

THE LIBERATION OF THE HUMAN SOUL

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Introduction

As a born-again Christian since June 2, 1976, when my life was radically changed after I accepted Jesus Christ as my only savior, I can honestly say that trying to understand the complexity of the human soul is perhaps the most challenging area I've ever had to deal with, yet the most vital.

In every human endeavor reaching the goal determines the victory. Failing to reach the goal, though admirable if one tries very hard, it is still a failure. Bottom line is we lost; we failed to accomplish the desire objective.

However many Christians today settle for trying very hard and accept failure to reach their goal in Christ as an admirable endeavor. Even when in the end they have failed miserably to achieve the goal that Jesus Christ had set out for them in their lives.

My prayer is that in this book I will be able to shed some light into the inner workings of the human soul that will enable born-again Christians to achieve the goal of their faith which is the salvation, deliverance and restoration of their souls.

1 Peter 1:9 “Receiving the end of your faith — the salvation of your souls.”

The Difference between the Spirit and the Soul

This is an area that is not dealt with often enough from church pulpits. What is the difference between my soul and my spirit? And how does lack of knowledge on this subject affect my walk with Christ?

Knowing the difference between your soul and your spirit can mean the difference between walking in shame, guilt and condemnation or walking in total and complete freedom from guilt, shame and condemnation.

Let me begin by stressing that the Bible makes a clear distinction between the soul and the spirit, and if we understand that their interaction affects how our physical bodies respond to any given situation, it will teach us how to walk in self-control, which is the completion of spiritual fruit.

I Thessalonians 5:23 “Now may the *God of peace Himself* sanctify you completely; and may your whole *spirit, soul, and body* be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Paul clearly segregates the two, *spirit* and *soul* as dwelling within our physical *bodies*. But by introducing God as the *God of peace Himself*, Paul implies that there is a relation between spirit and soul that brings peace or the lack thereof, depending upon their interaction.

In order to know how the spirit and the soul interact within our bodies, and how their interaction affects our behavior, we need to understand their individual nomenclature. The Greek word used by Paul in the above passage for *spirit* is the word “*Pnyoomah*” Strong’s concordance # 4151 and it means *Breath* (blast).

The Greek word used for *soul* is the word “*Psookhay*” Strong’s concordance # 5590 and it also means *Breath*. We get a clearer picture from **Genesis 2:7** “And the Lord God formed man (*the body*) of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life (*the spirit*); and man became a living being (*the soul*).”

The words for *breath* and *spirit* are pretty much interchangeable in both the Hebrew and Greek languages. So when God breathed into Adam’s nostrils the breath (spirit) of life, Adam became a living soul.

From this and other scriptures I’ve concluded that the human soul is like a pneumatic

(*Pnyoomah*) tool (*a tool that run on blasts of air*), originally intended by God to run (*to be motivated*) by God's breath (*spirit*), or let me put it another way, our soul is to be moved by the words that come out of God's mouth.

When Adam and by implication us, disobeyed the word that came out of God's mouth, our souls lost their motivator and hence the soul became self-motivated (*selfsteam*). Now in the soul we find the mind, will and emotions intricately connected to our five physical senses.

Genesis 3:6 "So when the woman *saw* that the tree was good for food (*taste*), that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise (*mind*), she took of its fruit and ate."

Here we see the process; disobedience to the word of God disengages the governor of the soul: the Spirit of God. And now the human soul can be easily manipulated through the physical senses. Satan controls the environment we live in, the world; if we do not walk in self-control which is a fruit of the Spirit; then, the demonic environment of this world will control us also.

As born-again believers we cannot afford to be led by our physical senses, if we are lead by the sensuality (*carnality*) of this world, we will never achieve the goal of our faith, which is; the liberation of our souls from satanic influences and manipulative schemes.

This is why the soul is so vital: Whichever spirit (*breath*) motivates the soul, that spirit will control to a very large extent the actions of our physical bodies. When we walk in victory is because the Spirit of God is driving our soul. When we walk in defeat is because the Spirit of God has been disengaged from motivating our soul, and now our soul is motivated by our physical senses which are manipulated by the circumstances surrounding us.

I John 2:15 "Do not love the world or the things of the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father (*breath*) is not in him."

John could not have said it any clearer, when we love the world or the things of the world (*the devil's environment*), we've allowed our souls to be manipulated by the god of this world. Instead of the fruit of the Holy Spirit flowing through us, the fruit of carnality abounds. Selfishness instead of self-control, hate instead of love,

unhappiness instead of joy, impatience instead of patience, pride instead of meekness and no real peace.

Isaiah 57:21 “There is no peace, says my God, for the wicked.”

Perhaps the best way to describe the difference between soul and spirit is like this: The spirit of a born-again Christian is like a good seed, within it lies dormant everything that pertains to a life of peace and abundance of the godliness that we have been promised.

II Peter 1:3 “...His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, *through the knowledge* of Him...”

And just like a natural seed needs a place to germinate and release all the things that are encoded within it; the born-again spirit needs to be embedded within the soul in order to bear spiritual fruit.

Hosea 10:17 “Sow for yourselves righteousness; reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground, for it is time to seek the Lord, till He comes and rains righteousness on you.”

This is what makes the liberation of the soul so vital, without it there can be no harvest, no real victory. The preaching, teaching and learning from the word of God provide the watering that causes the seed (*spirit*) to bear fruit, however the fallow ground of the soul must be broken, tilled and cultivated. The weeds that choke the fruit of the spirit have to be uprooted.

Matthew 15:13 “...Every plant which My heavenly Father has not planted will be uprooted.”

As I conclude this chapter, my heart turns towards the many Christians that are struggling with sin in their lives. No matter how hard they try they are unable to overcome it, and like clockwork Satan is there to remind them of their misery and failure.

