

Psalms 139:15 (Bruce Conrad) 204017

Aberdeen Conference: 2016, Spiritual Growth (139:15)

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Years ago in the woods of central Maine. And lo and behold. My neighbors. Were gathered to the Lord's name there and Palmyra ME. And so the Lord didn't let me wander. Too long or too far? And happy to take my place there at the Lord's table there. Some years ago. The second thing I want to say is that I. Appreciate Brother Paul's comments last night at the Him sing. I have a confession that I felt a little sleep deprived having. Due to Jonathan Leben's. Way with me. And usually an early to bed guy, so I did check my phone to see what time it was when Paul got up to speak and. And I just. Was so. Struck by how he could be so edifying in so few minutes. I think Paul only spoke for seven or 8 minutes and read 3 verses and it was. I don't know if he's in here or not, but. Very, very, very edifying and thank you for that. And the bar has been set rather high. With 60 minutes before us. So with that, let's start with a hymn hymn #2 in the appendix. Him that I'm not sung in a long time. It was a favorite of my college roommate. Brian Doak must have really spoken to his heart back in those days. If someone could start it please to attune that, everyone would know out here. #2 in the back. I know. With the glory. Hurry. Hurry. This thy nature. Grow you still sleeping? There's no disconnect everyone time. It's my. When I speak journal. Of earth. OK, my soul. And Jesus.

All by yeast. Still with me? If I wonder. Change. Back to. Petrol free. All my gratitude. Favour. Made to my soul. Shall we pray? Lord Jesus, we thank thee that we can look up and see thee there by faith. To the open heavens, Thou art seated there upon thy father's right hand. Rejoice that thou hast gone up there as the victorious man. Give thee thanks for coming down, taking up our cause, and discharging all that stood against us and setting us free. Assigning us an eternal portion with thyself. We thank Thee, Lord Jesus, that we can still appreciate and know that in this late hour, as we wait for thy soon return, Thou art still the head of the Church, which is thy body, and art still ministering nourishment to us as members of thy body. We ask this afternoon for a portion from thee that would be for the edification of thy people. And we pray that that would guide us through the multitude of thoughts to that which would be. According to thy mind to have before our hearts and minds this afternoon. We ask these things, Lord Jesus and I, worthy and precious name, Amen. Well, I have it in mind this afternoon. To take up something that I'm not sure we take up in this way very often, which really is our individual. Portion in Christ. We are very privileged to have the legacy of truth that we've been exposed to. And much of it concerning how we are from John in God's family and share that life in nature with God's Son. And through the Apostle Paul, of course, we learn that we are members one of another, members of one body all. Partakers of one loaf joined together by the Holy Spirit. But I thought this afternoon maybe just to trace a few things that have to do with us as individuals. And so I'm going to try to discipline my own mind for the next 45 minutes or so. To convince myself I'm just speaking to individuals. Couple hundred of them, but individuals. And so I'd like to start by reading a couple verses, the first in Psalm 139. Psalm 139 and verse. 15. My substance was not hid from thee when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect, and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them. How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God, how great is the sum of them? And then over in Galatians chapter one. For a verse. Verse 15 of Galatians chapter one when it pleased God who separated me from my mother's womb and called me by his grace to reveal his son in me. Well, these verses came to mind because we realize not long after we are saved or maybe even before.

