

Who Are We And Where Do We Fit (Part Two)

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As we begin this sermon I want to remind you of the two questions that are at the foundation of the sermon on the last holy day. Those questions are still lurking today because they were not answered in the previous sermon.

Those questions are, considering the massive scope of all that is going on in this world, “Who are we?” And, “Where do we fit?” The ‘we’ is the church, the subject that we are dealing with, sanctification, is truly expressive and meaningful and its importance needs to be clearly understood.

Those two questions were by design not answered in last week’s sermon because I felt I needed to add other important elements in this sermon—important to continuing sanctification, and preparation for the Kingdom of God. Here are three verses that I did not use last week regarding sanctification. Please turn to I Peter 1:2-3. It is written to the pilgrims of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia.

I Peter 1:2-3 Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ. Grace to you and peace be multiplied. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

I Peter 1:13-16 Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, as in your ignorance; but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, because it is written, “Be holy, for I am holy.”

I Peter 2:9-10 But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praise of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light. Who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.

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The first Day of Unleavened Bread, the sermon focused on the meaning of sanctification. I have continued to study into the term and especially how it was used commonly as the Greeks used it in their language as contrasted as to how the apostles used it. In common Greek writings, Hag-ee-as-mass was used only as it literally means. That is, being set apart, set separate from others.

If the Old Testament was written in Greek it could accurately be used for Israel's exodus and thus separation from Egypt. However, sanctification, because it is more directly and specifically purposeful when applied to spiritual things in the New Covenant writings of the apostles.

Several commentators stated the apostles used the term more expansively and also specifically than was common in ordinary Greek. Regarding sanctification, the important factor for us to understand as to its usage is to know the general subject in the context in which it appears in, otherwise you might get somewhat confused. The apostles used it three related ways: it first indicates the state we are in as a result of God's actions. That is, we are called and set apart. That is how it is mostly used in the Greek.

In addition to its most common usage in normal Greek, the apostles also used it to indicate the continuing process begun as a result of what God did. In other words, it is not a static term, it is dynamic. They used it to suggest continuing movement, a developing process, movement as illustrated by walking as Israel did in the wilderness, thus suggesting a constant movement toward a definite goal.

In addition, the apostles also use it to identify the intended end result of what God did and that is, the end result is absolute holiness, divine holiness, purity in every facet of life. This is why this term sanctification for the best understanding has to be understood within its context, because it was used to encompass the entire spiritual journey through our spiritual wilderness.

The Bible contains recordings of Israel's experiences in the wilderness. Those recordings suggest constant movement forward. Here in I Peter 2:9, you can understand this as a concluding summary of this amazing breathtaking circumstance that Peter began right at the beginning of the epistle with. In the third verse he was already on the subject of sanctification. He directly names it right there.

Halfway through the first chapter, holiness is mentioned as being sanctification's destination, so Peter is moving right along in the usage of this word but he is already beginning to show suggestions of a movement, from merely being called, in verse 3 of chapter 1, to becoming holy, in verses 14-16. Thus his dominant theme for the entire

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epistle becomes clearer. Sanctification began totally beyond our control, it did not occur through anything that we earned and thus the purpose of this summary statement here in I Peter 2, becomes clear in this verse with these inspiring words regarding what an honor has been bestowed upon us.

Of all the people that God could have sanctified, He sanctified so few, He set them apart out of the billions that were available to be set apart. We have to understand and appreciate that we are special to the Giver of this honor.

To make this doctrine practical through our daily life, we must believe that what we have been called to is so valuable we absolutely do not want to lose any of it. It needs to be understood and appreciated by us for the very best to be made of it.

Again reflecting on the sermon last week. Deuteronomy 7, which addresses Israel's sanctification in a condensed form there, especially leading up to verse 12, clearly establishes that our responsibility toward building upon the awesome treasure is to respond to God's calling by keeping His commandments, His statutes, and His judgments.

Now picking up on items found in the Sermon on the Mount, which Jesus used. He was the God who was speaking to Israel in Deuteronomy 7. Now we are in the New Testament context, but the same One is preaching. So picking up on items found in the Sermon on the Mount which Jesus used to begin His ministry, I chose in that sermon to expound upon His use of the term 'treasure.'