Romans 7:17-18 “But now, it is no longer I who do it, *but sin that dwells in me*. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells; *for to will is present with me*, but how to perform what is good I do not find. For the good that I will to do, I do not do; but the evil I will not to do, that I practice.”

Romans 8:20 Now *if I do what I will not to do*, it is no longer I who do it, *but sin that dwells in me.*”

The day that a born-again believer comes to the realization that the spirit within him/her has been made alive, and that there is now therefore no condemnation for that spirit; for indeed it is that spirit that desires to do good “*for to will is present with me*”, they will no longer look at sin in the same light anymore.

The sin is in the soul that was self-motivated before we knew God, and now sin to us should be like a warning light, a symptom of an unseen malady, and it is there for the purpose of reminding us that there is something wrong within us that we need to deal with.

When the *check engine light* flashes on the dash board of our vehicle, we do not feel guilt or shame about it; we simply become concern and see to it that the problem is dealt with as soon as possible. So it should be with us, when we keep doing that which *we will not to do*, is time to come to God and allow Him to give us a spiritual diagnostic check-up of the soul.

Proverbs 11:9 “...But *through knowledge* the righteous will be delivered.”

Instead of hiding with guilt and shame by identifying ourselves with that sin, let us expose that sin for what it is, an unwanted trespasser that needs to be evicted from our soul, *through knowledge*.

Hosea 4:6 “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge.”

Let us become diligent in learning the intricacies of our own soul. Let us make the liberation of our souls our principle goal in life.

The Soul Complex

Proverbs 20:27 “The spirit of a man is the lamp of the Lord, searching all the *inner depths* of his *heart*.”

Literally the words *inner depths* means; *rooms of the belly*, and the word for *heart* means: *an apartment*. We could say that within everyone of us, in our hearts (*not the physical one*), there is a complex of very private rooms that were originally designed by God as the dwelling place of His character and glory in order for Him to have intimacy with us.

When God’s character and glory dwell in abundance within our soul, our physical bodies will reflect that character and glory, and there will be no doubt to those around us that God’s presence is alive within us.

John 7:38-39 “‘He who believes in Me, as the scripture has said, out of his heart (*belly*) will flow rivers of living water.’ But this He spoke concerning the Spirit.”

God is desirous of spiritual fruit emanating from us; that should be the goal of our faith: ridding our soul of self-generated desires, because the self is connected to this world which has been corrupted by Satan.

It is imperative that we come to a clear understanding of the make up of our soul, and how our soul operates, that is, if we want to overcome the power of the sin that is living within us, for that’s what causes us to fail time and again.

Matthew 13:24-25 “The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field; but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat and went his way.”

The spiritual application of this parable is simple. The good seed is God’s breath (*spirit or word*) that has been given to all mankind, but while men slept, that is before we came alive in Jesus Christ, the enemy, Satan, sowed thorns and thistles in the souls of man.

So that when we become born-again and now have the desire to bear good (*spiritual*) fruit, we find that along with the desire to do good there is also a force at work in us that causes us to do evil against our very own will.

For the sake of simplicity let us say that the human soul complex has nine “apartments” in which dwells different “tenants.” This “tenants” affect our outward behavior, good “tenants” cause us to produce good behavior, and bad “tenants” cause us to act badly.

If we want our character to be a godly character, we have to evict from our soul “apartment complex” the bad “tenants” and replace them with good ones. How do I know the good “tenants” from the bad ones? How do I get rid of the bad ones? How do I empower the good ones? This is the dilemma that every Christian faces.

Here is a list of the nine good “tenants” that God originally designed to dwell in our soul complex: Love, Joy, Peace, Longsuffering, Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness, Meekness and Self-Control. (**Gal. 5:22-23**)

If I can give you an insight here. There is more than one manifestation of Love, just like there is more than one level of Joy, the same with Peace and so on. The reason why I am sharing this with you is not to confuse you, but because we need all the “tenants” in the apartment to be good. You see as Christians we can love some and not others, we can be very peaceful about certain matters while in others we become very frustrated.

What I am trying to say is that within one of the nine “apartments” we can have both good and bad “tenants.” Our aim (*the goal of our faith*) is to rid our soul complex of every bad “tenant” in every “apartment” and replace them with the good ones that God originally intended to dwell in us.

For the sake of simplicity again, let me say that there are nine different manifestations of Love that are supposed to dwell in one “apartment.” Love for God could be one, Love for others could be another, Love for self a third one, Love for enemies, erotic Love and so on. You could love God and not others; you could love God and others and not love yourself. You could function properly in all the first mentioned areas and malfunction badly in erotic love which then becomes the lust that binds so many today.

We could say the same for the other fruit of the Spirit; nine levels of Joy, nine levels of Peace and so on. The reason why I’m expanding these areas into different levels is because of the need to discern between them. You see, when we reach the ability to love properly at all levels, there will be no doubt to those around us that we are Christians because of our complete love.

When we reach the maturity level of Self Control over every area of our soul, that means that we have achieved intimacy with God in every area of our hearts, Jesus has consummated His spousal relationship within us and now we are bearing Him godly spiritual fruit which is His and our inheritance.

Psalm 127:3 “...The fruit of the womb (*inner depths*) is His reward.”

Here is a list of the bad “*tenants*” that we need to evict from the apartment complex of the soul, so that Jesus’ glory and character can come and move in: The bad ones are; Adultery, Fornication, Uncleaness, Lewdness, Idolatry, Sorcery, Hatred, Contentions, Jealousies, Outbursts of Wrath, Selfish Ambitions, Dissensions, Heresies, Envy, Murders, Drunkenness, Revelries, these and things like them will keep us from inheriting God’s kingdom (*bearing godly offspring*). **Gal. 5:19-21**

In order for us to rid ourselves of these ungodly “*tenants*” we need to know first of all that they are there, ***remember the warning light***, the symptoms will expose them. It helps us if we know how they got there and what right they claim to stay there.