That the God who created you and me. Knew us before, were our little. Fingers and toes and. And body was formed in our mother's womb. He created us. And having brought us into this world, he doesn't hand us off to a separate God who's going to be charged with our care, our salvation. But it's the God who formed us in our mother's womb, as Paul had the experience, no doubt the God who separated him from his mother's womb and then called him by his grace. And one of the most wonderful truths for a a young believer or a new believer to realize. As though you and I may have thought that we were struggling and scrambling and and so on to determine what to do about our sense of sin and what to do about finding the truth and when we finally. Lose that wrestling match. And are brought to Christ. And then we learn such things like we read in the book of Ephesians, that we were chosen in Christ. Before the foundation of the world. The brothers where I was first saved, as I was telling you we were, if you if you head from Montreal, due E to go out to the Maritimes where there was so much gospel activity and tent work and so on. A lot of the older brothers in Montreal used to head right across in the the tip of Maine sticks right up into Canada for some reason and they just head right east. And boom, they cut across on Route 2 and my house was about a mile off that road in the meeting room just a mile to the other side of it. And so we got all this. Wonderful teaching from these older brothers, us young ones, there on their way back and forth. And I can remember the first time a brother stood up and and he said, it's just as if on the outside of the house it says whosoever will may come. And then you go inside the house, and you look back over the door, and you see chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, and I can remember sitting there. Early in my Christian life. And just asking that question, why me? Job asked that question in a different context. I think it's the 7th chapter of Job. Job was an upright man. A righteous man. And yet God wanted to perfect that which concerned him. He wanted him to grow, and he wanted to put him through some experiences that would result in enlarging his spiritual understanding and capacity. But in the early part of Job in chapter seven, he says, why me? Why do you bother me like this? I try to escape you just by going to sleep, and you trouble me with dreams. Let me alone that I may swallow down my spit. Why me? Well, the other side of that question, why me? Is answered by every believer who understands that if you're sitting here today in your right mind and you're a child of God. You should be asking that same question from the exact opposite point of view. Why me? And the difference, or the distance, if I could put it that way, between what you and I deserved as sinners. Born like it says, I think, in the book of Job. We're born under trouble, like the sparks fly upward, everyone of us. Born in sin and proceeded to sin, we earned ourselves the lost eternity. And yet, here we are. Perhaps a few moments away from eternity with Christ in the Father's house. And the difference between what you and I deserve. And what we have and will have that huge gap. Is filled in our hearts with worship. It's the only thing that can It's the only way you can put your hands on both of those things at the same time. That distance, that delta, as we call it, is worship. We bow our head. We say why me? And if you're still sitting here in your sins and it troubles you to have.

Someone read from the Bible and say. That it's God's sovereignty which takes a man or a woman or a boy or a girl and plucks them from the Broad Rd. that leads to destruction and brings them to eternal safety. I don't know what to say to you. That's really the way it is. John Kaiser told me once he was sitting in a Gospel meeting in Montreal. Brother next to him elbowed him and he says is that true? No man can come unto the Son, but the Father Draw him. How do I know He draw me. And John gave him, I think, a very wise answer, he said. You just come and you'll know he drew you. Whoever you are in this room this afternoon, you're responsible. You are accountable. You're responsible to God, who made you. And he commands all men, including you, to repent and to bow the knee to the Lord Jesus Christ. That's what you are responsible to do. And so here we are, we're. We've been saved. We are fit for heaven. We are fit for the Lord's table through the precious Blood of Christ. Our title to be there. And we're fit for heaven through that same precious blood. Now what? Why doesn't he just take us one by one when we get saved and take us home? Why does he leave us here? Clearly, he's charged himself. It's just staggering to think of He's charged himself with our individual care and growth. He wants us to grow. He wants to enlarge our hearts and capacity to be capable of thinking the thoughts that he thinks. Men often call it communion or fellowship. In the word of God. But God has a strong desire to fit you and me, to think his thoughts. To do that, we need to grow. And so a Christian's life is has much to do with spiritual growth, whether we're young or whether we're old. The verse in. First Timothy chapter 2 I'll read well known verse. Chapter three of First Timothy 2 God Our Savior. Who will have all men to be saved? And to come unto the knowledge of the truth. Young people, I do sympathize. With the challenge at the entrance of. Adult life when decisions are no longer automatic and you have to make them. To discern, to be able to discern what is the Lord's will for me? What should I do? Where should I live? What should I do? How do I make a living? Etc. Etc. And of course, it is not lost on most of us. That the most important decisions of life are made when you are least equipped, by virtue of experience, to make them. He could have made it some other way. That's the way God chose to make it. You make these key decisions in your life. When, by virtue of experience, you're least equipped to make them? And why is that? Because the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. And because the young person who at those crossroads says I have no idea which way to go here, I have no idea whether to do this or to do that. But he or she looks to the Lord. The Lord delights. He walks to and fro throughout the whole earth. Just looking so that he can show himself strong on behalf of those that trust him and how he delights to give wisdom through his word. And this is an early part of Christian growth and if you were saved later on in life you had to relearn much of how to live and how to think. It's almost a left-handed way that instead of grappling, grabbing onto things with your own hands and thinking your own thoughts and using your own wisdom. You have to stop and say whoops, that's not my way. I have a new way, a new object, a new capacity, and a new approach by virtue of being brought into the family of God.

