

IT IS TIME THAT YOU MAKE A DECISION

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Praise the Lord. If you have your Bibles, you might want to open them up this morning to John, chapter three. I think one of the most frustrating things about preaching the Word of God is the lack of visible evidence on many occasions. To me personally one of the most frustrating things about preaching is the lack of seeing something demonstrable in the lives of the individuals who are listening to the Word.

I have been having an experience in the last five years that kind of relates to it a little bit. We are what you call sustainable growers as far as the producing of crops that we grow. What that means is that we're not organic, but we try to stay away from the major commercial chemicals. We don't really do any in the fields to speak of. I mean, we don't do any herbicides, and things of that nature in the planting and production of the vegetables. When we can, economically and reasonably, we try to use organic products. When we were first starting, of course, we didn't have a lot of knowledge and we didn't have a lot of places to go to get that knowledge. In the state of Illinois, there just wasn't a lot of information about farming without chemicals. It was very expensive and we were very limited in our ability to buy certain products that we needed in order to do certain things.

We had planted a fall crop of probably a thousand to fifteen hundred cabbages, broccoli, and all those things that like cool weather. I had determined that no matter how bad it got, I wasn't going to use any kind of commercial insecticide on it. I made a commitment to not use any commercial products in controlling the insects on this particular crop, for whatever reason. Maybe I was being prompted of the Lord because He wanted to demonstrate something to me. Let me say at this point that you don't just go out and plant. There is a lot of work in prepping and getting ready to plant. You have to start everything in the greenhouse, pre-planting before it goes out into the field and you have hours of labor, intensive labor. You have the filling of the trays with the dirt, and putting the little-bitty seeds in there. It's just a lot of work. It's a lot of work. When that's done, you have to take care of them. You have to go in and water them, you have to make sure they don't get too hot. Right now, we are planting our fall crop that will go out in the field in the middle to last part of August. Then, on top of all that, because we don't use herbicides, a lot of the plants that we plant are planted on what is called "plastic culture." We use a plastic culture farming method. This means that you go in and plow up your field, you till it and get the tilt of the ground right, and then you come in with this little machine that's got this roll of plastic on it and you lay down this strip of plastic. Then you go and get your transplanter and hook it up to your tractor. Then you go in and get all the plants that you want to plant and you put them on the transplanter, and you fill the tank on the transplanter with water. Then you have to get somebody to ride on the back of the transplanter and go out to plant these little plants. It's a lot of work, and

that's even before the plants are in the ground. It's a lot of work. I remember one year we did all of that, and after we got it out there, we had this infestation of these little, green worms. They were just like locusts and I lost everything. I lost everything. I didn't just lose a crop. I mean, every plant was destroyed. Now, you could say, "You should have done this, you should have done that." I could have done a lot of things, but because I made a commitment and a choice on the basis of what we wanted to do, I was limited by my financial set of circumstances as to what I could do to keep that crop from being destroyed. I took pictures of it; I have the pictures. I have never seen such plant devastation. All that was left of these plants was the vein tissue in the plants. All the leaves were gone or in various stages of being assimilated by these different bugs.

It is something that I believe is parallel to the ministry with the church; I mean, it's a lot like that in the ministry to the church. There's a lot of work that goes into building a church. I am not talking about buildings of wood and stone, I am speaking about living stones. God goes to a lot of trouble in bringing to us all of the things that He wants us to have. As I walked through that field viewing the destruction, there was such a feeling of desolation and sadness. I don't know if I can adequately recall for you the feeling of loss, unless you have really been in that position. As I walked through that field, and looked at those different plants, the devastation was so complete and so intense that I was feeling it in my soul. There is something of that feeling that I have this morning as I look upon the church and the place and the condition that it is in. I believe that that is, to a great degree, the way that God perceives and feels about His church.

Let us consider the fact of us here today. Now, you may have been in the gospel ten years, twenty years, twenty-five years, thirty years, thirty-five years, forty years, and that seems to you a long time based upon the fact of how you've labored, where you've labored and what you have done. But consider God as the master husbandman who has been laboring in the church, laboring for a church for seven thousand years. And can you imagine, *can you imagine*, can you even possibly imagine the feeling that God must have had? To a lesser degree I think I can because of my experience. You know, when God came into the garden after man's sin, God knew. God wasn't taken by surprise. But, you know, I don't think that that pre-knowledge lessened the sense of sadness, or the position of grief, or the feeling of desolation that God felt concerning the issue. Especially if you go into Jeremiah chapter 4, and you begin to read where God was lamenting over Israel and the condition that they were in, and you see that it was because of their position and place of rebellion. How many of you have read Jeremiah chapter 4? Have you ever read it? You should read it, because it gives an apt description of the heart of God as He viewed the destruction of the thing that He loved. Now, God knew what was going to happen, but I don't believe it lessened the feeling that God had. Now, if on a human level with regard to natural, carnal things, I can feel such intensity as to the thing that I am sensing, would not, could not Elohim, the great I AM of all creation, have intensity that is so much more humanly impossible to bear or even comprehend? It's not only that, but what we're growing, we really believe is a blessing. Do you believe that? I mean, we believe that. We believe that we're not doing it to build an operation that is a sustainable farming operation, but that we are doing it as unto the Lord, as God has directed us to do it. It is to provide food and substance for the people of God, as well as the people of the world in the end time.