II Timothy 2:26 “And that they may come to their senses and escape the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him (*the devil*) to do his will.”

Just listen to the heart of God my dear friends, see how God looks at us when we are bound by sin. God sees us as victims trapped in a snare and He is bidding us to come to our senses, to ***understand*** and escape from that snare.

The way to escape from a snare is not through struggling, the more one struggles, the tighter and the more tangled the snare becomes. But if we understand how the snare was set, and how it was tripped, then we’ll know how to unravel it. Then we can just simply walk out of it. Since we are speaking about a supernatural snare from the devil against our soul, we need God’s spiritual wisdom, knowledge and understanding to untangle the devil’s web of deception against us.

Proverbs 24:3-4 “Through ***wisdom*** a house is built, and by ***understanding*** it is established; by ***knowledge*** the rooms are filled with all precious and pleasant riches.”

The precious and pleasant riches represent the good “*tenants*” or spiritual fruit. In other words we ***learned*** (*knowledge*) how to evict the bad “*tenants*” and how to replace them with the good ones. ***Wisdom*** represents the spiritual seed that contained

all the good things of God in essence form; which we were able to established (*plant within our soul*) because we came to an ***understanding*** of how to break up the fallow ground within us and uproot every demonic seed that was there.

Understanding the Demonic Infrastructure within the Soul

In the unwanted “*tenants*” list, seventeen were mentioned. For the sake of helping us understand how these demonic entities operate, I will break them down into four sets of four with Selfish Ambition in the middle. And I will classify each set of four by their operational assignment.

Adultery, Fornication, Uncleanness and Lewdness I will classify as works of **Perversion**, and for the purpose of visualization, I will place these perverted works to the top side of Selfish Ambition, which is in the center of the self-motivated soul.

Idolatry, Sorcery, Dissensions and Heresies I will classify as works of **False Religion**, and I will place them to the left flank of Selfish Ambition.

Hatred, Contentions, Envy and Jealousies I will classify as works of **Division**, and I will place them to the right flank of Selfish Ambition.

Outbursts of Wrath, Murder, Drunkenness and Revelries I will classify as works of **Malfunction**, and I will place them to the bottom side of Selfish Ambition.

At the center of course is **Selfish Ambition** the soul motivator before we became born-again.

Now let’s see how this demonic structure works.

Gal. 1:7 “...But there are some who trouble you and want to pervert (*distort*) the gospel of Christ.”

Nothing has greater impact in the human soul than the distortion of the truth. Just think back as you were growing up, how something that you thought to be real turned out to be false. Remember how profoundly it affected you.

That is how Satan threw Eve off balance when he tempted her; “...Has God indeed said, ‘you *shall not eat of every tree* of the garden?’” (**Gen. 3:1**) Just this simple distortion of what God had said: “...Of *every tree of the garden you may freely eat.*” (**Gen. 2:16**) Caused Eve to enter into contention with Satan, whose real aim was to get Eve’s soul disengaged from the truth of the word (*breath*) of God. Satan brought doubt concerning God’s word by perverting it.

Immediately after the perversion of the truth of God's word came in to Eve's soul, she fell for the temptation because her physical senses were now motivating her soul. "So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate." (**Gen. 3:6**)

Proverbs 17:23 "A wicked man accepts a bribe behind the back to pervert the ways of justice."

All that Satan has to do to disengage the soul of a born-again believer from the truth of God's word (*the spirit which governs his soul*), is simply; ***pervert what he believes through distortion that brings confusion, then offer him a bribe.***

Adultery and Fornication are prime examples of this principle. We know is wrong specially as Christians, but when our beliefs become distorted, we fall for the bribe due to a lack of self-control and then we pay the price. For the wages of sin is death and the devil is the paymaster.

Now to the bigger picture. **Perversion** or distortion of the gospel of Jesus Christ causes confusion that causes us to err. Two things will always happen when confusion arises as a result of perversion: The first one is **division** and the second is **religion**.

You see, when we are not sure of what's right, we become **divided** (*separated from the truth*), then we have to make our own **religious** rules (*we decide what's right or wrong*) to govern our actions, that is when the soul becomes self-motivated. Now all that Satan has to do is bribe us with the things of this world that appeal to our senses, and before long we **malfunction**.

(John 10:10) "The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly."

This principle works the same at every level. From the personal level to the corporal level, you will find that deviation from the truth causes all kinds of rules and regulations to appear which cannot be met, leading to more division and malfunction.

The reason why I got into all these technical details with you, was because I wanted you to know how very important to the liberation of the soul is to have the truth of God's word firmly implanted, without deviation or distortion, deep within your hearts.

Test yourself in those areas that you are unsure of as to what is right or what is wrong. I am sure that you will find a divided heart within you. You will also find that you yourself have created a set of guidelines, some sort of religious code by which you guide yourself concerning that matter that you are unsure of. And if you are honest with yourself, you will also find that the circumstances around you will influence your decision. That means that whoever controls the circumstances around you, will also control your behavior in regards to that matter.

Matthew 24:10-12 “And then many will be offended (*perversion of truth*), will betray one another, and will hate one another (*division*). Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many (*false religion*). And because lawlessness will abound (*malfunction*), the love of many will grow cold.”

Jesus gives us a perfect example of how this demonic process works. The word “offended” comes from the Greek word “skandalidzo” which means to scandalize, from the root word “to entrap”. This is the way of peer pressure to manipulate behavior.

This is what I believe Jesus meant: When you do not have conviction in what you believe (*not sure of what the truth is*) even after the Bible clearly spells it out. Satan will make it very unpopular for you to take the right stand; it will become scandalous to believe what God says. You will betray that which God said was right and wind up hating others and hating yourself.

You see, when we disengage the word (*spirit/breath*) of God from motivating our soul, we cannot produce peace or love, because they are fruit of God’s Spirit. We will end up doing that which *we will not to do*. Not only that but now we open ourselves to believe a lie (*false prophets*).