While you're not sure whether you're going to go to school or not. While you're not sure about whether you're going to do this for a living or that for a living, while you're not sure if you should stay where you were raised in that town or move to another. Can you just find it comforting and sink your teeth into God's desire for you? That regardless of all those other issues, he wants you not only to be saved, but to come to a knowledge of the truth? It wasn't but a week or two after I was saved, and I know a lot of brothers say if you'll permit a personal reference, I can't help but using personal references for the rest of whoever long we've got. So I want one apology to cover the next 40 minutes or whatever we got. But. Lost my train of thought and saying that. They'll come back. What's that? Yeah. Oh, yes. Thank you. Infirmities. Weakened of being saved, I started to pray. Lord, what would you have me to do? And as you would expect, the answer didn't come in a in a day or a week or after two prayers or three. But it was a three-year long exercise really to use a often misused word. And just praying. But I didn't sit alone in my house for three years. You know, I was going about back and forth to the meeting and visiting with the brethren and working in what my hand found to do. I did. And supported myself and and on we went. And that's which all of us need to do and it's that process of growth. Gradually the Lord in my case unfolded what he had for me to do specifically about my in that case it was my livelihood. So God's desire. Is to enlarge our capacity. The well known verse in First Corinthians 6 says be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers, but the verse before it isn't quoted as often. And I think it says to be also enlarged. He wants us to have a large heart. He wants capacity. We had the experience in our family of having one son that was about 22 or 23 and another one that's two or three twenty year apart. And. You know everyone loves the little bouncing boy. And every the older ones would come home and they were delight in this little boy and as Christy and I did too. But the quiet times with an older one that comes home as they get into their 20s and 30s and I'm sure many in the room have children well, well into adulthood who are have children themselves. And you enjoy in a unique and special way the kind of fellowship and common thoughts and sharing back and forth that you have with those that have had that increased capacity. And so you may not be sure about this or that, but you can be sure that God is desirous for you and I to grow. I want to speak now for a few minutes. I can't do it comprehensively. But just a few aspects that have been on my heart about Christian growth. And the first one is in 2nd Corinthians 3 and verse 18. Did I say First Corinthians? I meant Second Corinthians. Sorry. But we all with open or unveiled face beholding. As in a glass, the glory of the Lord are changed into the same image from glory to glory. Even as by the Spirit of the Lord. To paraphrase, I think we could say occupation with Christ makes us more like him.

We don't get up in the morning as Jim was saying. His advice to get up and and open the scriptures and set the Lord before yourself. We don't necessarily pick one of those many virtues that the Lord displayed and say I'm going to work on meekness today or I'm going to work on kindness today. Put the Lord before us. When the I listen to the young people about exercise, I'm going to the gym. I'm going to do legs today, You know, I hear the young fellows at work. Yeah, I'm going to the gym. I'm going to do legs, you know. And then I guess they do arms the next day. I don't know how they do it but arms and then. They kind of rotate around through. It's not like that we know. In spiritual things, there's a man that God has put before us, who happens to be the one who died for us on Calvary Cross, who is also the one who lives for us on high, who is also the one who walked down here to display in his own person everything that God is. Nothing left out. In him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. It's just staggering. Just staggering that God would be pleased to display all that he is in the man Christ Jesus. And as we behold him, and as we trace his pathway here, and the circumstances he encountered and the response. In every little detail that we that we observe. And his ways with us now as head of the Church, which is his body in the future, that he is assured us is before us. That occupation covers all these other bases. And we end up without even probably being aware of it. To be more like him. Where we live in Texas now, there's this little creature. I should figure out what their what his name, what their name is because I talk about him every once in a while, but he has a little creature and he jumps on something green and he turns green. And he jumps on something another color and he kind of goes that color. Well, we want to be jumping on. Occupation with Christ and lo and behold, we're going to be more like him. For some reason, when I was a young believer, the brothers used to pick on me. And we'd be in a in a conference and I I know these things get taped and spread around so I got to be more careful going forward and naming names, even if it's way away. But this one brother he. Be in a big conference need. Let's see Brother Bruce. And he pointed me. How did you receive Christ Jesus the Lord? And as you would be if I did it to you. Hardly even breathe. And by faith. And then he would quote the verse in Colossians as ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him. Tears coming down his cheeks. The brother taught me a lot about being occupied with Christ and not much else. And