Can you imagine the great I AM in the garden when He comes in and Adam is hiding from Him (Genesis 3:8)? You know, it's almost as if I can see it. Have you ever seen a plant that has been neglected? It was vibrant, it was healthy, it was green! It was alive! And then for some reason, something happened and it became dull, even in color, and droopy, and lifeless. I like to go out in the early mornings; I go out very early in the mornings and sometimes, well, not only to keep abreast of what is happening in the field, but just to watch and to look at the things to see how they are growing. You understand? I believe that's a lot like God. You know, I think God strolls through the garden of our soul and I sometimes wonder, you know, if He looks at me the way I look at some of the things that I am seeing in the field that gives evidence of what I am growing. Hallelujah. I think that I must be feeling something of the feeling of God in it all. There is something of a sense... I don't know really how to describe it. I really don't know how to adequately express to you the feeling that I am feeling this morning, other than a sense of sadness on the basis of how you and I respond to the Word of God. We do not understand, we do not understand the position, the place, the responsibility that we have for what God has given us. You see, unlike my garden, the plants in the field didn't have the means by which to protect themselves. They have an idea about all of that, you understand. They say that, first of all, a plant that is healthy and vibrant and that you don't use manufactured chemicals to help it resist, will by itself, in its state of healthiness, resist the invasion of pests. Or the plant will produce something, I think they're called flavonoids, that the insects do not like. So even to some degree, if you start out with a perfect situation, and you do everything just right, then your plant may, by some means or some way, have the ability to resist the invasion of the insect. But unlike those plants who may create their own resistance, God has given you and me a means by which we might resist the devil, *that we might resist the devil*. Those of you who weren't here last night, I strongly encourage you to knock on Brother George's door to get the DVD. It was a very good meeting. And I'm not going to have time to go back over a lot of what we covered, and because of that, you are not going to get the full gist of what we are talking about today.

The church needs to **repent**. The church needs to repent, first of all, of its independent position of individuality and its place of personal preference. Now, God can talk to me about my place in the church, but I know that unless I am willing to do what the Word of God says that I must do, in order for me to be in that place that the Word of God says is mine to have, there has to be in me a submission to that Word. Unfortunately, **unfortunately**, I don't believe that I'm speaking to you out of my own intellect. I don't know what you're doing. I don't know where you are, except that God shows me and brings to me a Word concerning that position and that condition. If I don't know what your situation is, and I don't know what your set of circumstances are and God gives me a Word, there should be something of a recognition in you with regard to that Word. If there's no witness, you have no responsibility. But, nevertheless, I do not believe the church is doing what the church needs to be doing. We're still independent, we're still positional individual in our thinking and in our actions. We do things, make decisions, not on the basis of the will of God, or the Word of God, but on the basis of what we think is right or because we just want to do it or because of what we think is our responsibility, or the pressure of the situation. I'm not telling you that you need to stop what you are doing. What I'm telling you is that you need to understand, you need to

come to some conclusion as to what the Word of God is in the midst of your set of circumstances. How is it overshadowing you, what is it requiring of you, and by what means will you submit to it to bring forth the reality of that Word? Hallelujah.

Now, I could go out into my field, I could load my planter up with all kinds of seed and go out without any thought as to prepping the field to receive the seed. You see, I'm still talking to you about the original thought on how there seems to be no response to the Word, either immediately or, for that matter, over a length of time. I am not trying to put a guilt trip on you. Because I tell you, when there is no response to a Word where I am conscious of the presence of God, I have to go to God, because I have to assume that in the beginning I wasn't saying the right Word, I wasn't moving in the right way. I wasn't flowing in the unction or in the anointing, or in some manner or some way, I have failed to present to you the reality of what I am sensing. So, it's not that I'm just putting some sort of guilt trip on you. But I do believe, on the basis of the Word that God is giving to me, that there is truth in what I am telling you about your position and your responsibility in responding to the Word of God.