Truth: Liberator of the Soul

John 8:31-32 “...If you abide in My word, you are my disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”

Truth is the foundation upon which the soul must rest. Truth is nourishment for the soul. Truth makes your soul become alive. Truth secures the soul into an unmovable state of being. Truth transforms the soul into the habitation of God. Truth and only God’s truth defines the soul.

Whenever a soul experiences a taste of God’s truth, it will never again enjoy a lie. That soul will long for the unpolluted breath of God’s word.

Next I will contrast God’s truth against the devil’s lies, to help you understand how those unwanted “tenants” that keep God’s glory and character from taking up residence within you, keep their grip over your soul.

I will call the greatest lie perpetrated against mankind: **Limitation**. The devil knows full well that if ever the soul is freed from its perceived (*through the human senses*) limitations, immediately he will lose control over that soul’s realm. For it was to the *living soul* that God gave the dominion, and whatever dominion our souls have forfeited the devil has stolen.

Mark 11:23 “For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this *mountain*, ‘Be removed and be cast into the sea, and does not doubt in his heart (*soul complex*), but believes that those things he says will be done, he will have whatever he says.’”

The majority of us do not live out our full potential in Christ because since our childhood, Satan has been hard at work creating a false reality around us, to keep us from reaching the full potential of the dominion God has given to us. And in order to reinforce that false reality to us, Satan has to keep the truth of who we are in Jesus Christ hidden from the living soul, which is limited by the physical senses when is not being motivated by the Spirit of the living God.

The devil is a master at mind control and he has had six thousand years of practice. When we analyze his tactics, we will find that the way he controls and manipulates people is through obstacles (*mountains*), that he strategically places in people’s ways to force them to take the road (*short-cut*) that will lead them into the pitfalls that he has carefully crafted for them.

For example, some people seem to struggle with finances all their lives, for others buying a home seems to be an insurmountable mountain. Others never seem to get along in relationships no matter how hard they try. Many struggle with their inability to accomplish what they desire.

They just do not seem to have the motivation required for getting the right education, or control their eating habits, or control their offensive behavior that keeps them from establishing good relationships, or overcome addictive habits that keeps them bound.

All of the above mentioned limitations and many more are mountains that the devil has placed in people's lives, to keep them from the realities that God has for them.

Psalm 8:4 "What is man that You are mindful of him, and the son of man that You visit him?"

We are God's representatives on this earth, ordained of God to execute dominion over His creation, endowed with His power (Spirit) to exercise His will over this physical creation.

Psalm 8:6 "You have made him (us) to have dominion over the works of Your hands; You have put all things under his (our) feet."

When we look at it from God's perspective, we have already been given everything needed to remove every mountain of limitation that the devil has placed in our way, and we do not need to follow our physical senses anymore, all we have to do is believe the truth: What God says.

The reason why I am writing this book is that maybe somehow, something I write will trigger the revelation of God's truth to your soul, and you will be set free to fully exercise dominion over your soul's realm.

Satan's deception always begins by him challenging our authority to exercise our God given dominion over him. As Jesus was getting ready to begin His ministry, the devil questioned His authority "If you are the Son of God." (**Luke 4:3**) Jesus responded with an unmovable truth "It is written." You see, if God said that we have dominion over the enemy, then, we do!

Psalm 8:5 “For You have made him (us) a little lower than the angels (**Elohim**) and You have crowned him with glory and honor.”

I had to put the original Hebrew word there, because even the translators struggled with the stated fact that God would make us just a little lower than God Himself.

Elohim is the masculine plural name which God gives Himself in the book of Genesis when He created everything including us. **Genesis 1:1** “In the beginning God (**Elohim**) created the heavens and the earth.” We must begin with the most basic of all truths: We have been created in the image of the All Mighty God and we have been authorized to rule this physical realm on His behalf.

Luke 10:19 “Behold I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you.”

This awesome truth was given to us in seed form the day we became born-again. Our job, indeed our duty, is to plant this seed of truth at the core of our souls and make it our compass. We are to make it our inalienable right to rule that comes from God Almighty, which can only be accomplished if and when we are lead by His Holy Spirit and not by our mind, will or emotions.

As born-again believers we have, not just a duty, but an obligation to rid our souls of every doubt and unbelief that would contaminate God’s truth, His word and His promises. For without God’s truth our soul can never be made free, and without a free, spirit-led soul we can never rule on His behalf. The only real limitation that we have is lack of faith, for without it we cannot please God.

Faith comes by Hearing and Understanding God's Truth

I Corinthians 3:2-3 “I fed you with milk and not with solid food; for until now you were not able to receive it, and even now you are still not able; for you are still carnal (*motivated by the physical senses*). For where there are envy, strife, and divisions among you, are you not carnal and behaving like mere men?”

Strife is a similitude of selfish ambition, which always leads to envy and division. These are all classified as works of the flesh. As long as we are carnal (*led by our physical senses*), we cannot handle the truth of God's word.

Why is it that the human soul fights so hard against the truth of the word of God? It's all about control! Our soul has been self-motivated for so long that it does not want to relinquish power to the Spirit of God. The soul will do the will of God as long as it can remain in control, the problem with that is that as long as the soul remains in control, Satan will be able to manipulate it.

Perhaps you've heard of powerful Christians who were very knowledgeable in the word of God, and very dedicated to their call, who then fell to the entrapments of sin. Perhaps you yourself are very knowledgeable in the word of God and very committed to your call, yet you live in fear of your weaknesses. You know that given the “right” circumstances you too would fall.

God does not put any confidence in our flesh, and He does not expect us to do it either. The bigger threat that we become to Satan's kingdom, the harder that he will fight to defeat us. The devil will not hesitate to expose whatever hold he has on an individual to save his kingdom.

Matthew 7:20 “Therefore by their fruits you will know them.”