He referred to it as a treasure. What He was referring to is what we have been given, and that which sanctifies us. He goes on to say, which is important to you and me if we are going to be motivated, is that no one can serve two masters. Matthew 6 appears right after He mentions treasure. It is important on our part to consider what God has freely given us is a treasure of such value we will do all in our power not to lose one bit of it.

This appreciation is a contribution to this process—the process of sanctification—only we can supply. Nobody can put appreciation into us. We can hear sermons, we can read the Bible, but we have to allow and work at building appreciation for what we have been given and put that appreciation to work.

This puts the process of sanctification right in our lap. It is during sanctification that we are to be loyal to God through the keeping of His commandments. He gave us this treasure so that we would have something to shoot at, something that is a goal,

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something that we can appreciate the value of, if we allow it to build in our hearts.

Toward the end of that sermon I cautioned that we have to be careful not to allow ourselves to fall into the trap that Satan did. He was victimized by a pride that arose in him from his thoughts regarding God's gifting of him until he was far more interested in achieving *his* vision than he was of what God had for him. The responsibility that he decided to work on was not the same responsibility that God gave him the gifting to achieve.

Turn to Proverbs 13. We will look at two very clear statements pertaining to the same general subject, talking about Satan and his pride. Here is a warning that we really need to be aware of.

Proverbs 13:10 By pride comes only contention, but with the well-advised is wisdom.

Pride produces strife, it is its fruit.

Proverbs 16:18 Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall.

I want you to relate them to Satan. It tells us very clearly in Ezekiel 28 that this is what happened to Satan. He allowed pride to build up in him, and it produced the very things that these verses are saying.

Pride is spiritually dangerous. It leads directly to contention, because pride is so competitive. Proud people cannot abide with what they interpret as competition from others. Why do they feel competitive? The pride influences them to believe that they are better than others and should not be resisted. They resent the competition and resist it by attacking in some way. It may have taken awhile but Satan concluded God was holding him back from a better use of his power.

God became the bad guy because he twisted it in his own mind, his own heart, that God was against him. God was his competition, so he said, I shall be like God. By the time this is recorded he had it in mind already that he was going to win a competition against God. His attention gradually became more directly focused on what was of self-centered interest to him, and step by step he became God's adversary and what finally exploded into out right warfare.

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Satan could not accept the treasure God gave him unless he could use it solely as he saw fit. There is no doubt that he recognized that he had a great deal of ability, that he was gifted, but he did not look to the Giver of the gifts. He concluded that they were his by right. That is what happens in a person with pride they begin to look upon things as being theirs by right and they will go to war to protect their image of themselves. That is what Satan did.

I am going through this because we have been gifted with an awesome treasure, and we have something that we can use if we will follow the sanctification process humbly before God, and realize that we have this simply because of what God did and nothing that we did inherently but we can also use the gifting He has given to us and twist it in a way that Satan did.

Overwhelming desire to achieve his interest burned within him, disloyalty was the result. We Christians must never forget that God places us in the body *as it pleases Him*. That is why that verse is in the Bible, because of what Satan did. It is a reminder that he did not want to follow what God wanted him to do and what God gifted him to do. He had an awesome treasure that was given to him but he used it only for his own interest.

We must never forget that God places us in the body as it please Him, and provides us with gifting suitable for that place. In a similar manner the same sort of rejection of a treasure that God freely gave Israel occurred during their trek in the Promised Land.

Please turn to Numbers 13. What Israel did there was spiritually very similar to what Satan did.

Numbers 13:30-14:10 Then Caleb quieted the people before Moses, and said, "Let us go up at once and take possession, for we are well able to overcome it." But the men who had gone up with them said, "We are not able to go up against the people, for they are stronger than we." And they gave the children of Israel a bad report of the land which they spied out, saying, "The land through which we have gone as spies is a land that devours its inhabitants, and all the people whom we saw in it are men of great stature. There we saw the giants (the descendants of Anak came from the giants); and we were like grasshoppers in our own sight, and so we were in their sight." Then all the congregation lifted up their voices and cried, and the people wept that night, and all the children of Israel murmured against Moses and Aaron, and the whole congregation said to them, "If only we had died in the land of Egypt! Or if only we had died in this wilderness! Why has the Lord brought us to this land to fall by the sword, that our wives and