Now, what is the Word that you are following after? What is the Word that is overshadowing you? Are you waiting to get to heaven? Is that why you became a Christian? Well, that's why I became Christian, in the beginning. It wasn't really that I wanted to go to heaven, I just didn't want to go to hell. I just didn't want to go to hell and that's why I got saved. I believed that hell was a reality and it didn't seem like, in my mind, a place that I would really enjoy spending eternity. So I said, "Well, we can take care of that, I'll just get saved and I'll get into heaven." Hallelujah.

I'm in John, chapter 3. I'm really ministering to you out of verse 19, and it says, *This is the condemnation*. That word is an English word for judgment. It says, *this is the condemnation*. You see, there is judgment already present in the Word that God prophesied over Adam and Eve in the very beginning when He established the borders of His judicial oversight. He reiterated it when He gave the commandments to Moses to give to the house of Israel. He said, *This day I put before you* (Deuteronomy 11:26). You know, you can look at it like this: you're talking about an omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscient God who has the ability to know what the future is. Let me tell you, names are kind of important, especially when it comes to God. When you want to refer to God as the omniscient, omnipresent, omnipotent God, He calls Himself the I AM. Every time He talks about the I AM, He is talking about His position of eternity, and everything that relates to that, but unfortunately, you and I don't have the mental capacity to comprehend the totality of what that really means. So, He had to reduce Himself. He had to bring Himself down. Because, you see, we are finite in our position. That means we have a beginning and we have an end. But with God, that isn't the case. Sometimes I think God is like a figment of our imagination, somewhere out there. We know the reality of His existence by virtue of our new birth or our Holy Ghost baptism. But somehow, some way, out there, somewhere, in the great, wild, blue yonder, somewhere is this entity called God. One of the reasons is we don't have the ability, we don't have the mental comprehension in our finiteness to understand the *in*finiteness of God, the totality and the reality of what He says, very simply, in the statement that He made about Himself in the fact that He called Himself the I AM. It doesn't mean that you and I can't get a hold of it. It doesn't mean that you and I cannot get some sort of comprehension of that position,

because one of the things that God gives us for that purpose is the entity that He calls the Holy Ghost. As I was telling you last night, the Holy Ghost was given to you, not for the purpose of running goose bumps up and down your spine or even giving you the ability to speak in tongues. The Holy Ghost was given to you so that you might know truth, **truth, TRUTH**. Not truth about this arena of carnality and flesh, but the truth about the infiniteness of what He calls the I AM. I like the way Austin Sparks puts it. I think it was he who coined the word the “otherness” of Christ. You see, we don’t have words, we really don’t even have words to describe the thing that we call God. So God had to reduce Himself, and He reduced Himself by saying, “I AM for you, the Alpha and the Omega.” What that equates to is that God begins to establish the borders of our finiteness so that He can bring us to the understanding of the reality of eternity.

You know, I have only one Word; I’m sorry if I’m boring you or putting you to sleep. This is the Word that God has given me. He started giving it to me about two years ago, and the first of this year God began to bring it together and it’s the only Word I have. I don’t have another Word. I don’t believe I’m going to have another Word until we get this Word, or until Jesus comes. I believe, whether it’s 2008 or not, I believe in the imminent return of Jesus Christ. Do you know that the imminent return of Jesus Christ is not a Sonlight Gospel, Brother duCille revelation? How many of you know that? Not too many of you. The imminent return of Jesus Christ was a doctrine that was preached by every one of the apostles. They were looking for Jesus and acting like Jesus was coming the next day. They that wrote about it talked it and they walked it because they believed it. You know, I believe that they believed that they would somehow, some way, in the time frame that they lived, see the return of Jesus Christ.

Now Paul, I think, had a further revelation of the matter when he said, “I am a man born out of due season.” You know, Paul’s problem, his thorn in the flesh, wasn’t a physical malady. It was a spiritual reality. It was a revelation of an ability to see down through the corridors of time, and he knew, I believe, by the Spirit, though he may not have understood everything that he was penning, he knew that he was penning an eternal word for an eternal purpose for an eternal people. I believe that he probably had some reality of the fact that he would not participate and move on the natural plane into that reality of eternity, but that he would participate as a part of that host of heaven. But, you see, we want to relegate everything to a natural environment, because we’re natural people. It’s easier for us to think that it was a natural impediment, or a place of natural affliction that he had, than a spiritual awareness or a spiritual perception of the reality of what he called in his Word the end time.

