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B0924 – June 14, 2009 – Review Of Sanctification

Let's get some continuity with Solomon. I want to cover a lot of material by way of review and bring some of this stuff that we've learned in the Golden Era of Solomon into perspective. One of the things we can't emphasize enough is to think in terms of the progress of revelation, that God administers history like a teacher administers lessons, one after another. History has a progress, revelation has a progress, and there's a rhyme and reason for the way God works. Right now we're trying to visualize this Golden Era of Solomon and the big ideas behind what was going on in God's mind for that era in Biblical history, the time frame is 1000-900BC.

We want to go to Deut 17:17. In Deut 17 we have the limits of the king. We said when the monarchy was established that it was not a totalitarian regime; it was office underneath the authority of Scripture. We said the importance of that is it means that all political institutions, Biblically speaking, are under the authority of the word of God. There's no such thing as a secular non-Biblical institution in God's sight. Obviously there are pagan societies with the institution. That's not what we're saying. We're saying that any claim by any government by any king by any administration that they are the supreme authority is a false claim. If the king of Israel could not claim for himself divine authority in his legislative and policy making, who else could possibly claim that? Here you have the model king put in a box, and that's why this passage in Deut 17 is very important. There are a lot of political implications here; this is not just religious literature. There are deep political implications to this. The king of all kings of all societies of all history, the one kingship that was called into existence by a direct intervention of God was not permitted absolute authority. His authority was derivative of a prior authority in God. We covered this with David, verses 15-16, "you shall surely set a king over you whom the LORD your God chooses,

one from among your countrymen you shall set as king over yourselves; you may not put a foreigner over yourselves who is not your countryman.” This is after they decided they wanted a king like all the other nations and God says I’ll give you a king but it’s going to be a king according to My model.

Verse 16, “Moreover, he shall not multiply horses for himself” that’s an expression for power, horses were the military weapons of the day, they were the best weapons of the day, the “high-speed” weapons of the day, today we would say armed infantry, but horses represented not only military power, they represented political prestige, “nor shall he cause the people to return to Egypt,” In other words, there was supposed to be a separation and this plays a role in what we’re going to say about the stench that Solomon started in the culture, “to multiply horses, since the LORD has said to you, ‘You shall never again return that way.’” Verse 17, “Neither shall he multiply wives for himself, lest his heart turn away; nor shall he greatly increase silver and gold for himself.” Then the admonition, verses 18-19 which describes the daily, every day prescription on the part of the supreme political ruler; he is to study the word of God. There’s the model of a political leader. Every day he is supposed to be in the word of God. That’s the model for the highest authority that God ever directly authorized in history. You argue from the greater to the lesser; if that’s the control placed upon the greater king, then what are the controls placed on the lesser kings. The pagan society with a pagan king with a pagan governmental authority is in rebellion against this standard, inherently rebellious against this standard. That’s the setting.

Now we have to come over and look at Solomon’s behavior. We go back to 1 Kgs 11:1-4. We want to ask some questions of the text. It says: “Now King Solomon loved many foreign women along with the daughter of Pharaoh:” and he lists some of these women in his harem, “Moabite, Ammonite, Edomite, Sidonian, and Hittite women, ²from the nations concerning which the LORD had said to the sons of Israel, ‘You shall not associate with them, neither shall they associate with you, for they will surely turn your heart away after their gods.’” Then the comment of the prophetic writer of the text, “Solomon held fast to these in love.” I said last week to anticipate this question: What’s going on here? Something “rotten” is setting in at the core of this Biblical culture, of this great golden era. Something’s not right, and it has to do with marriage, it has to do with international politics, and it has to do with idolatry.