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children should become victims? Would it not be better for us to return to Egypt?" So they said to one another, "Let us select a leader and return to Egypt." Then Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before all the assembly of the congregation of the children of Israel. And Joshua the son of Nun and Caleb the son of Jephunneh who were among those who had spied out the land, tore their clothes; and they spoke to all the congregation of the children of Israel, saying: "The land we passed through to spy out is an exceedingly good land. If the Lord delights in us then He will bring us into the land and give it to us, a land which flows with milk and honey. Only do not rebel against the Lord, nor fear the people of the land, for they are our bread; their protection has departed from them, and the Lord is with us. Do not fear them." And all the congregation said to stone them with stones. Now the glory of the Lord appeared in the tabernacle of meeting before all the children of Israel.

Thinking on that storyline there, can you see the process that occurred with Satan? Were the children of Israel gifted? Yes they were, they were gifted with liberty, they were gifted with a knowledge of where they were headed, they were gifted with the potential to be able to have the land that they were before there. They could not loyally and sacrificially respond because they did not believe in God's will for them anymore than Satan did.

That is exactly what he did. He turned his back on the gifting that God gave him to carry out a responsibility in God's operation of things and decided that he was going to use it as he saw fit, instead of keeping the commandments of God. He decided that God was against him, that God was holding him back from what he wanted to do, and what he wanted to do was better than what God wanted him to do, so he used the gifting to rebel against God.

The Israelites did not supply the necessary appreciation of the great treasure that had been made available to them, they discounted it, thus they rejected the treasure that God laid right in their laps. They were right on the doorstep of actually receiving a major portion of it—liberty as a people and prosperity in their own land. Not in the wilderness, in their own land.

They rejected it in favor of their then present fear-driven, self centered, dissatisfaction. How easily they forgot how God had supplied their needs all the way through those first couple of years. That was part of the gifting.

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The treasure was not appreciated by them. Their rejection of taking the land, which was a type of the Kingdom of God, was to them not worth their while to make sacrifices for the possession of it.

We need to think this through thoroughly, because every single one of us has been gifted by God with the gifting needful to carry out what he has commanded us in Deuteronomy 7:12—keep His commands. That is simple enough, not in terms of keeping them necessarily, because those challenges will always be there, but at least in giving us understanding of what is required of us.

We have the treasure, and the way I am giving this sermon is that, that treasure is intended by God to be a motivator. God set a jewel before us and said, “This is yours. I want you to keep My commandments.” A simple illustration.

Another factor is needed and we will find that Jesus supplied this factor immediately after He mentioned the treasure. The two factors have to be worked together, because one without the other is going to leave us weakened. We need the two of them and I am sure that is why Jesus mentioned the two of them together.

What is it that we need? One of the major reasons that Israel rejected the treasure was because their vision, their perception of what God had offered them for their life must be clear, as clear as we can possibly make it. There has to be clarity of vision of the treasure. The treasure is the offer of the Kingdom of God.

People whose vision is not clear, I think that we would say today, all over the place, in the use of their gifts from God, their time, and their energy. Holiness is thus hindered because of a lack of discipline. Vision enables a person to be disciplined. His goal is set, he sees it clearly, and he is driving toward it.

Turn back to the Sermon on the Mount. This time we are going to be in chapter 6. These two motivators have to be worked together in our life in order for sanctification to continue to the end that God wants it to reach.

Matthew 6:22-24 “The lamp of the body is the eye. If therefore your eye is good, your whole body will be full of light. [God’s truth] But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great is that darkness! No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.”

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Just in case you did not remember, the treasure is mentioned in verse 19. In this brief paragraph Jesus gives us two motivators that He wants us to work together with one another, in order to provide some motivation. Appreciation of the treasure and a clear vision of our goal, provides great influence toward keeping us faithfully loyal to God's purpose and thus there is constant movement toward holiness.

Again we are going to use this basic illustration that Jesus used as He began His ministry. He used this illustration as a prod to support loyalty to God and to His purpose. What caught my attention is the phrase in verse 22, "If your eye is good, your whole body will be full of light." And in verse 23 it says, "If your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness, and how great is that darkness."