So, God reduced Himself, He says, “I AM.” Out here in what is called eternity He is the I AM, but in here, when time starts, He becomes the Alpha. So, it’s really a temporal term for the otherness of Christ, the otherness of God. But it’s a term that you and I can relate to. Many times in the Scripture you see the definition of this position as the Alpha when He would prophecy over an individual and He would say, “I knew you when you were formed in your mother’s womb.” What was He saying? From the beginning of your formation, from the beginning of the creation of your physical life, He says, “I was present, I was there.” But He also relates to His position of the Omega, which is the end of all things, as we know it, on a temporal plane. Now, the problem that God has with you and I is ingetting us out of this arena of natural thinking, getting us out

of this arena of thinking on a horizontal level. We think horizontally. We're not thinking vertically, right? Though it's up/down, it's up. Though it's backward, it's forward. God has to change our position or our disposition, **our disposition**, as far as our environment in which we live, not that He changes the environment, but He changes you. I don't think we even understand what it means to be born again, quite frankly. I think if we understood what it meant to be born again, we would not have some of the problems that we have. To be born again means that you are being translated - isn't that the word he uses (Colossians 1:13)? You are being translated from this position of darkness; this has all been given over to hell. And in the midst of hell, God brings forth the reality of life. Hell and death are synonymous with each other. Hallelujah.

We have to have God bring into our set of circumstances things that are totally and absolutely impossible in order to demonstrate to us, first, our inability to cope and second, but most important, that the impossible is possible with God. I don't know whether it's because we're so thick-headed, so stubborn, so earth orientated or what, but God has to bring us into situations and circumstances that are outside of our control. That means He will pluck you up out of where you are, put you down in someplace that you had no idea of ever being, and give you into the charge and put you under the authority of someone else or something else. How many of you ever had a job you didn't like to do, but you had to do it? And what did you do? Mumble, grumble, complain, tell your wife or your husband how bad they were treating you? And you can't wait to get out of that place? You can't wait, "God's got to do something!" Of course you probably never said that. Hallelujah. Well, the fact is that God has done everything that He can possibly do. How many of you are in a relationship, don't show hands, please (laughter). How many of you are in a relationship that is just really difficult for one reason, one personality reason or another? Sometimes it seems absolutely impossible. Of course, none of you have ever had that situation, or are presently having to deal with that type of circumstance, right?

You're going to have to make a decision. You're really going to have to make a decision and I don't know how many times more that I will have the opportunity to come and to tell you that you have to make a decision. You have to come to a position of consecration and dedication as to whether or not you really believe the Word. Now, what am I talking about? Is this Burt's theology? I really don't think so. You know, they called it sonship in the beginning, do you know that? Brother Bill, he was one of the pioneers of the concept that God wanted sons. He wrote a book about it called, "Eagle Saints Arise." Wasn't it talking about sonship? Wasn't it talking about the heart of God to bring forth the reality of that position and the strength and the vitality out of the midst, *out of, out of, out of, OUT OF*, do you hear me? **OUT OF!** That means something out of you that isn't you. It has to be something other than George. It has to be something other than Burt. It has to be something other than Dave. It has to be something other than what we are, because what we are isn't sufficient, isn't satisfactory, nor will it do what it's supposed to do! It can't! It's under the control of different elements and different principles. **In order for you and me to get up and over those principles, we have to be something other than what we are, but the problem is that we like what we are.** We like what we are. We like what we are! You know, I can only relate to you how God has dealt with me and not everybody is like me, but I believe that God deals with everybody like He dealt with me, in one manner or another. I think that there are

many besides me that are pursuing after a Word that is called sonship. Now, let's see if I can get the right word here. I'm just trying to give to you a spiritual definition using the English language. Another word for eternity is called expendability. Unless you are willing to be expended... You know, Mary, I'm talking to the wrong people. You probably all have this down so well that I should be somewhere else today preaching to somebody else. II Corinthians, the fourth chapter. This is the "Expendability Formula." Verse 6 says, in II Corinthians chapter 4, *For God, who hath commanded the light to shine out of the darkness, hath shined in to the midst of our hearts.*

He hath commanded the light to shine out of the midst of darkness, to shine in the heart of the individual believer. Put your finger there. Let's go to Ezekiel, see if that's what I want. Ezekiel 28, verse 18. He's talking to the devil, and he is pronouncing judgment upon the devil. He says, verse 17, *Thy heart was lifted up because of thy beauty... My goodness. Thy heart was lifted up because of thy beauty.* There was a certain self-examination that the devil did of his own personal, soulish environment by his grading scale and he came up with an A+. Hallelujah. We're not much different in the way that we look at ourselves, and the way that we respond to individual situations, or how we even respond to the Word of God. Our self examination would go something like this: "How could he do that? How could she say that? How could this happen to me?" All of those thoughts are the self-examination process from a carnal, earthly, devilish, hellish position. It says that Jesus, though *he was reviled*, he what? He *reviled not again* (I Peter 2:23), but of course, He was only human, He probably said in His mind that He really didn't deserve this and they were a bunch of jerks and that they were going to get their come-uppance. "You just wait 'til I'm on the throne, you're in trouble. Oh yeah, Caiaphas, you're coming before Me one day." NO! He committed all things to the righteous udge. Our reaction most of the time is self-centered. We're talking about self-centered thoughts of position and places of dominion that we believe are ours, and that everything is okay. "Well, if **you** would do so and so, **I** would do so and so." "It's all **your** fault, **you** made me angry." I've never been able to quite figure that one out. This is the doctrine of devils. It is self-centered and self-orientated.