another piece of advice he gave me. I'm going to pass it on to you guys. Some 40 years ago, 35 or something, said Bruce. Never know more about anything in life than you know about this book. Whatever it is you do. Finance. Textiles. Farming. Engineering. Computers. Never know more about anything in your life. Then you know about this book. I thought that was good advice. I had the opportunity. To go back and thank him for that advice. Visiting my elderly mother and back in Pennsylvania and I looked this brother up. You know, assisted living place. We finally managed to find each other. And I had a series of things I wanted to thank him for. And I was. He wouldn't hardly let me talk. But I did manage to get that in how much I appreciate it.

And I don't know. Who was? More touched by him or me, I think I was, but good advice, good advice. There's a lot you can wrap your head around. And the world loves upright young men and women. To do work like Samson do work there, he was going round and round doing work. It's pretty sobering. We don't want to feel like we're in that kind of a situation. So brother said on the break. He says we want to work to live, not live to work. Never know anything more about anything than you do about this book. Occupation with Christ. Now I'd like to turn to Romans chapter 6. Romans chapter 6. Just pluck a verse. Like verse 6. Knowing this, here's something to learn. Knowing this, that our old man is, or really it should be, has been. Crucified with him that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin. Verse 11 Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Up at Jonathan's brother said. You know, when I was first came amongst the gathered Saints, a brother stood up at the podium and said, you're never going to hear what I'm teaching you right now, any other place. And he was new, I don't think had been at the Lords table yet. And he he said, you know, I've heard that from my mom most of my life. So we don't want to make big bold proclamations, but I think it is safe to say. That amongst the gathered Saints there is an understanding through the spiritual legacy we've been, we've been given. To be able to understand. The condition that we're in now as believers, as those that have not only had their sins forgiven, but as those who have been brought into a new position and condition before Christ. Back in my early days, brother, that was kind of like my father in the Lord, and he decided that if he since he had to spend all afternoon in his dump truck, I might as well. Too. And so he swung by and picked me up. And I can tell you exactly where we were on the highway. And it wasn't air conditioned. It was old and it was bumpy and the windows were open and he leaned over and he said. Brother. Is your old nature forgiven? And of course, I knew it was some kind of trick question. And so we just bounced around for a while and a light went on in my head. He says no, it's not forgiven, he said. It's crucified. And, you know, years later, as I began. With Steven and others to to be under some teaching from some really capable brothers on these subjects. You know, I hail back to what Brother Royce taught me in the dump truck that day. I'm forgiven. But that nature that could do nothing but sin is not forgiven, it's condemned. It's dead. And my, my, my virtue, my, my intention is to reckon it that way, day by day. The Scripture, I think, speaks in the New Testament three times of the old man. And in every case, you can look them up in Romans and Colossians and Ephesians, I think are the three places always past tense. What you were as a child of Adam. You aren't anymore. It's dead. Buried. You're a new creature in Christ. And this is meant. This is taught to us for a practical reason. So that we could learn how to walk through this world in a way that would honor God.

