That's the principle of life. And there is such a thing in Scripture as the government of God. And I think it is put there to govern us, to help us. But grace is one principle and government is another principle that runs through Scripture side by side. Like the two railway tracks of a train track. You look off in the distance and it seems like it touches out there, but it really doesn't. It runs side by side. When David sinned, his grievous sin against Bathsheba and Urijah. Then he was rebuked by the prophet Nathan. And when Nathan said you are the man, David said I have sinned. He recognized his sin. He didn't try to cover it over. And that's good. That David said and David or Nathan said, David was guilty of manslaughter and of adultery, 2 sins that he could have been stoned for, killed for. And Nathan said thou shalt not die. David had pronounced the judgment in the story that Nathan had told him that man should die. Nathan said thou shalt not die. That was the grace of God. But then he says, But because thou hast made the enemies of the Lord to blasphemy, the sword shall never depart from thy house. And David lost four of his sons. The government of God, and I think God allows government. You know, what I think is that government is allowed to control us. Brethren, He sees perhaps a weakness in me and He allows circumstances in my life to govern me. But let's never forget that before God we stand before Him on the ground of grace. Yes, there is government, but we stand before Him on the ground of grace. And now in our relationships with one another too, we are not to fail of the grace of God. And I thought it was very good application of those scriptures in Deuteronomy Brother Bill. Spoke of the year of the Lord's release. Oh, how much God has forgiven us. How much he's forgiven us. You know, Bill mentioned that parable at the end of Matthew 18 where there are the two debtors, the one debtor, I should say there was a debtor that owed 10,000 talents. I made some calculations some time back to try to figure out how much that 10,000 talents were. And a while back I was speaking about it and I figured it was about \$10 million. Somebody came up to me afterwards and said I think it gets closer to \$100 million. Well at any rate, it's a debt that that man had no concept of. He said have patience and I'll pay you all. Did he understand the debt he owed? He didn't have a clue as to how much he owed. And when we don't have a clue like that, it makes us perhaps difficult to forgive somebody else. And he went and grabbed ahold of somebody that owed him 100. Denarius, I think it is 100 pence, which is I figured about \$10. At least it's a small amount. Somebody can correct me if I'm off on that figure too, but. He would not forgive that because he did not understand how much he had been forgiven. Oh brethren, let's go back to Calvary. Let's look at what he paid, what Jesus paid for us, and it won't be hard to forgive somebody else. We were speaking to the men in the prison in Lawrence County the other day. One man on the front of the front row said.

I don't know what I'm going to do when I meet up with the guy that shot me, he shot me twice. What should I do? I said, well let's go back. First of all, I said supposing you sin 10 times a day, I have no idea how many times you sin a day, but supposing you sin 10 times a day, in a year that's 3650 sins, and in 10 years that's 36,000 sins. And in 30 years, I think he was about 30 years old, that's close to 100,000 sins. That you sinned against God and if you have accepted the Lord Jesus, he is frank and. Frankly forgiven you at all. Are you going to find it tough then to forgive somebody two bullets he put through you? Yeah, I said. That's a good way to think of that. I think that is a good way to think about it. So the Lord help us, brethren, not to fail of the grace of God. Oh, how we need to be gracious with our brethren. The Lord loves His people, and if there's something that displeases Him, it's those who speak against His people. Let's be careful not to do that. You know it

pleased the Lord when Moses pled for the people of God. You remember in the book of Exodus. The Lord said when they went after idols, let me alone, I'll consume them in a minute, and I'll make thee, speaking to Moses, a great nation. Moses said Lord, you can't do that. They're your people. You made a promise to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob that you were going to bring them into that land, and he pled God's own word. That's the kind of pleading that God will honor. May the Lord help us to do that. Somebody has offended you. Can you sincerely get down on your knees and plead for His blessing? Oh, that's the spirit we need to have. We have another example of Elijah. You remember how? He bled at the end of his life. He was a bit discouraged. He wasn't afraid to face the 400 prophets of Baal. But when Jezebel said I'm going to take his head off, he ran like a scared dog. You know, it's only in the sense that we stand in the presence of God that there will be moral courage to confront evil. And he lost that sense, and he runs and he says to the Lord, when the Lord came after him, he says, I only I have remained faithful, and all the rest have gone after bail. And he says it twice. And it has been noticed that it is the only sin of an Old Testament believer mentioned in the New Testament. It's that sin of Elijah pleading against the people of God. I say it again, brethren, God loves his people, for as willful and as naughty and as stiff necked as they might be, He loves them. Plead for the people of God, never plead against him. What did the Lord say to Elijah? In effect? He said. Elijah, I can't have you continuing to plead against my people. Gore anoint Elisha to be prophet in your room. In other words, he says I'm going to have to replace you, Elijah, if you do that. And he did replace him. He took Elisha, Elijah home. And he replaced him with Elijah. The Lord help us, brethren, in our relationships one with another. That we may not fail. The grace of God. Let's do what it says a couple chapters earlier. Provoke one another to love and to good works, it says. Let us consider one another. In other words, we're all different. Think about that brother that you seem to be at odds with. Do something to provoke him to love and to good works. What provokes love?

But love? It really does great things. Some little gift, some little unobtrusive act of kindness goes a long way. If they're not going to do that. That kind of soil gives place an unforgiving attitude, gives place to roots of bitterness. They have been terribly devastating to the people of God and the testimony to the precious name of the Lord Jesus, brethren. I remember Mr. Hayhoe. Saying this is Mr. Harihar saying again. Again, I guess I remember him in person, but I remember. What he said more on tapes, but I remember him saying that again and again. He said don't ever allow a hard or bitter thought against any brother or sister in the Lord Jesus. I thought that was so good. You know, sometimes I've had those thoughts and I've had to judge them in the Lord's presence and let loose of them. It's the year of the Lord's release. Let loose of them. Don't hold on to them. If you do. It's going to produce somewhere along the line of roots of bitterness and many will be defiled. Don't let it happen. And just before we close, brethren, I'd just like to show the imagery that the apostle Paul uses in the end of this chapter. To me, it's beautiful. He contrasts 2 mountains. First mountain is Sinai, the 2nd is Zion. Verse 18 he says, Ye are not coming to the mount that might be touched, that burned with fire, and into blackness and darkness and Tempest, and the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words, which voice they that heard entreated, that the words should not be spoken to them anymore. Verse 21 So terrible was the sight that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake. That's not where we have been brought. Dear brethren, where have you and I been brought? Verse 22 Ye are come unto Mount Zion. And unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem. And to an innumerable company of angels to the General Assembly. And Church of the first born, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all. And to the spirits of justice, men made perfect. And to Jesus, the mediator of the New covenant. And to the blood of sprinkling that speaketh better things than that of Abel. This is where we have been brought. Oh, to enjoy it in a fuller measure, like Brother Bill was bringing out. To enjoy the richness of where we've been brought. Brethren, if we do that, it will not allow for these bitterness, these feelings between brethren that bring such devastating results. This is where we've been brought to Mount Zion. The heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the General Assembly and the Church of the First Born, which are written in heaven. Oh, the glory that is before us. Brethren, I don't think we get an idea. In any measure of the glory, that's just ahead for the child of God. I even think of when the Lord Jesus comes back at the end of the Tribulation period in power and glory, it will be probably the greatest display of power and glory in the whole history of the world through all time. When God introduces His Son into the world and you and I are going to be witnesses, eyewitnesses, we are going to see it happened. You and I are called to greater things than to be getting snared with things down here. This is where we are, brethren. Now just as we close, let me read the last two verses. Wherefore we receiving a Kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear, for our God is a consuming fire.

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