Thine heart was lifted up because of the beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness. Now, let me ask you a question. If the Bible says that we are all subjected to the same spirit and we all have the same destiny when we are born into this environment that we will call "world," what do you suppose the nature of that humanity is? Do you think it is good? The Bible says, Because one sinned, all have sin and because all have sinned, death is upon all men (Romans 5:12). So, there is a world mentality that is bequeathed to us by the DNA of that entity that is overshadowing that realm of darkness. Hello? Paul had it, do you know that? He had it. He said, *In me, in my flesh* (Romans 7:18) and you know, Paul said another thing that's astounding. He said, "I'm always having to bring my body under subjection" (I Corinthians 9:27). Paul! Come on! He's a saint. They made him a saint! It is on the word that Paul wrote that you and I have the formation of the foundation of what we believe. Paul! And the man said he had to continually... Perpetually, that's what it means. Perpetually working to bring something that was within this realm that he existed outside as well as inside. The first thing that I have to look for in any confrontation, and I had one recently, is how do I respond to that confrontation. Funny, isn't it? You always have those little confrontations, those human intertwinings. **I have to look at my response.** You know,

they can be totally wrong. They can be absolutely moving in a bad spirit. They can be bringing something to you that is diabolical and wicked, but if your response is wrong, YOU have a problem! You have a problem! I have a problem! Before I can say it's your fault, I have to do a certain degree of self-examination and, very possibly and most probably, a whole lot of repentance. Of course, you're not like that. You don't have this problem. You've probably shaken off this world mantle of thinking. What I'm telling you, what the Bible is telling you, is how this heart thinks because it has the overshadowing influence of a diabolical creature that is called devil. It is his brain, or his DNA that you and I possess. I found rebellion in the Czech Republic. I found it in Slovakia. I found it in Africa. I found it in Ukraine. I found rebellion everywhere I went. In the church! In the people that say they love God. Why? Because no matter what your geographical boundaries are, there are principalities that are over all these little areas that we call the governments. It is divided up into principalities and over those geographical areas there are princes, each one of these have a spirit that rule over them. There is a throne for each of these areas and a devil prince sits upon each one of them and over these thrones is another throne and the thing that sits upon that throne is this entity that we call the devil. He is the one that has overshadowed you and me, and we were birthed, not into the land of the living as it was in the beginning in the garden, but into the land of the dead in the condition of desolation, degradation, death, and hell. That's the nature. This is the attitude of that nature. These are the qualities and to some degree or another, you and I will find every one of those attributes working in us. There are three major areas that the Bible says that you and I have to overcome. They are the pride of life, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eye (I John 2:16). Those are the three positions, those are the three major doctrines of a satanic denomination that each of us have an affiliation with and for, because it involves worship of a being. On a spiritual level, they are a satanic administration of a devilish philosophy/theology. That's why the Bible says, *Let therefore this mind that was in Christ Jesus be... where?* On the table? In the drawer? In the desk? In the computer? In your little Bible program? *Let therefore this mind that was in Christ Jesus be... where? ...be within you* (Philippians 2:5). Why? Because it's necessary for us to get out of this position, this carnal, natural place of thinking/mind. These are the doctrines that have become attributes, these are the qualities. Pride and lust are the qualities of that condition. Hallelujah.

Listen to this. It says, Ezekiel 28:17, *Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness.* Did you notice that everything is self-orientated? Everything is self-orientated. Turn with me over into Isaiah 14. I like to put these two scriptures side by side, because it's very defining of the nature of sin. You remember where Paul said in Romans, the seventh chapter, fourteenth verse, *For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin. 15 For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. 16 If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good. 17 Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.* What is he talking about? Sin that dwelleth in me? You mean that in his soul somewhere there was a little compartment, a little box and in that box was something called sin? And every now and then that box would open and sin would pop up? Is that what he's talking about? No, he's talking about the nature of Paul, the son of so-and-so that was born in Tarsus. He's talking about all that nature that he was born with.