Jesus is using eyes metaphorically as though they are windows. In a house the windows serve double duty, they let light in, and they allow one out to look in, and allow those who are in, to look outside. There is a two-way street here, Jesus's main concern is the one on the inside looking out. In order to make this metaphor spiritually useful, we have to examine it one step further.

What is the real subject here? The King James Version translates the term 'good' in verse 22 as, single, and I believe that translation is in some way better suited to the overall subject here. The King James Version translates the term 'bad,' in verse 23 as, evil, which also might be better once one understands Jesus' intent.

The main subject of Jesus' teaching is in regard to devotion to one purpose. The single eye refers to His disciples having a single, fixed vision, or goal. This is why right after this illustration He used the statement that, "no one can serve two masters." If your eyes are bad and you are seeing double, that is not good.

The thrust of Jesus' teaching is one of maintaining clear focus which each disciple must be responsible for. Even as each disciple is responsible for appreciating the treasure, each disciple is responsible for maintaining clear focus. Clear focus supports loyalty to achieving a purpose. The evil eye is not something that is mysterious or devilish, but rather refers to a blurred misleading vision that causes one to not rightly identify what is before one.

In addition, the Greek term underlying the 'evil' translation, also carries with it a sense of something weighty. Because the eye is not seeing things right, then life becomes weighty, difficult. The single eye facilitates clarity of purpose to one's mind, or heart, and labors in life, while the evil eye pictures a darkening of the mind that produces a heavy difficult life because of uncertainty about which way to go and what to do.

If you cannot see well you will not know what to do, which way to go. The evil eye produces fear, and fear is very heavy to deal with. The modern illustration that might be helpful is the truth involved in modern sports, especially where one is in constant movement. This illustration is especially clear in sports like baseball, volleyball, basketball, hockey as well, where a puck is used rather than a ball, but the rule of thumb is basically, "don't ever take your eye off the ball." If one does that during a game it is highly possible that you are not going to know what to do in the next movement because the game is passing you by.

The reason for the confusion is because one's focus on the progress of the game is broken because where the ball is, is controlling the action and the outcome of the game. If focus is broken, then the player's anticipation of what he should do next deteriorates, and he finds himself unable to help the team.

So we are involved in a life that has an awesome purpose that requires a fair measure of focus. The focus in life does not need to be intensely concentrated as it is in a fast moving game, because the game will be over shortly. But in life, life moves on, so the principle is still applicable. Therefore if in our spiritual life we are not focused to the extent needed, we do not really grasp what is going on, then Jesus would judge our vision as evil. It is evil because it is sending uncertain, vague, confused, and foggy signals to our heart.

How loyally dedicated can one be when he does not know what to do next? Loyalty has to begin and given somewhere. True loyalty to God began with His calling and we begin to truly know Him for the first time in our life. Loyalty will be given by us to what we are focusing on within our calling. That is easy to see with Satan. When pride was rising up in him he was not any longer focusing on what God wanted him to focus on. His focus was broken because his eye was evil and he turned his attention to what interested him, not the One who gave him the gifts.

That is such a simple equation. It is what Jesus is using here to help us to understand that even as we are the one who provides the appreciation for the treasure, we also are the only one who can focus our attention. That is part of our keeping the commandments.

I remember something that was interesting to me in the movie "The Ten Commandments." Everyone remembers the evil Edward G Robinson, who played Dathan. What was so interesting was, John Derek who played Joshua, put the blood on the doorpost and the lintel of Dathan's house because he wanted to marry the girl that

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Dathan had turned into a slave. So when the Passover angel went over and was killing everybody and everybody began departing, Dathan, who had his heart set on remaining in Egypt and continuing his job as a slave master under them, living high off the hog, and here he was now, because of the blood, being forced out of Egypt. And he was frantic, so he asked the question as they were leaving, "where are we going?" He did not know where they were going.

Maybe most of the Israelites did not know where they were going, but I think whoever wrote that portion of script understood something here. Dathan did not know where they were going, and of course in the movie Dathan caused all kinds of trouble. He was not of the same mind as the leadership at least, and he ended up being executed by God.