Fruit is a product of that to which the soul is deeply rooted in. Our actions will expose the things to which we are deeply connected, sometimes subtly and hardly noticeable. But not during a time of crises, that's when the “real us” comes out. If we are operating in faith, during a time of testing it will show; our lack of faith will also be exposed during a time of crises.

If we find ourselves lacking in faith in the time of our greatest need, it simply means our roots were not connected to the Spirit of God (*His promises*), but rather to our

own understanding of things through our emotions, which are riddle by the limitations of past failures.

How do I remove the spirit of limitation from residing deep within my soul? If I can use another example; the soul longs for something real to dwell in! The habitation of the soul is spoken words. Weather we like it or not our soul will find solace in a lie, whenever the truth is absent.

Since the majority of us were exposed to major lies before we became saved, those lies in which our soul became entwined with must be exposed and quickly disposed of and replaced with God's truth. Let me give you an example:

Acts 9:4-5 "Then he fell to the ground, and heard a voice saying to him, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?' And he said 'Who are You, Lord?' Then the Lord said, 'I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. It is hard for you to kick against the goads.'"

Saul was a man who was fully convinced that Christianity was a fraud. In his religious zeal he was doing everything possible to prevent it from spreading. As a man deeply knowledgeable of the word of God and by the account throughout Israel of all that Jesus had done, Saul could have come to a different conclusion of who Jesus was. But since his zeal was not based on truth but rather emotion, he was unable to accept the truth except through a radical encounter between his spirit and his soul. A *dividing asunder* between the two from the Word of God.

Notice that when Jesus spoke to Saul as Saul's body felt to the ground, Jesus called out his name twice. I believe Jesus was addressing both Saul's spirit and his soul. Saul's spirit immediately recognized Jesus lordship by addressing Him as "Lord". But Saul's soul did not have a clue; that is why Saul asked Him "Who are you?"

As we read on we find out that Saul was trembling and astonished, which is the result of a lie being confronted by the truth, and it was the revelation of truth that prompted Saul to ask; "Lord, what do You want me to do?" And so the process began of transforming the soul of Saul from trusting his own emotions to trusting the words that were spoken to him by Jesus; "For I will show him (Saul) how many things he must suffer for My name's sake."

Saul's soul went from dwelling in its own perception of what was real, to dwelling in the reality of what the truth was: Jesus Christ is Lord!

Real faith, the faith that removes every mountain, can not be experience through the physical senses; on the contrary, real faith befuddles the senses. Real faith is found in the astonishing revelation that Jesus is the embodiment of truth. When Jesus said: “I will never leave you nor forsake you” He was providing an eternal dwelling place for our weary souls. Every soul that makes this promise its dwelling place, will never, ever feel alone.

“I will complete the work that I began in you”. When the soul makes this truth that Jesus spoke its habitation, based on the fact that Jesus is the author and finisher of our faith; then we will never, ever, doubt our victorious outcome, because circumstances have nothing to do with it.

Acts 17:28 “For in Him we live and move and have our being.”

What is our existence dependent on? Our breath! Our breath is the last thing to go before we die. Our breath is composed of our spirit and our soul. As born-again Christians when we die our spirit goes back to God for that is where it came from. But the reward of our soul will be determined by those “tenants” that dwell within its walls. We will receive a reward for all the good “tenants” living within our soul, and we will suffer loss because of all the bad ones.

II Corinthians 5:10 “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.”

Our physical bodies are like a dumb beast, always obeying the holder of the reigns which is the soul. The ancients illustrated it by the drawing of the body of a horse having a human torso, with arms and a human head, which represents the soul (*senses*) driving the beast. But sometimes this creature had wings which represents the spirit, which enables it to rise and fly above the physical environment. The reward for the soul is based in it being led by the Spirit (*word/promises*) of God. And by implication, the body; for it is submitted, by its intricate connection to the soul.

The soul has to be separated; broken from its dependency to the human senses, it must relinquish the reigns to the born-again spirit which is led by the Holy Spirit of God if it is ever to receive a reward. Humanly speaking in the now, our bodies cannot receive the fruit of righteousness, which is the reward for faithfulness, until the power of selfish ambition (*the self-steam that drive us*) has been totally broken, and fully surrendered to the Spirit of the living God.

Hebrews 4:12 “For the word of God is living (*life*) and powerful (*energy*), and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division (**merismos**) of soul and spirit, joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”

The Greek word “merismos” translated division or to divide asunder, has the connotation of separating for the purpose of properly aligning it, in order to gift it. Let me explain: The word of God is life giving energy that must flow in the proper order, from the spirit to the soul. Like electrical current that flows from positive to negative, it can not be reverse if it is to work properly.

God’s spiritual fruit will not flow out of the physical senses (*soul*), only through faith, which is a spiritual fruit as well as a spiritual gift. Faith is independent of the circumstances surrounding it. It flows out of God and it seeks to indwell our soul, but it will no share a room with doubt, fear or unbelief. However faith will gladly abide with love and hope, for these are eternal like God Himself. **I Corinthians 13:13** “And now abide faith, hope, love.”

Hebrews 11:1 “Now faith is the substance of things hope for, the evidence of things not seen.”

If we longed for righteousness, if we desire to be set free from the sin that dwells within us, if we crave to see the evidence of His holiness in us and through us, we have to properly align ourselves to His already provided gifts.

Hebrews 2:1/4 “Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard...God also bearing witness both with signs and wonders, with various miracles, and gifts (**merismos**) of the Holy Spirit, according to His own will.”

The same Word that like a surgeons knife penetrates deep down, and separates our selfish soul from its trusting that which seems right in its own eyes, is able to gift with signs and wonders the properly submitted soul that is trusting in all the great and precious promises of God.

Un-Traumatized by His Stripes

Proverbs 20:30 “Blows that hurt cleanse away evil, as do stripes the inner depths of the heart.”