Somehow we've got to tie together the text. This is the thing about Scripture, sometimes the Bible intends us to do the thinking, and it wants us to put it together so let's put these three topics up here: one is idolatry; another one is marriage; the third is international treaties. All three of these are implicated, and somehow they work together and somehow it was kind of a synergy among these three elements. If you go back to Exod 23:26-33 and 34:12-16 you find certain forbidden marriages, it's saying don't intermarry with these cultures. If you're an astute student of Scripture you realize, wait a minute one of those laws is violated by a small book of Scripture, the book of Ruth. The law says "don't marry a Moabite woman, Ruth is a Moabite woman, and not only is she married to a Jew named Boaz, but she's in the Messianic line. So now we've got to cope with a little theological problem. What is the book of Ruth doing in the Canon of Scripture; is there a conflict between what the Law prescribed and Boaz's marriage to Ruth? Earlier, in the Book of Joshua, Caleb is married to a Gentile wife. And yet the Law says don't marry them. So do we have a conflict in Scripture? Some people can say yeah, there is, but we know enough of our God to know He doesn't think that way. So if we think there's a conflict, there's something wrong with our thinking. What do you suppose is the answer to that dilemma? How do we reconcile the existence of Ruth with this commandment not to marry foreign women, and then tie it back to Solomon where he's accused of going down the tubes because he married foreign women? What's the issue? The issue is obviously in Ruth's case she was a woman who was converted. Think back to the days of the Conquest. Of all places, when the spies went into the land, who did they meet, not just a prostitute but the lady who ran the brothel. And who is it that's the believer? It's almost like God sort of says okay, you'd be surprised where the gospel goes, and who it converts. Of all the land, in all that area, it was the madam of the whore house who trusted in Christ. The rest of that city rejected and they were slaughtered. When the armies went in, who did they rescue? Biblical archeologists point out that when they get to those destruction layers at Jericho, they found that the north side of the city was where there was housing directly in the fortress wall and that there's one section that's not fallen out, and that's exactly what the Scriptures say. We may be within fifty feet of where this lady lived. In her case and in Ruth's case they were women who bowed their knee to the God of Israel in the OT, they believed in YHWH.

What then do we say about Solomon? What we say is that we never observe in Scripture any of Solomon's wives converting to YHWH. That's the point, that's what went wrong here besides the fact we have a harem going on. King David had a harem going on but David's harem isn't becoming a source of stumbling; Solomon's harem is. That's another issue, the multiplying of wives, etc. we're not going to get into that.

In 1 Kgs 11:1-2 we have the case where he has a harem but the harem is made of marriages to women who have not converted to faith in YHWH. Now we've got a problem. He got into those marriages to seal international deals. They were the glue that held together international treaties. It shows you that in ancient history marriage took priority over international treaties. Why do we say that? Why do they insist on royal marriages to cement international treaties together? Isn't that a confession that they believed in the power of the marriage union? Sure they did, it shows you the deep seated divine institution of marriage in man. The marriage put the international treaty so to speak, in concrete. What does a marriage bring to the world? Marriage to go anywhere has to have some kind of a unity of purpose, and that purpose generates a certain culture, certain values and these values propagate out into society through the children. This is why, when families go to pot, society goes to pot and there's no government program that can fix it, because the problem isn't with the government, the problem is with the families. The government has tools to deal with other kinds of problems but family is outside the realm of the governments tools.

Let's review: Solomon has made marriages with women who aren't converted. Why does the NT caution against dating and marrying unbelievers? Because you have a total collision of worldviews. To marry an unbeliever means you have Satan for your father-in-law, and now you have a war on your hands: one of you bows the knee to Christ; the other is bowed to Satan. How are you going to build unity on those two diametrically opposed principles? Solomon is trying to do that, and out of that we're going to see what went wrong with his wisdom. He starts with a marriage that's compromised. Right there he's compromised the biblical absolute. When he went and used these marriages to seal his international treaties, he imported not only foreign women but foreign values, and that was where things went wrong. The rot started when two different value systems were mixed in the marriage and from there it just went down the tubes. We'll see it took centuries for this to work out. Our

next event is going to be the collapse of the kingdom, the fall of the northern kingdom, the decline of the whole nation. It all starts with this kind of compromise.

Alright, secondly, let's link. What is it that is always hitched to an unbeliever you marry? Idolatry. The marriage which you entered into to establish the international treaty because you didn't trust God, now brings in idolatry and these terrible values start getting generated. So at the very root of Solomon's kingdom there was an infestation. Why did Solomon do this? The guy isn't dumb. Solomon is probably one of the smartest men who ever lived. How could he have been so stupid to make this kind of mistake? Ecclesiastes works with that problem. Ecclesiastes says basically that no man can comprehend God, and since you can't totally comprehend God, you can only get pieces of His mind. That means that to trust God requires an in-depth understanding of who God is. In the final analysis you have to submit to commands you don't fully understand. God says do things this way and we can't see all the reasons why. They're not stupid things, they're simply that He either chooses not to reveal why or it's so complex that we creatures couldn't comprehend it if we tried. Our thoughts are not His thoughts and His ways are not our ways.