It is an illustration from a movie, but it does illustrate what happens if a person is not of the same mind as the leadership, and in this case the leadership was God. He was not going the same direction as God, he was not going in the same direction as Moses and Joshua, and others who were part of the leadership, so all the way along his evil eye was not directed on the same goal they were, and he ended up being executed.

This is one of the reasons why God gave the Israelites, who were as unconverted as dogs and cats, you might say, the cloud by day, and pillar of fire by night, so that there was a measure of physical guidance for those people as long as they were moving. Because they could not on their own supply what they needed. They did not have the Spirit of God to enable them to do it, but at least God mercifully provided them with the means by which they could at least keep somewhat on track.

The loyalty that God wants does not have to be given on a spectacular stage before thousands of witnesses, but rather in a consistent quiet way of life in everyday service. The treasure has been freely given to provide a foundation that motivates along a God-given path toward further development, and if we are going to succeed in this endeavor that we have been called to, we cannot afford to have a mind that is disloyally divided between some other interest in this world and what God has called us to accomplish.

Sanctification will at best be slowed, or worse, stopped, or not occur at all. God has called us to steadily grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ. I do not mean that we cannot have any other things on our mind during our calling, only that our calling must dominate all other things that come to the mind and that our hands find to do.

Put another way, all things must circulate around the perimeter of our calling. I hope that you are catching the drift of my message here. Loyalty is often narrowly pictured as what we do as part of an act of obedience, or the words used in a conversation. These

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are definitely parts of loyalty, but what I want us to see is that loyalty begins before an actual act of obedience, because it is already been worked on prior to the act, in arranging our mind to foresee that loyalty, faithfulness, has been worked on by means of eliminating much extraneous thought and activity.

I want to return to the original question, because I am not in a sense addressing individuals specifically in this sermon. I am really addressing the church as a body, of which we are a part. The original questions, who are we? And where do we fit? We have been set apart, we have been given a path to follow—we have been told that we have to supply certain things in order to fulfill our responsibility—we have to keep God's commandments, His statutes, and His judgments. Those are the overall things. We have told by Christ that we have to consider our calling to be a treasure, and our eye has to be single focused, on the same objective that God's is in His calling.

We still need another element to go along with these other two. This element is the way that we see or perceive ourselves against the background of the events happening in this world.

It is a pretty rotten world, but remember we are *not of it* but we are in it. We have to live with it existing in the same time and space that we do. We have to get a reasonably fair picture in our mind of where do we fit, where do we see ourselves within this world in which all these terrible things are happening, and are leading toward even circumstances that are worse than they are right now.

During the 2014 Feast of Tabernacles, I expanded upon four themes in which each was an aspect of a much larger issue. I titled that series as “In Search of a Clear World View.” I will be talking about world view here.

I want to cover some of that again. Even though the term ‘world view’ never appears in the Bible, it is a fairly modern usage in English but it is helpful to understand because it is a very meaningful term to people who are preparing for something. It is derived from the German language, *Weltanschauung*, which literally means ‘world outlook.’

Perhaps I can illustrate world view in this way, If you would stand on the edge of the Grand Canyon and include yourself within the picture, you are not really looking at yourself, you are looking out at the canyon but yet you are a part of the picture. Even though you are not focusing on yourself, you are part of the picture.

If you were standing on the edge of the Grand Canyon and include yourself in the picture, your eyes would pick up many objects within your range of vision. You could

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definitely see the canyon itself, and a portion of the sky above. Your eyes might pick up the Colorado River beneath the canyon, as a means of contrast, the height of the mountain rising from the Colorado River below. You might be aware of trees, rock formations, and the strata as each layer was deposited. You would behold a multitude of colors and shapes, and even though you could not see the heat of the desert, it would still be part of the picture.

In other words there are things that are impacting even though we are not directly part of it, and not concentrating on it. The important element here is that, if you were thinking at all, your mind would not be a complete blank. In fact it has been clearly demonstrated that our mind, our eyes, pick up things that we did not even think that we saw, but they are registered there in the mind. The mind saw them, even though we did not think on what was happening.

That view may impact your very next thought. It probably would because the view of the Grand Canyon is so awesome, you would either be filled with awe at what God has done, overwhelmed. It makes you feel as if you were in a holy place.