Undoubtedly is not going to be easy to rid ourselves of all those unwanted “tenants” that we have built our lives around for so long. For better or for worse, we seem to resign ourselves to that which we do not like over that which we do not know. But as believers we have been given a goal, which is; the **salvation** (*healing, deliverance, restoration and preservation*) of our souls. Indeed the most worthy of all endeavors is to become that which we were destined to be.

Job 23:14 “For He performs what is appointed for me, and many such things are with Him.”

Here is where wisdom, understanding and knowledge earn their keep. Wisdom would ask; how did I become what I am? Understanding would say; how do I destroy what I hate? Knowledge would counter; come follow me and I will show you the way.

Think of your soul as a very exquisite Persian rug, uniquely hand woven unlike any other. Wonderfully made to reflect the ingenuity and creativity of its maker. Designed to adorn and complement the most beautiful of palaces. Durable and of the best quality materials that were ever made, priceless and without equal. Lost for centuries in a place and culture that does not recognize its worth or appreciates its value. Thrown over a dirty floor and stepped all over with mock and mire. Deeply ingrained filth casts doubt as to weather, even if someone were to recognize its value, that they would be able to restore it to its original splendor.

Such is the condition of the human soul that Jesus came to redeem.

Luke 19:10 “For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.”

Once we were found and confessed our sins before God and received Jesus Christ as our only savior and Lord, the ownership issue was resolved. We belong to Him! Never again will we suffer the reproach of the lack of identity or value. For God so loved the world that He gave His most treasure possession as a ransom for us.

But now to the restoration part: the blood of Jesus not only saves (*brings back to the original owner*), but also removes (*cleanses*) the stain of sin, washes away the filth

and the mock and mire. Like an unparallel softener, the blood of Jesus is able to remove the harshness and terseness once so common. Only His blood is able to bring up the tenderness that once was so ingeniously woven into the delicate fabric of our soul.

There were two aspects to the salvation that Jesus procured for us through His suffering: He shed His blood for the redemption of our soul, and He was beaten with the blows that hurt in order to restore it. You see, without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin; and without the beating and the bruising of stripes there can be no cure for the soul.

I Peter 2:24 “Who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness — by whose stripes you were healed.”

We know what the sin part is; our lying, cheating, conniving, and every evil deed that we ever committed. What we may not know is that the stripes that Jesus endured went deep down to the root cause of our sinfulness. Jesus did not just suffered to forgive our sins, but also to remove the seed of sin that is deeply rooted within us, that we may sin no more. Jesus made it possible for us to get rid of all those unwanted “tenants” that we classified earlier as works of the flesh.

Psalms 89:32 “Then I will punish their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes.”

In the old days they used to put a rug over a heavy line, take a paddle and beat the rug. The paddle was not designed to tear the fabric of the rug or to cause it harm. The idea was to remove the deeply ingrained dirt through the beatings. At first a great cloud of dust would manifest every time the paddle hit, the more that the rug was hit the lesser the dust cloud, until the time came when the stripes fail to produce any dust at all, all the unseen dirt had been exposed and removed through the stripes. Like wise for the human soul, without blows that hurt there can be no cleansing from the evil that dwells in the inner depths of the heart.

Isaiah 53:4-5 “Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed Him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed.”

One of the oldest tricks of the devil is the traumatization of the human soul. Countless times we see how a traumatized soul is forever changed for the worst if not properly dealt with. We may not want to admit it, but we are a product of past circumstances that shaped and molded us into what we are today, some for good and some for bad.

We all have to deal with deeply ingrained painful memories, actions or words that haunt us, and that to this day have a profound effect upon our actions. Some of them so tragic that our conscious mind is unable to recall, yet from the depths of the well of the unconscious mind they spew waters so bitter, that our lives are soured to the point of not worth living it.

Psalm 88:3 “For my soul is full of troubles, and my life draws near to the grave.”

But if we really knew and understood the wisdom of God, we would seek to come face to face with those hidden things that torment us and once and for all gain mastery over them.

Job 23:14-15 “For He performs what is appointed for me, and many such things are with Him. Therefore I am terrified at His presence; when I consider this, I am afraid of Him.”

We must overcome the fear of letting God perform in us that which He has destined for us. Don't get me wrong as believers we want God to do His will in us, we just don't want to have to endure the stripes and the blows that hurt. But for the purpose of cleansing there has to be an exposing of all those unpleasant things, a tearing apart and a ripping away of all of those unwanted “tenants” before they can be properly disposed of.

Hosea 6:1 “Come and let us return to the Lord; For He has torn, but He will heal us; He has stricken, but he will bind us up.”

The blood that Jesus shed for me gives me the assurance today of eternity with Him tomorrow. The stripes that He endured for me naked on that old cross make it possible for me to trust Him, while I myself am broken and exposed by the vicissitudes brought upon me by His loving hands.

Psalm 131:2 “Surely I have calmed and quieted my soul, like a weaned child with his mother; like a weaned child is my soul within me.”

The Issue is Trust

The ways of the Lord are impossible to phantom, but in His word we find very clearly defined principles. Knowing the proper application of these principles can mean the difference between peace and turmoil. Understanding how His principles work can lead us to a greater level of trust.

The covenant principle: Our God is a God that keeps His word. A God initiated covenant guarantees that He will complete that which has been initiated in such a covenant. For example in:

Hebrews 6:18 “That by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us.”

Here we see that those of us who have fled into the refuge of hope, we are told that God has entered into an immutable covenant with us. God who cannot lie swore on an oath that He would not change His mind (**Heb. 6:21**) concerning our hope for the restoration of our souls. Jesus’ example of suffering for us guarantees us that if we allow Him to break us up, no matter how much filth is uncovered, He will continue His work of redemption in us no matter what, as long as we are willing to trust Him: this is what the bible calls faith.

The covenant principle is a covenant of death and unto death. Requires a deep cutting (*divide asunder/merismos experience*) and a period of dreadful darkness, during which our faith is tested.