And you say, well, I feel like in the enrollment 7 all the time where you know that which I would, that I don't do, and the things I don't want to do I end up doing, you say I feel like I'm in Romans 7. My brother up at Jonathan's camp when we were just kind of milling around visiting, he said. You know, if he says maybe if we learn the truth. Soundly from Romans 6. We wouldn't even need to go into Romans 7. Most of us have that experience, perhaps before we have peace with God and can say we're saved, or perhaps after. But this also as to our growth, it is an important thing to lay hold of that you are a new creature in Christ. And that you have new resources and a new power that you never had before. You don't have to sin. We do, but we don't have to. And I've told the story before. I'm getting to that age where I know I'm repeating myself, but I attribute this to Norman Berry and. Norman Berry When? When I was a young. You know young man in the woods of Maine and he would come in this beautiful suit and. Very dignified man. A brother from Montreal. One time. And he looked and he stopped in front of Maine. And you know, I always say, uh, oh, what did I do? And he looked at me and he stared me in the eye and he says, why do I sin? And I mean that's a difficult thing for a 24 year old to say to a 70 year old. Who's so well taught and I didn't want to acknowledge that I knew that he sinned. Even I I. I'm just my mind is going 1000 miles on it. I know what to say. I'm just standing there. And he looked at me and he said because I want to. Then he walked away. And I learned a lesson from that. And the lesson I learned is the lesson of Romans 6 and I suppose also Romans 8. We now have the liberty to be free from the power of sin, to be able to walk. In Spiritual Christian Liberty. And if I Sin now, it's because, as Brother Barry put it, I choose to. Well, these are nuts and bolts, parts of the Christian life that are not well understood in many places. And it's good young people to get an outline of these sound and practical tools for your toolbox. So that you can make good spiritual progress and have good success, and that you can grow. A third thing that I want to take up about growth is also something I'm indebted to my older brothers back then. For first learning about and that is self judgment. I had a pamphlet and I'm not sure if it was written by Gordon or his father, but I think I still have it. It's a little square pamphlet called Self Judgment. And if you have it and you look on the cover of it and there's like a little quote out of the pamphlet, which I really enjoy, and it goes something like this. Self judgment is the inescapable condition of a walk in communion with God. I think that's what it says. And the brothers back then used to press upon us and remind us they would say things like keep. A short short accounts with God. And what do I mean by self judgment? Here I went and just said you're the old, the old Bruce Conrad is dead and buried. I have a new life and now I'm talking about going back and. And dredging this up? No, not at all. But as we go through our day, let alone our week, and go through our day, we want to take advantage of the presence of God. Who knows? Our inward thoughts. Who knows everything about us Are unique and special challenges and all the rest. And he's intimately. Involved and knowledgeable about everything that concerns me, just like the verse in Psalm 139. And Jim's exhortation and the others of us about reading the word of God is a good one.

But if you've got 20 minutes, don't spend the whole 20 minutes. My suggestion reading. Spend 10 reading. And then spend the other ten listening. To what the Lord would say to you, or speak to you. I know for young people you hit the pillow and you're and boom, you're out like a light. And as you get older you're going to find maybe a different experience if the Lord tarries. In the Psalmist in Psalm 16. He said. My reigns instruct me in the night seasons. Everyone's so busy and plugged in, as Bill was saying up at camp with the with the ear buds and everything else. That you wonder if you're even having a night season. A night season is a quiet time. When instead of even praying. You're just opening up to the Lord and listening. And you know what will happen. He'll bring things before you. Things before you that are encouraging. Things before you that warm your heart and remind you whose you are and whom you serve. But also bring things before you that he wants you to judge by, that I think in English the best way to mentally disown something, I think perhaps is a as a definition of judging something. To acknowledge. A failure to acknowledge. A tendency. And let the Lord come in and speak to you and refresh you. And recalibrate you, if I could put it that way in modern language. By the work of the Holy Spirit in your heart, this is quiet time with the Lord. And you wonder sometimes, well, how can a brother act like that? Or how can this sister act like that? Or how could this have gone on for all these

years and years? And we have to ask ourselves, and maybe this is more of us, older ones, do we ever get alone in the presence of the Lord? And say like little little Samuel, Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth you try it, and you just lay down. And justice unwinding, so to speak, mentally, spiritually, and the Lord will speak to you. He's. So he's so taken with us. He's in such love with us. He's so concerned and committed to our spiritual life and our growth. Well, let's turn now to Galatians Chapter 6. Now we're up and about. We can't lay around all the time. Though those quiet times. Are the source probably of our strength and power, but in Galatians 6. In verse 4. Let every man prove his own work. And then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another. For every man shall bear his own burden. If you hold your finger there and read a passage in First Corinthians chapter 12. Chapter 12 of First Corinthians and verse. Verse 4 Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit, and there are differences of administrations or ministries, but the same Lord, and there are diversities of operations. But it is the same God which worketh All in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit with all of for the common profit. And so now we're up and about. And the Lord gives us opportunities to serve. Does he need us? Someone was saying, you know, I just want to kick myself when I had an opportunity and I passed it by and I didn't give him a tractor. Speak to their soul. No one is going to end up in a lost eternity because of you or me. I don't think it's a privilege that he gives us to serve. It's for our benefit and blessing.