That being the case, man's wisdom must be subordinate to God's wisdom. There are two levels of wisdom. Remember when we started two years ago we kept saying you'll see this again and again and again in the Scripture, and always go back to this, always remember this. Unbelief believes in continuity; there's only one level of existence. Belief in the Scriptures believes there are two levels of existence, there's the Creator existence and there's the creature existence. Let's apply that distinction to wisdom. There are two wisdoms: there is the wisdom of God and there is the wisdom of men. Solomon confused these. He had such great human wisdom that he began to think that it was self-sufficient and you can tell he thought that way because what was he trying to do. What were these marriages purpose? It was to get international treaties? Why did he want international treaties? To get security. They're mutual defense pacts. He was trying to secure his kingdom when God had already promised them security. God had absolutely ensured that Israel would be secure. Whose job was it, after all, to protect Israel under the terms of the Abrahamic Covenant? Who protected them down in Egypt? Who had promised to give them the land? Who was it that stopped the sun and the

moon in the middle of a battle? Who was it that commanded their armies? Who was it that knocked the walls of Jericho down? So given all these things, where does the security issue lie? The security issue lies with YHWH. But you see, this is such a subtle temptation, we want to create our own kingdoms, our own solutions, and Solomon felt because he was so wise, he was an astute trader, we know that he wheeled and dealt in the international currency markets. He bought and sold gold and silver by the ton. This guy knew all about international relations and he began to think like the people he did business with. And then he realized that the way to get the security is to make a treaty. After all, everybody else is doing it. So we will build a human kingdom according to the wisdom of the world that will give me security. My security lies in my wisdom, and I'll build out of my wisdom. He built all right, and that began with foreign marriages, and with that came the baggage of idolatry.

That's how the three work together. Spiritually it was Solomon unable to comprehend the totality of God's plans, which makes him a man of faith, not of works. But the flesh always resorts to works, gimmicks, do it yourself plans. I'm going to build my security. Solomon's undoing wasn't some kind of great immoral sin. It was a sin of a more subtle sort; it was the desire for security on MY terms; that was the sin that led to the cultural decay.

We want to move on because we want to draw out the truths we learn from the Golden Era of Solomon that we can bring over into our lives. Every one of the events that we've dealt with so far has had doctrinal truths. We went back to Creation and out of the Creation event we learned about God, we learned about His attributes, we learned about the nature of man, we learned about man's relationship to nature and the creation, all these basic, basic ideas on which everything else in Scripture is related. We went to the Fall and we learned about the problem of evil; we dealt with the problem of suffering, a major problem with most people. It's all there in the event of the Fall. You can't understand one without the other. When we started with the Conquest and Settlement we embarked on the doctrine of sanctification, the reign of King David elaborated on the dimensions of sanctification and now the Golden Era of Solomon has a contribution to understanding sanctification. What can we pull out of this?

The moment we raise this question we go back to a principle, and this is why I hope maybe some of you see why I keep going back to this framework. It looks like what we're talking about is the Christian life stuff. That's true, this is all Christian life stuff, and this is all the stuff that 90% of the books deal with when you walk in a Christian book store. But the difference is when you learn to think in terms of the framework that the truths down in this period must be built on truths of prior periods. When you learn to think that way, you realize wait a minute, the doctrine of sanctification or Christian living is built on prior truths, and it's these prior truths that give the power to those truths. Whereas a lot of Christians will tend to say, well I don't really understand sanctification, or we have this book, the secret to living the Christian life, and all the "secrets." You'd think it was the most classified secret in history, everybody's got a secret. It's not a secret, the principles of the Christian life all flow out quite naturally from these prior truths.