Genesis 15:6/8 “And he (Abraham) believed in the Lord, and He (God) accounted it to him for righteousness...And he (Abraham) said. ‘Lord God, how shall I know that I will inherit it (God’s promises)?’”

Here we see the simple and the difficult sides of trusting what God says. It is easy to trust God for a promised eternity after we die. Oh but how difficult it is to trust God for a promised deliverance here and now, especially when our lives have become such a mess and we see no possible way out of our hopeless situation.

After Abraham inquired of the Lord as to how he would inherit God’s promised redemption, God told Abraham to bring a three year-old heifer, a three year-old female goat, a three year-old ram, a turtle dove, and a young pigeon:

Genesis 15:10 “Then he brought all these to Him and cut them in two, down the middle, and placed each piece opposite the other; but he did not cut the birds in two.” Remember that the **Word of God** (*God’s Promises*) is able to divide asunder (*Merismos: take apart, fix and put back together again to its original setting*) between soul and spirit, joints and marrow and intent and attitude of the heart. Abraham believed God with his heart (*spirit*) but in the natural (*his soul*) he had no clue as to how God would be able to bring it about. God is going to show him how spiritual principles work through a physical act that Abraham was familiar with: Animal sacrifice.

Genesis 15:12 “Now when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and behold, horror and great darkness fell upon him.”

I believe that the three animals represented: the human spirit, the human soul and the physical body, the uncut birds represented God’ promises, which are yes and Amen! When Abraham cut them in half and put the pieces opposite to one another, it reenacted what takes place within us when faced with a difficult situation (*lacking the capacity to understand how it could be done*), which is the way that our natural emotions respond to a spiritual promise: This was represented by the vultures (*doubt and unbelief*) that came down upon the carcasses that Abraham had to drive away.

It wasn’t until Abraham fell into a deep sleep that he was able to see the true condition of his heart.

Jeremiah 17:9 “The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; Who can know it?”

Abraham now understood that the Word of God revealed to him through His promises, was the only thing that can be truly relied upon. No matter how far fetched or how improbable to the natural mind it may seem.

Genesis 15:17-18 “And it came to pass, when the sun went down and it was dark, that behold, there appeared a smoking oven and a burning torch that passed between those pieces. On the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying...”

In Bible days cutting an animal in half and walking on the blood between the pieces was how a covenant was made. It basically said: “May this happen to me if I do not keep my word.” Except that in Abraham’s case, the animals represented the division

between Abraham's soul and spirit, joint and marrow, and intent and attitude of Abraham's heart. The revelation that Abraham received deep down in his heart was: What God promises He is indeed able to perform!

Romans 4:20-21 "He did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God, and *being fully convinced that what He had promised He was also able to perform.*"

John 8:55-56 "Yet you have not known Him, but I know Him. And if I say, 'I do not know Him,' I shall be a liar like you; *but I do know Him and keep His word.* Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw it (*by faith in God's promises*) and was glad."

The Covenant

Ephesians 2:14-15 “For *He Himself is our peace*, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself *one new man from the two*, thus making peace.”

Remember one of our first Scriptures:

1Thessalonians 5:23 “Now may the *God of peace Himself* sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Through the covenant we begin to see the progression of the deliverance of our souls from the law of sin and death, into the liberty of the sons of God. Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, once crucified, dead and buried, now sits on the throne of glory as a representative of all the sons of glory. He abides in heaven with the only glorified human body, and is representative of a firstfruits offering to God of the harvest that is soon to come.

Romans 8:2 “For *the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus* has made me free from *the law of sin and death*.”

When we accept the Lord Jesus Christ as our only savior and Lord, immediately our *spirit man* is passed from the law of sin and death into the glorious law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus.

Ephesians 2:1 “And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins.”

This happens in an instant, and is called the born again experience. But not so for the human soul, for it is required that it should go through a transformational period.

Philippians 2:12 “Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, *work out your own salvation with fear and trembling*.”

Work out your own salvation: This implies a progression; a work in progress that applies only to our *soul man*. Our *spirit man* is either dead (*separated from the life of Christ*), or alive (*born again*) to Christ Jesus, there is no in between. However the

changing of our personality (*the soul man*) requires a progression of dividing asunder, removal and disposing of the unwanted “*tenants*” and the putting back together again to its predestined position, according to the will of God who alone knows our destiny.

Fear and trembling speaks of the progression of the work deliverance or the transformation of our old nature into the nature of the image of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Philippians 2:13 “For it is God who *works in you both to will and to do* for His good pleasure.”

The physical body will grow old and continue to decline until death, and will be redeemed and the soon return of our Lord Jesus Christ.

1 Thessalonians 4:15-18 “For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep (*dead in Christ*). For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words.”

This is when the redemption and restoration of our physical bodies will take place. But until then, our emphasis is on our *soul man* who has to be transformed into the image and destiny for-ordained for it by God.

Hebrews 10:16-17 “This is *the covenant* that I will make with them after those days, says the LORD: ‘I will put My laws into their hearts (*spirit man*), and in their minds (*soul man*) I will write them (*progressive*)’, then He adds, ‘Their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more.’”

Progressive Transformation

Psalm 103:1-5 “Bless the LORD, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His holy name! Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits: who forgives all your iniquities, who heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from destruction, who crowns you with lovingkindness and tender mercies, who satisfies your mouth with good things, *so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.*”

This promised vitality obviously is for the soul, for as we know the saints of old (*including David*) who lived long years grew old and eventually died, and now await the redemption of their physical bodies to complete their restoration. But look how David addresses his soul man: “Bless the Lord O my soul!” And he then compels his soul not to forget “All His benefits”. But here is the point that I want to bring your attention to: “All that is within me” Clearly David is addressing all the “tenants” within him to bless God!