And so, young people, just as with maybe your line of work, it's good to be exercised about how the Lord is going to use you and how you're going to function in the body of Christ as one of its members. And so when you bring this up and young people say, well, how do I figure out what my gift is? And again. It's it's not being occupied with yourself or taking some sort of personal inventory. We do know that the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every person, every man, for the common profit. And we do know that we are responsible to use what's given to us by virtue of receiving a gift. You become responsible to the Lord who gave you that gift. And how does it begin to take shape? How does it begin to be put in motion? I think it's through a burden. I'd be happy to hear the thoughts of others, but I think it's through a burden. I think the Lord puts a burden on the heart, and you find yourself kind of intrigued with a certain need or a certain person or people or a place or just a certain function or activity that takes place in the Church of God, and you gravitate to it. It's very exercising when you read about the parables. In the parables where different ones are given different amounts. And we read that to whom much is given of the same as much required. And the limiting factor was not how much was given, but the attitude that the person had toward the giver. It's very interesting. The one who had who thought that the Master was an austere man. He just hit it in the ground. Master came back, be it unto thee, just like you thought. You think I'm austere. I'm austere to you. The sobering. But we need to be exercised and get moving. In the line of things that the Lord fills our hands with individually. You can't ask another brother. Or sister, what do you think I should be doing? It doesn't work. I know because I've tried it. Suppose we can make references to dear brother Gordon. Hale is with the Lord. Be in the kitchen with him in Pearl. Asking him questions, very specific questions, and Gordon would always have that little chuckle. Before he'd answer. He'd smile and. Invariably. Always. He never gave you an opinion. He gave you a verse? So impressive when I think back upon it. He gave you a verse sitting with young people around the campfire. Questions asked. Turn to a scripture. Bill and Jonathan do the same at the camp. So I asked Gordon about a certain thing and and he smiled and he turned me to Acts chapter 13. Which I will turn to now. And in Acts chapter 13. Just this little snippet out of this verse 36. For David after he had served his own generation by the will of God. Fell on sleep. Brother Gordon, who was many decades my senior. He said, well, in my day, this was the exercise that we had based on this scripture, But he says you're living in a different day. And the word of God is such that it will guide you in your day, but you have to look to the Lord. For how he will guide you in applying the same principles that I applied in my life. You have to apply those same principles and scriptures in your life. And that was a wonderful answer. Wonderful answer. And for those of us who are older, let's remember this in regard to the younger. When we brothers who are taking part in the reading meetings and in the ministry, in the local assembly.

It is not our place to be giving people answers. And so I look back on it over my 40 years or so. We've given too many answers. And we do the Saints of God a disservice when we do that. I learned a lesson in engineering school. Spiritual lesson. I learned a lot of them, but. The one that comes to mind is Umm. We had a an exam in structural analysis. In its open book you have the same tools. I never became a practicing engineer, so I but for the real engineers. You know, they have all these books and manuals that guide them to make decisions and so we were given a series of parameters or wind loads or snow loads or something like that. And for the whole hour or maybe it was 2 hour exam, you had just one problem open book and you had to work your way through all of these gates and wickets and and make all these decisions and come up with the right answer. And so we went through the whole exam and, you know, got to know the other guys in the in the classes you went through and walking in the hallway and what you get for what was the final size of most of those beams. And I think it was, AW, 24 or something. Wow, that's not what I got. And I was starting to sweat that I had really blown this exam. Well, sure enough when I got the exam back, I had gotten the exactly wrong beam because I had made an arithmetic. Arithmetic mistake way way early on. But my thinking process was right. And I and I went through the right steps and the right processes and came with the right processes to the wrong answer. And I got like a 94 in the exam. Because you said in practice you know you'll be, you'll be catching those little arithmetic errors. You won't be doing that, but you you follow the process, right? And this is what our responsibility is to teach. And this is what your responsibility is to learn, is the principles of the word of God. And the application of them needs to be done in your heart and in your life by faith. As the brother said to me years and years ago. As you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, which was by faith. So walk ye in him. We would like to give you answers, believe me. You like to, we tend to, but we do you a disservice. Some of the most important decisions I had before me in my life regarding Christian service and regarding how the Lord would have me live my life. I got a ton of really wrong answers. Because they weren't didn't know me from my mother's womb, they didn't know how. I was. Bent necessarily how I was raised what the context of my life was. And but I got a lot of answers. Mommy, love these brothers. But it wasn't good advice. You know, we read morally. We read morally. It's been said that the moral ways of God don't change with the dispensations. It's true. And we read in the Old Testament, which for us are oftentimes pictures, and so there are proprieties of life with respect to intimacy. With respect to touching another person or being intimate in that manner, whether it's a father and a child or husband and wife, there are these different orderly and appropriate. Guidance for life. And they're not to be violated. And I would just submit to you all that it's the same thing spiritually. You have to really examine yourself whether you have the right, in specific decisions of people's lives, to touch them in that way. God wants us. He has guidance. We shake hands. Greet one another with a holy kiss. And we interact with mutual respect. And we need to respect the presence of the Holy Spirit, even in a young person, maybe I could say especially in a young person.