That whole thing is in my mind. I cannot remember everything my eyes saw, and everything that was registered on my mind, but my mind saw it. Whether you are getting the point here or not, this is the way life is. It is a series of events that is registering on the mind and many of these things we are not even aware are registering. We are aware of things of which we are concentrating on, so you may have a wide variety of thoughts regarding each object within the scene, but the overall impact would probably be the almost overwhelming scope of the canyon itself.

That entire picture would be of a specific portion of the world. What one experiences tends to produce a reaction. We are getting to an important part of world view here: what we experience, what we see, tends to produce a reaction.

On the other hand a singular object within the scene might be focused upon, forcing everything else to become blurred and less important. Here are some definitions.

First, from the *Merriam Webster Dictionary*: it defines world view as, “the way one thinks about the world.” The emphasis is on the word ‘way.’ That is important because we are going to see as we go along here, people can look at the same thing and get two different views. They have different ways of interpreting what they see. In other words, one’s world view can be highly individualistic.

Second, *The Free Dictionary* defines world view as, “the overall perspective from which

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one sees and interprets the world.” ‘Interpret’ is the word that is important. This is a pretty good definition. That same dictionary also says, “a comprehensive conception or image of the universe and of humanity's relation to the world.” How do we react to that relationship? It also adds this, “A theory of the world used for living in the world.” They are pointing out that the way we see things effects the way we act and react. Just as I said about our view of the Grand Canyon. That scene is going to effect us.

Here is the one I like best. It is taken from the *American Scientific Affiliation* web sight. I believe this might even be a religious organization. This definition does not define the term itself, but what it does do is clarify what results from one’s world view as, “world view forms the belief's, values, and behavior of a culture that stems directly from one’s world view.” What they are saying here is, our world view very frequently determines what we are going to do, what we are going to say.

This is why world view is so important. The way we look at things is what we are dealing with here. We have been given a treasure, an awesome treasure. We have been told by Christ that not only do you have a treasure, but I want you to look at this thing clearly. How clearly can we look at something when it is all fuzzed up by what is going on in the world? If we cannot discipline ourselves to pull ourselves away from the impact that the world is having on us, our world view is not going to guide us very clearly.

This is something that we kind of resist because we want to hang on to what is comfortable to us. Where did that comfort come from? It probably came from our experiences in the world. How reliable is that? It is not very reliable. This is why it takes us forty, fifty years to get to the Kingdom of God.

World view reactions are drawn from our experiences in the world. That is very helpful once we understand that everybody's world view is somewhat different even when literally looking at exactly the same scene or experiencing exactly the same circumstances. This is why the police have so much trouble. They start questioning people who viewed something, and each one has a different description. The people are sincere but they do not see things the same.

How do we deal with the differences within a congregation of people who are to love one another and these differences are out there? How do we handle them? How will we react when a difference of viewing something arises?

We have a common saying as we try to explain something that arises and disturbs the peace between us and another and very often what we say is, “Well he or she doesn’t look at things the way I do.” Of course. Their world view is dictating something different

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from what you think. And you think about it different because your world view is not seeing it the same way as theirs.

How do we handle those differences? We have this treasure, we have our eyes lined up on the Kingdom of God, but we still see things differently! So we get angry, we fight with one another, we hold grudges, because the world view is dictating our response.

In these kind of situations, how dominating of a personality do we have? How submissive are we? Are we humble? Are we proud? Do we insist that everybody has to see things the same way we do? This is the way Satan was toward God. Once that pride arose in him and he began to look at every situation through the eyes of pride, and what he wanted to do, it eventually lead him into a war with God and the differences were never resolved because Satan did not look at things the same way God did.

This is a real challenge, because we can be as sincere as anything regarding the treasure, and we feel our eyes and mind are lined up in the right way, but the differences still exists. This is one reason why we have to learn to love one another, despite the differences.

John 17:3 “And this is eternal life, that they may know You [so that He is a part of our world view], the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.”

John 17:20 “I do not pray for these alone but also for those who will believe in Me through their word.” [that is you and me]

We believe in God, in Jesus Christ as our Savior through what they have written.

John 17:21-23 “That they all may be one as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me. And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one, just as We are one; I in them, and You in Me, that they may be made perfect in one and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me.”