One thing I want to review is one of the purposes in sanctification is to solve this problem that we inherited at the Fall. Sanctification's background is to separate good from evil. We all kind of glimpse that when we have our struggles. We have a book on prayer, or we have a book on the filling of the Spirit, and we talk about victory over the sin nature, etc. We're really on a periphery grabbing that issue. But what we want to do is confront it boldly and directly. Sanctification is nothing less than the solution of the ultimate problem of history itself; the little trials and tribulations that you experience as a Christian are cosmic issues. All the little battles in life are tied into this bigger battle; this is what gives meaning to it all. This is not a trivial little part time exercise. What God the Holy Spirit is doing in sanctification is He's trying to solve the problem of evil that everybody's whining and crying about - why does all this happen, why is God not removing evil? Well, He's trying; He is working through us in sanctification. That's what makes it so painful. We're on the cutting edge, and there are growth pains, teaching pains, and stumbling and sinning and confessing and getting up and moving on and then stumbling again, that entire gory training program is all part of the big picture. The big picture isn't getting rid of my addiction. The big picture isn't getting better mental health. The big picture isn't feeling joy, those are all nice fringe benefits but that's not the big thing God's got going. If that's it then the whole Christian life would be nothing more than a self-improvement program. But the Christian life isn't a self-improvement program. It does include improvement in self, but that's not the game. The game is related to

something that took place centuries and centuries ago, took place in God's mind in eternity past, when He contemplated the grand creation of the universe, and He decided that He would allow the creature to rebel, that He would put His own Son on the cross and permit the creature to submit to Him or rebel, and have a grand demonstration down through history of what rebellion against Him leads to. So whatever His reasons for decreeing certainty to history and the certainty of the presence of evil and the certainty of the ultimate separation of good and evil, it involves glorifying Himself. That's what's back of this doctrine of sanctification.

Let's go to this table. The first table summarizes what we dealt with in the past, from the past event summarizing examples. We've talked about five different truths of sanctification. We want to look at each of these and then come to the one that's going to be emphasized with Solomon. We've got five truths, five parts, and in David's life there was one part emphasized, in Solomon's life there will be another part emphasized, when we go into Ahab and Jeroboam and the kings there will be other parts of this emphasized. But it will always be parts of these. So as we read this section of history, from about 1000BC on to 586, the final collapse of the nation, all that 400 year period of history has to do with a dramatic illustration of the doctrine of sanctification through the nation Israel.

So let's look at the first one just to review and make sure we get what's going on here. I call these the aspects of sanctification, the five aspects of sanctification. Call them what you will, that's just a word. But the ideas are what count.

ASPECTS OF SANCTIFICATION	HISTORICAL ILLUSTRATION
Phases: Position is what God does, Experience is what God wants us to do	Position = Abrahamic Covenant, instantaneous, indicative mood Experience = Sinaitic Covenant, continuous, imperative mood
Aim: To develop loyalty to God	Victory at Jericho; Defeat at Ai
Means: Law and Grace	Law = revealed will of God given by God as the standard for our lives, protects against licentiousness and legalism; God's declaration of Holy War Grace = the ability given by God to meet the standard; protects against fleshly attempts of legalism, rationalism and mysticism; God's provision of an intercessor in Moses
Dimensions: Existential Present and Long- Term Growth	Obedience and Disobedience Cycles; Taking more and more of the Land
Enemies: World, Flesh and Devil to be eliminated by God's sovereign power	Indirect strategy, not direct attack against God's enemies; Jericho and Aijalon vs Kadesh-Barnea and Ai

On the second row on this chart it says **Phases** and two are mentioned; Position and Experience What I mean by Position is what God does. What does God do at the point of salvation? He justifies us, He regenerates us, the Holy Spirit indwells us, these are all things we learn in the NT. Dr. Chafer who started Dallas Theological Seminary once did a study and he found that there were 33 things that happen at the time that you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. Amazing things and we just don't know that they're there. But they give us our position, things that can never be changed God has injected us into His big plan which means He has a plan for the details of life.

He has Israel in the plan. If you go to the right column you see an illustration of positional truth; the illustration is the Abrahamic Covenant. What did God promise Abraham and the promises to Abraham in this covenant were promises; were they or were they not historically guaranteed? They're guaranteed. Can any force in history undo the Abrahamic Covenant? No. That's God's promise. So immediately, without reading somebody's "secret" to the Christian life, if we know a little chunk of our position we can look Hell in the face and not be intimidated. We are in a victorious position forever! What is that great hymn of Martin Luther, remember the lyrics where he says that "we tremble not for him," Luther grasped positional truth. We're not afraid of Satan in the final analysis. He doesn't have the power to take us out of God's

hand. God conquers and since I'm connected to Him, I conquer; Satan doesn't conquer. That's Positional truth as illustrated by the Abrahamic Covenant.