To take in the principles of the Word of God. And to apply them in faith. And come out the other end with an answer. And so I think this helps explain sometimes why in the book of Proverbs it'll say things like answer not a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own conceits. Or no, lest I'll be like him. And then in another verse it says, Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own conceits. Well, which one do I do? Wisdom is profitable to direct. And so, just a word of caution. But let's finish up. Let's finish up by turning to 1St Corinthians 15. And justice for a little piece of a verse there. Verse 41 There was one glory of the sun and another glory of the moon and

another glory of the stars. For one star differeth from another star. In glory. A God that formed you in your mother's womb who knew you before you were formed in your mother's womb. Who is? Followed you all your life through and will follow you. Has an end in view for you. Individual destiny for you. We were looking the other night at the stars. What amazing thing how many there are, and you know with them all by name. And so it is with you and me. He knows us all by name. When he called us out, he called us by name. When the Lord Jesus said my sheep hear my voice, he didn't just turn and say, hey sheep. I think he calls us one by one we come in one by one. He knows our name is the hairs of our head. Are numbered by him. Think of that. He knows us, of course, far better than we know ourselves. And in that eternal day, he's going to rejoice over his own, each one a separate display of His grace, each one glorified. All of us known intimately to him. And then finally in Revelation chapter. Three I think it is. Revelation Chapter 2. In verse 17 he that hath an ear. But I'm here with the Spirit, saith them to the churches. To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone. And in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth, saving he that receiveth it. This passage has always intrigued me. I think the Lord is going to give me a new name. I don't know what it is yet. It's going to give you a new name. And when you first hear it and he says it, it's just going to click, I think. Think it's going to express the intimate knowledge? Of your whole life, Your whole journey. All those hidden sorrows and disappointments because they do come and they accrue. And we go on. And at the end of it all, he's going to give us that new name which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it. I don't know. There's many things. That are put before us in the word of God as promises and our portion with eternal blessing for some reason. This one really is one of the ones I look forward to the most. It expresses you know you name a child because it's your child. And I belong to him. He bought me. He brought me like Jacob, all my journey through knowing all the ups and downs and the failures. You're going to give me a new name that's going to express all of that? That would be a wonderful thing. We're not just going to be a group, we're going to be individuals.

We are a group. We are members, one of another, but we're individuals. So take stock of yourself and of your personal blessings, your personal responsibilities. Take it seriously and look to the Lord and appreciate the fact. That he has a unique and special personal relationship with you. And at the end of the day. He's going to communicate to you all of that. It's going to be wonderful. In John's Gospel, the Lord Jesus says it's so interesting in the world. You shall have, tribulation tells us right up front. Tells us right up front. In the world you shall have tribulation. You're going to have tribulation. But be of good cheer. I have overcome the world. What a thing. Psalmist could say, Put down my tears in thy bottle. Are they not written in thy book? Even our sorrows captured by him, understood by him, the human heart has been said, has two very strong and deep, needs to be loved and to be understood. If people love you and they don't understand you. It's not quite as satisfying as it could be. To be understood without being loved, that's not that great either. We have a desire, all of us to be loved and to be understood. And he does both. And in that day, he's going to show how fully he's known our walking through this great wilderness. And how wise and profound is love? I think I've used all of our time. So let's just pray.

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