He says, *18 For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. 19 For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. 20 Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. 21 I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. 22 For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: 23 But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.* He's talking about that nature, that place, that culture, that nationality. Come on! It shouldn't take you as long as it took me to get delivered from some of your Americanism. If it did, then you would have to do everything that I did. You know, I'm just more hardheaded than the rest of you. God didn't take me around the world to teach people about the Word of God. God took me around the world to teach me about God and the Word that was supposed to be in me. Hallelujah. But you know, many of you are going to go out of this room and you'll say, well, maybe you'll say it was a good word, and you're going to get involved in life and you're going to forget. The result of that is that things are going to go just the same as they went yesterday, and the day before, and the day before, and the day before that, and you're not going to have any victory. Because you did not heed, you did not respond, you did not begin to motivate yourself to do what you needed to do. Paul did not leave us in the condition of desperation with regard to this position of sin, but he said, *O wretched man that I am!* First of all, the place you and I have to come to, is the recognition of our position of personal weakness and degradation. Some of us are so, so, so macho in our thinking with regard to whom we are! I'm not talking just about men. I'm talking about women, too. Come on!

It says, *22 For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: 23 But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.* But he says, *who shall deliver me from the body of this death?* That's step two, recognizing the need to be delivered and looking for the solution. Step one is recognizing the position, recognizing the condition, *O wretched man that I am!* Last night, I was before the Lord in *O wretched man that I am!* This morning I woke up, and it was *O wretched man that I am!* For the propensity of my humanity, and the things that I have to deal with, "My God, I need to see the deliverance that is in You."

Step two, He says, *who shall deliver me from the body of this death?* Well, that's a valid question. Who's going to deliver you? Who's going to deliver me? He says, *25 I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord.* And, you know, that would still be a pretty dismal chapter if it weren't for the eighth chapter. You can't stop at the last verse of the seventh chapter because it's not a finished story. Chapter eight, verse one, *There is therefore now no condemnation,* take out chapter eight and just tack it on to the end of chapter seven as verse twenty-six. No, you leave that chapter eight in there, because that eight is the sign of new beginnings. Hallelujah! *There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in...* Oh, boy. Those that are in. Did you hear that? They that are in Christ Jesus. Right? Let me draw it for you. Right? I have Christ in me, but Christ is still subjected to me. Everywhere I go, Christ goes. Everything I do, Christ is there. Everything I say, Christ is there. Everything I do, right or wrong, Christ is there. Christ is subjected to me. Hello? I can't even imagine, hardly imagine, an omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent God, who describes Himself as the I AM, subjecting Himself to

this type of an environment. How would *you* like to be totally and absolutely under *my* control? That's something Oliver is finding out. You wouldn't like it. And you know, some of our wives, the mentality is that that is the position, that is the place, and we're telling them that they have to submit. That's just a little side note there. All right, the other situation is me in Christ. Christ in you, the hope of glory (Colossians 1:27). But the totality of the fulfillment of the Word, and the reality of the intent and the thought that God had in the very beginning is not Christ **in** me the hope of glory, but me **in Christ**. What happens to me? That means I can't do anything, **I can't do anything** that Christ doesn't do and sometimes this is my attitude and sometimes it is not. Of course, you don't have that problem, right? No problem there, right? You have it down, you have the formula, you have the revelation, and you have the ability to move in the Spirit. Well, something's wrong. Something's wrong.

There is therefore now no condemnation. Remember what we read there in John the third chapter? Do you remember the Scripture? He says, *this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world,* (John 3:19). Romans, the eighth chapter says, *There is therefore now no condemnation.* What are we talking about? What kind of Word are we talking about? What kind of position, what kind of place, what is it that God is seeing or making a demand on us? Hallelujah. Well, let's look at it. John the first chapter, first verse. *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 The same was in the beginning...* You know, I think the Bible could have just been written with a couple of verses. *2 The same was in the beginning with God.* Now, listen to what it says about the Word. *3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. 4 In him was life; and the life was the light of men.* It says, John 3:19, *This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. **Whose deeds? Your deeds. My deeds.*** Do you know that God looks at evil a whole lot differently than what I determine as evil? Do you know, for a long time, I thought being a Christian meant being good? That means I didn't drink, I didn't smoke, I didn't talk dirty, I didn't look at dirty magazines or dirty shows, or dirty this or dirty that. I didn't do any of these dirty little things that the whole world was doing. I was Mr. Goody-Two-Shoes. I was being good, so therefore, I was going to make heaven. That has nothing to do with it.