Psalm 51:5-6 “Behold, *I was brought forth in iniquity*, and in sin my mother conceived me. Behold, *You desire truth in the inward parts*, and in the *hidden part You will make me to know wisdom.*”

In Psalm 51 David is revealing the progression of his deliverance from the iniquity that he inherited, through the exposing of it by the truth that was spoken to him by Nathan the prophet. The lie had to be exposed before David could receive the truth in the inward and hidden parts of his soul, through the wisdom of the words spoken to him through God’s prophet.

Psalm 51:7-9 “Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Make me hear joy and gladness, *that the bones You have broken* may rejoice. Hide Your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities.”

David equates the brokenness within his soul as comparable to having his bones broken; such was the trauma that he experienced when the lie within him was confronted with God’s truth. He then asks God to make him hear again joy and gladness; these are spiritual fruit that were lacking in David’s life while living the lie.

Psalm 51:10-12 “Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me away from Your presence, and *do not take Your Holy Spirit from me*. Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, and uphold me by Your generous Spirit.”

Notice how David pleads with God not to remove His Holy Spirit from motivating his soul. The realization for us here is that no matter how powerful position wise, or how anointed spiritually speaking we are, without the governor of our souls: the Holy Spirit, fully engaged, we are no match for the lusts of this world. This is a learned experience; the spirit man intuitively knows truth, the soul man has to be broken into an understanding of it, in order to experience truth.

Psalm 51:13 “Then I will teach transgressors Your ways, and sinners shall be converted to You.”

David does not say: “I will condemn sinners for their transgressions” No! What he says is that he will teach transgressors God’s ways, and then they will be converted. The power of self-control represented through the spirit of meekness in a believer’s life, speaks volumes of the power of the blood of Jesus, not only to save the person but also to transform their personality. David was not a perfect man, but his faith in the transforming power of the Word of God makes it possible for me to believe that if God can give courage and strength and the ability to fulfill his destiny to a flawed man like David, then He can do the same for me. If only I am willing to trust Him and His Word like David and Abraham and so many of the saints did.

Hebrews 11:32-34 “And what more shall I say? For the time would fail me to tell of Gideon and Barak and Samson and Jephthah, also of David and Samuel and the prophets: *who through faith subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises*, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, *out of weakness were made strong*, became valiant in battle, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.”

The Fact of the Matter

Hebrews 2:11-13 “*For both* He who sanctifies and *those who are being sanctified are all of one*, for which reason He is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying: ‘I will declare Your name to My brethren; In the midst of the assembly I will sing praise to You.’ And again: ‘I will put My trust in Him.’ And again: ‘Here am I and the children whom God has given Me.’”

If I am willing to believe that I was created by God and for His pleasure. If I am willing to acknowledge that my present human nature does not glorify my Creator; and if I know that all my transgressions have been blotted out because of my confession of sin before God and the acceptance on my part of His willingness to forgive me of all my sins in Jesus name. Then I have an obligation, don't I? To do all that I can to rid my soul of any and all hindrances that will keep me from attaining His destiny for my life here in the present.

Romans 8:12-13 “Therefore, brothers, we have an obligation — but it is not to the sinful nature, to live according to it. For if you live according to the sinful nature, you will die (*will not realize God's destiny for your life*); but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live (*you will achieve the goal of your faith*).” NIV *Italics mine*

If I am able to bring my soul under the influence of God's Spirit, does that mean that I will become perfect? Of course not! But I do not have to be perfect to fulfill God's destiny for my life, just obedient to the leading of His Holy Spirit! The best way that I can assure that my life time here on earth will not be wasted is by trusting His Word. If I have to be broken I rather be broken by Him, I know that He alone is able to put me back together again. How do I know?

Romans 8:11 “But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies *through His Spirit who dwells in you.*”

So I have the promises: I know that I am going to heaven because I have accepted Jesus' blood as a substitute for all my sins. I know that when I appear before the judgment seat of Christ (**1 Cor. 3:15**), even if I've wasted my time here on the earth, I will still receive the crown of salvation. But as I said in the beginning of this writing, so many of us just settle for failure and say to ourselves: “Well, I tried!” The only

reason a Christian would say something like that would be because of the lack of knowledge as to what is at stake.

Daniel 12:3 “Those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the firmament, and those who turn many to righteousness like the stars forever and ever.”

If we understand anything about God’s plan for mankind’s salvation, is that He uses humans as the conduit that brings about the Good News of the Kingdom. The failure of a single Christian to live up to their potential in Christ Jesus can have tragic consequences for those down the line from us. Imagine what would have happened to us today if in the first one hundred years of church history they would have given up. We would be lost right now without the good news of the Gospel.

When we are led by God’s Holy Spirit we become a vital part for the functioning of the body of Jesus Christ which is the church. No one gets saved unless a Christian prays for their salvation. No body hears the Gospel unless some Christian proclaims it to them either by word or deed. No one walks in self-control unless they are taught how to do it through the revelation from the Scriptures on how to wean their souls from the allure of the world.

Romans 10:14-15 “How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: ‘How beautiful are the feet of those who *preach the gospel of peace*, who bring glad tidings of good things!’”

The Gospel that we preach is the Gospel that we live. If we walk in the ways of the world by fulfilling its lusts, that’s how unbelievers live! What motivation do they have to change if the lives that we live are just as much in bondage as theirs; it’s for freedom’s sake that Christ has made us free, isn’t it? Nothing has a more powerful message to the lost than a transformed personality that is oozing out the love of Christ, overflowing with true joy, and excelling in an abundance of peace. Walking in selfcontrol in an out of control world is something that everyone desires. The early Christians died in martyrdom with such peace and love, even for those who were killing them that those who witness their demise became followers of Christ, because they knew that such qualities of holy character and peaceable semblance were not of this world. So they believed the Gospel message that they preached to be of divine nature and were willing to participate in the sufferings to attain such gain.

Are we to be any different? I pray not! Here is Paul's prayer for us:

Ephesians 1:17-20 “That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places.”