By far and away in regard to world view, how is God's as compared to yours? *Do you see things the same way God does?* It is so important that Jesus, who is both our Creator and Savior, and is now our High Priest working on us so that we can be created in His

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very image, prayed for help for us to meet this most important of all challenges.

Take some time to consider how divided America is between the liberals and the conservatives, between the blacks and the whites, Republicans and Democrats, heterosexual and homosexuals, abortionists and anti-abortionists. Giving up the way we look at things and coming to full agreement with how God looks at things is, even with the help of conversion and God's Spirit, difficult to say the least.

Satan is truly doing a number on mankind in every important category of life, and this can only lead to calamity, because God is not in his picture as a friend, He is pictured as an enemy. What do you think that he has passing on to mankind? The enemy is God, and that is part of the world view that we get from this world and it is in there.

This is why Jesus prayed. He understood that the world has impacted us and put all kinds of bad information and signals in there. I think that you will agree with me when I say that salvation can only be by God's grace. And in this request Jesus asked for a love from God the Father so intimate (and that considering that fact that we are so unlovable because we are so far out of alignment with Him), that Jesus asked for a love that is the equivalent of the intensity of the Father's love for Jesus Himself.

It says in the prayer, "as You have loved Me." That is mind bending! Is it asking too much for us to appreciate the treasure? Is it asking too much for us to be single minded in our devotion to this great Creator? That our Savior prayed to give them the love, as *You love Me*.

That is the only thing that can overcome this really screwed up mind view—world view—that we have put into us by the spirit that dominates this world. I believe you will agree with me, that everybody's world view is constantly shifting to some small degree as we mature, and experience, and thus learn new things. If this is not true then our conduct and our attitudes will never change, but they will because God is working.

Our Christian world view is the way we perceive ourselves as a Christian, with responsibilities within the larger picture of what is taking place in the world so that we might choose the best course of action for glorifying God and giving evidence He is indeed a major part of our life.

In Psalms 34, David said that the man who hates God, that God is not in all his thoughts. I read that to mean that God wants His children to think of Him in all our thoughts, because that way we have the best chance of getting the best guidance, and therefore making the best choice.

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What we just read from John 17 forces us to admit that our world view must change. It must change to be in alignment with God's but at the same time that which is already in alignment with the way God desires our world view must *never* change. See both sides of the picture.

I am going to close these messages on sanctification with seven truths that are part of our world view, that our sanctification has put into us and made that part of our world view, because the original question is, where are we in the world? These truths are major parts of the church's spiritual significance and they must be part of our decision making. Remember world view determines choices that are made.

I will tell you that being in the church is a big deal. I will give you seven scriptures, and in each case an aspect of the church in our life is named here, making the church significant.

Ephesians 1:3-6: The church was planned from before the foundation of the world. The church therefore has ancient roots making being part of it an extremely significant honor.

John 6:44: The church cannot be randomly joined—one must be specifically called, chosen, and placed in it personally by the One who planned for it from the beginning. It is a big deal to have the Creator pick you out Himself.

Ephesians 2:19-21: The church is metaphorically the body of Christ and we are being fitted into a holy temple. Both metaphors depict intimate closeness with our Savior.

Romans 8:14-17: The church has received the spirit of adoption and are considered as members of the very Creator's family.

Colossians 2:22-23: Human history reveals it is obvious that mankind has the impulse to worship. However the mystery of the church's spiritual identity must be revealed.

Galatians 6:16: The nation of Israel is a worldly institution. It is the church that is the Israel of God, and is specifically His possession. God is not done with the nation of Israel but they are a worldly institution.

Malachi 3:16-18: God considers the church His treasure. He values it so highly He gives it His personal protection in order to lose none of it.

Here is the question again: Where do we fit? The church does not fit into this world at all, except for carrying out any responsibilities God assigns it, and sharing life with all of humanity in it. We have been given such an honor that it is beyond our comprehension to realize how significant it really is. We can see the words written and we can appreciate them, and we can make good use of them, and I think that is what God really wants us to do—appreciate it, and respond to Him in the way that He desires.

So we have the treasure within our grasp. We have singleness of purpose that is forming, and our world view is clarifying. We are in a most significant group and yet at the same time we are nothing in this world, but we are on the right track.