This position is what you call 100% position. That's 100% position. This one can be thirty and maybe, *maybe* it can be sixty. I don't know, maybe it can. I have some doubts about the sixty. The position, the place of reality that God wants to bring us to, is the place, the position of how He looks at things from His perspective. So it's really not so much, what you do, it's why you're doing it. You can do it to make heaven. You can do it to be good, but that isn't the intent, that isn't the desire of God. God's desire is not for you just to be good for the sake of getting into heaven. God wants you good because of the nature that He wants to bring forth within you. Good is nothing more than a by-product of the presence and the reality of the intent that God had in the very beginning. Come on! Hallelujah. Hallelujah. Go back over into Corinthians.

II Corinthians 4:1-2, *Therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not; 2 But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; My goodness. Not using the Word of God to justify our position of resistance and rebellion against the confirmation process*

that God institutes in our life to produce the reality of what is in His thoughts. **We're supposed to like tribulation.** How many of you like tribulation? Don't like tribulation? Then you don't see the reality of God. You don't. You don't see the reality of God. You do not look at it as an opportunity to grow. You're looking at it from a self-perspective; you're looking at it from a horizontal view. You don't have the reality of the thing that is around you that is called God. Paul, I thought he was crazy. You know, the first words out of my mouth when the heat goes on are, "Oh no, not again." It really should be, "Oh, praise God." "Oh, praise God." Even if it's (through clenched teeth), "Oh, praise God." That's an improvement over, "Oh no, here we go again." Or, "Why me, God? What did I do?" It's not what you did; it's what you didn't do, not yet anyway.

We're supposed to be a tribulation people. Oh you know, you're going to be tribulating a lot of people, you probably tribulate a lot of people now. Oh yes, oh yes, oh yes, you probably stick some people pretty good, but that's not what I'm talking about. What I'm talking about is the fact of the Word that is in you making a manifestation to such a degree that everybody around you who does not want to hear or want to see that demonstration of the Word that you are, is going to want to try to **expel** you out of their presence in some way, some manner, and some fashion. So, you're not only somebody who gets tribulated, you're somebody who creates tribulation. Isn't that what He said in John seventeen? Isn't that what He said? It's not that God won't give you favor here and there, but I'm talking overall, in the general sense. Hallelujah.

Some of us are involved in situations with personality conflicts on the basis of the righteousness of God that is working in our being, and because, to some degree, there has been some sort of change that has brought a disharmony into the fact of the situation that we might find ourselves in. But, quite frankly, that isn't for you to determine or assess, because some of you can go out of here and say, "Well, I'm that one, and you're this one. I'm plus and you're negative." Oh yes, I hear it in the Spirit already. You hear, "*I don't think that way.*" Oh yes, you do. You do it all the time. You do it all the time with your buddies and your families and your siblings and your sisters and your parents. You do it all the time. There's always this spirit of competition that is working to bring disharmony, disunity, a spirit of divorce, argument, strife and all kinds of things going on that are carnal, that bring us out of the realm of the heavenly into the realm of hell.

It says, "The way to life is straight and it's narrow, few, few there are..." I want somebody to interpret that for me. "Few there are that find it (Matthew 7:14)." Now does that mean that many don't find it? And if they don't find it, they don't get heaven? They get hell? I thought there was a real possibility in all of that. If that is true, what form of diligence do I need to exercise the fact of my calling and election? My calling and election is not dependent upon my wife, did you know that? It has nothing to do with it. It may help me get there a little quicker, or it may slow me down if my attitude toward her isn't what it needs to be. If I am thinking in my mind, "My goodness," which I don't, don't go out of here thinking this way, but I can only use my situation. If I am thinking in my mind, "Lord, what's wrong with this woman that you gave to me!?" God says, "It's not the woman, it's the man." It's his position of understanding, his position of sensitivity, his position regarding the reality of what it was that God really did give man. She's not a servant, she's not a maid, she's not a cook; she does all of those things, but

that's not her function in eternity with regard to God. She is a part of the process of bringing together a corporate manifestation of the reality of the calling of God that God had in the beginning for us - together! Without me moving to produce Christ in her, I am not going to receive the full benefit of what I consider is my calling.