Then we have the second phase and that's our Experience, and the historical illustration of experience is the Sinaitic Covenant because the Sinaitic Covenant didn't concentrate on what God promised to do, it concentrated on what God wants *us* to do. See, there's two parts. Think about it. How are the NT epistles usually organized? How is Ephesians organized? How is Romans organized? What two things are always emphasized and which one comes first? Paul always starts the epistle with reference to Position. To "the saints at..." "who are in Christ..." That's always the first part of his epistles. That's a statement of Position. And then he goes on and deals with Experience. But he never mentions Experience first; he always starts from Position and then goes to Experience. When we get in trouble, what are we doing in our minds? We're reversing that, we're putting experience out front trying to work from there. But the progress conceptually in Scripture is quite the other way. Which came first, the Abrahamic Covenant or the Sinaitic Covenant? The logic is in the order of the revelation. First God says what He is going to do, and then He tells the nation what He expected them to do. The same pattern is in the epistles.

Now the next aspect; the **Aim Of Sanctification**? In a nutshell what does God want of us as creatures? Loyalty, to love Him. That's the aim, to love Him. We know that we fall short of that. It always makes me uncomfortable, that hymn we sing, "Jesus, Jesus, how I trust Him, how I've proved Him o'er and o'er." That's a pretty audacious claim. If we do we know it's only because of the grace of God, but I sort of cringe because we all know there's times we don't trust Him, there's times we don't love Him. So that's the thing we want to drive home: the aim in sanctification is ultimate loyalty to God, perfect loyalty to God, loving Him with all our heart, mind and soul. That's the aim of sanctification.

Here's a trick question. This goes back. Let's think about this, let's pretend there wasn't any Fall and we're living in this first part of history, before evil. What was the aim then? This is an exercise, we're with Adam and Eve walking about the Garden, no Fall yet, no evil. What was the goal? In a perfect environment, no sin there. But still the goal is to learn obedience to Him by trusting His word. Is what God said about that tree really true? Am I

going to go with the word of God or my experiment? Had they followed the word of God they would have, theoretically, been sanctified. They would have learned loyalty to Him. Let's move from Eden to Jerusalem in the year 30 AD. We're following behind the Lord Jesus Christ. Here is a man who never sinned, and yet the NT says He learned what? Obedience. Jesus learned obedience, but He didn't have any sin. True. But He still had to learn. He was sinless but He had to learn obedience. And how did He learn? He learned through suffering, through encountering trials and tribulations. He was sinless though. Why did He need sanctifying? Here's something we want to point out about sanctifying, getting back to the aim of sanctification. This aim of sanctification, loyalty to God would have been there had we not sinned. Had the Fall not happened, we still would have had an opportunity to learn obedience. Jesus did; Adam and Eve did, and both operated in sinless bodies. There was no sin involved. So what we're looking at here is something deeper, sanctification is not just about sin. Sanctification is about doing something that was ordained for the responsible creature whether he sinned or he didn't sin.

What the sin introduced into the equation though... now we've fallen, now we're sinful, are these impediments. It's harder, but the aim doesn't go away because of sin. The sin just makes it more difficult, sin puts a coefficient drag on the process. If you want a picture of sanctification here's one, and it's a simple one a child can grasp. It comes out of Gen 2, what did God tell Adam and Eve to do as a way of work every day? To keep and till the Garden, and they were to bring forth fruit out of the Garden. Was that because they sinned? Some people think work is because we sinned. Excuse me, but work is there prior to sin. What is the connection between sin and work? What happened to the ground at the point of sin? The ground rebelled such that it brings forth thorns and thistles. Are they still supposed to bring forth fruit? Yes, how else are they going to eat? But now what's the problem? The problem is inefficiency in the soil, everything that comes up isn't good. So now we have weeds to deal with. Has the aim changed? Or do we still have to bring forth fruit? We still have to bring forth fruit. What's changed is we have become rebels and the ground under our feet rebels against us like we rebel against God.