There is trouble in the homes. That's the only conclusion that I can come to, on the basis of the Word that I'm bringing you. I didn't come here with a pre-described, pre-determined thought that I was going to minister to you. Brethren, let me just put this illustration back, now let me do it this way. God does everything in threes, right? You know, we've had this principle. I believe I shared this briefly with you before, but I don't know if you got the idea, or, I think maybe you're just still working on the reality of it. Step one, step two, step three. You cannot have step two without having step one. You cannot get to number three without having step one and two; you can't go from one to three without having two. You can't start with three. You have to start on the basis of the natural. First the natural, then the spiritual. The first position, the first place, the first step is the home/marriage. If you don't have one, you won't have two. This is the church, as the bride of Christ, and this is the son or the fullness of the thought that God had in the very beginning. You cannot have this church two, if you don't have this church one which is the home, and we don't have this church two because we don't have this church one, the home, functioning as it should function. The principles of dying to self are learned here in church one, the home, in the relationship between husband and wife. I'm not even going to be able to get into family today. The relationship between husbands and wives is the fundamental position. It is the foundational principle on which God brings forth the demonstration of the church. Unfortunately, we are not seeing that demonstration in the majority of the homes that are *in* the church, so consequently, what we have is confusion in the church because we have confusion in the home. There is a responsibility before the Lord that the wife has with regard to her husband, and there's a responsibility that the husband has toward the wife before the Lord, and my responsibility is not to make my wife fulfill and bring forth the reality of her responsibility. Did you know that? Have you ever tried to make somebody do something they didn't want to do? You don't know anything about that, do you? Let me ask you a question. In the doing of it, was there peace and contentment? Well, the job got done, right? That's the main thing, right? Oh, what's a little collateral damage? Toe got stepped on, a finger is smashed, there's blood running all over the floor, tourniquets are applied to necks and legs and arms. What's that? But the job got done. There should be some sort of sense of completion, right? It is the spirit of competition. It produces an attitude of chaos, confusion... camaraderie? Does it build camaraderie? Compatibility? What does it build? So, what did you produce? You got the job done. You got what you wanted, but what did it produce? Did it bring forth Christ? Did it bring forth the Kingdom? Did it bring forth the reality of God? Did you deny the Word in the action, in the thing that you did, the thing that you perpetrated? When it was all said and done, did you repent when you knew that what you did was wrong? Or did you go on to the next one? Just go on to the next one. Well, we got that one done, let's try this one now! You know, what does it end up being? **Being without form and void** and darkness, darkness filling. We don't respond in the church, we don't respond in the home. Until you respond in the homes, you're not going to respond in church. If you don't move by the auspices of the Holy

Ghost in the home, you won't move by the Holy Ghost in the church. Listen to me. Come on.

It was Isaiah. No, wait a minute, I want to finish up right here in II Corinthians 4. Verse 2, *But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully...* You know, he's talking about the husband and wife relationship, also. Oh yes, "The Word says, you are to do so-and-so and so-and-so. Oh yes, you're to be so-and-so." ...*nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.* Many years ago, a very godly man gave me a very important piece of advice that I have indelibly inscribed upon my gray matter, and he said to me, "Burt, righteousness must not always be righteous, but righteousness must always appear righteous." So, I am responsible with regard to how you think about what I am doing. I must make every effort, on my part, to make sure that, if you think wrong of what I am doing, that, before God, I have fulfilled my obligation of manifesting that righteousness to the total and extent of the degree that God has given me the ability to do. Why do you think the Bible says, "Abstain from all appearances of evil" (I Thessalonians 5:22). Why? Because God knows the environment in which you and I live, and knows the environment of hell that is trying to bring its manifestation in the lives of the believers.

II Corinthians 4:1, *Therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not...but...commending ourselves to every man's conscience... every man's ...in the sight of God.* That takes away my position of what I think. "Well, I think I've done all I can do." What I think has nothing to do with it. What I feel has nothing to do with it. It is what I know that God is telling me about the situation. I have to fulfill that obligation of burden with regard to that thing that is being pressed upon me. *But if our gospel...* What gospel? ...*if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.* I'm going to have to go home, and I am going to have to take my little tape and I'm going to have to put it in my machine and I'm going to have to say, "Did I say that?" You know, I'm going to have to practice what I preach lest I become a castaway, and lest I allow the worldliness of my soul to rise up and usurp. I need to begin to examine where and how and to what degree I can bring forth Christ in my wife, in my home, in my children. You know, I haven't even scratched the surface of it, brethren. We haven't even begun to comprehend the responsibility, the onus of the obligation of righteousness that is on us because we have received a Word from God that is something more than just getting into heaven or just hanging on until Jesus comes. I don't want to just hang on. I don't want you to just hang on. I don't want you to just be "hanging on by the skin of your teeth," as my mom used to say. I don't want to make it into heaven by the skin of my teeth. I want to walk in as a son. I want to walk in the midst of that heavenly crowd with a corporate expression of the reality of God and the totality of what it was that God wanted in the very beginning. It's not that some of you don't have a tough situation, believe you me. But it's not a situation that is tougher, or greater, or more exacting, or more trying than the situation that God has allowed you to be put in and He has given you the ability to overcome it. If you did not have the ability to overcome it, He would have never put you in that place to begin with. God bless you.