My point here is that this second step of sanctification is very much the center of God's action, because over here in that right column notice the

“defeat at Ai.” What was the great victory militarily before Ai? Jericho. What did God do at Jericho? He knocked the walls down. Could God have knocked the walls down at Ai? Yes. What happened? The army got defeated at Ai. Why? Somebody screwed up. There wasn’t loyalty to Him in the camp. And faced with a choice, do I let these guys take casualties in the next battle, or do I protect them from taking casualties, or do I deal with this loyalty problem? What was more important? The battle or the loyalty to God. Obviously it was the loyalty to God, it always takes precedence. That’s why unless you keep this in mind, the whole aim of sanctification, a lot of things don’t make sense. Why did God allow this suffering? Why does He do this or why does He do that? We start blaming God.

Over here, the victory at Jericho, Joshua had his spies, he’d gathered the intel, he’d orchestrated his battle plan and in the middle of the whole thing this stranger shows up and Joshua says, “Hey stranger, are you for us or against us?” And the answer, which is almost never thought about, is essentially “Hey buddy, I’m on My own side.” And Joshua recognizes, I’m not dealing with a clumsy soldier here, I’m dealing with the Commander in Chief, and the Commander, the pre-incarnate Lord Jesus Christ delivers the strategy for Jericho. Now at that point Joshua has a choice, I can follow my intel or I can follow the Lord’s intel. I can rebel or I can obey. And we all know what he did. The walls of Jericho came tumbling down. Why? Because he was loyal to God. Winning wasn’t the issue. That comes as a result of loyalty. It’s always about loyalty to God. At Ai it was loyalty to God; at Aijalon it was loyalty to God. It didn’t matter what the other things were, loyalty was always the center. That’s the issue in the day to day in each of our lives. Nothing’s changed.

Then we come to the third aspect of sanctification, the **Means**, Law and Grace. You can’t have one without the other, and if you lift one above the other you always ruin both of them. On the right column I’ve given some words about law and grace. “Law = the revealed will of God,” you have to have that. There has to be content to faith. Faith comes by hearing, hearing what? Noises? No, hearing the word of God. So if we don’t have any word from God we can’t believe. So law is necessary, it reveals God’s standard for our lives, it’s giving us something to think about - content, content, content - so we don’t go off and like the people in Toronto, like laughing hyenas, rolling around making fools of themselves because they have nothing else to do with

their minds, and they're equating this with some great spiritual outpouring? The Holy Spirit is probably having a ball laughing at them. It's not an outpouring of the Holy Spirit, there's no content to it. When God speaks there's content to it. Can you imagine sitting there with Jesus just rolling around laughing and barking like dogs; there's something totally incongruous about this. Nowhere in the ministry of Jesus do you have everybody behaving like dogs. Yet people have the nerve to call this some outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Ridiculous! Content, there's always content.

"Grace," this is the other side, "= the ability given by God to meet the standard." Do you know why I wrote that? Because you can never reach His standard in the flesh. It requires His grace and yet even when we fail what does God do? He pursues us. He never gives up on us. What's the illustration? The covenant renewal at Mount Sinai. What happened while Moses was up getting the Ten Commandments? There was the Law, the Law was being given. How many hours old was the law when they were having a big party down at the bottom of Mount Sinai? Committing idolatry!! It probably wasn't a day old and people were already violating the Law. What's ended up happening? Moses, I'm going to wipe these people out. Which prompted Moses to do what? To intercede. God was gracious and He provided Moses as an intercessor and He gave them the law a second time. He didn't have to.

So you have Law and Grace always combined and when a group of Christians emphasize one over the other, they're both destroyed. You have people who identify with the law and they will preach the law, the law, the law, the law, and it can degenerate into a human performance, with no grace. I can't obey the word of God, I need grace. So overemphasis on the law results in trivializing the law because no one can meet that standard in the flesh, so we just reduce it down to where we can obey it in the flesh. Who did that in the days of Jesus? They reduced the law, didn't apply it to the heart, it was just externals. The Pharisees. And what did Jesus do in the Sermon on the Mount? He said, what are you guys talking about, the Law addressed the heart. Why did He do that? Because that's what makes me realize that I can't keep the law, I need help from the outside, I need grace.

There are other people who emphasize grace, grace, grace, grace, grace, and never talk about law. Then what happens to grace? Grace becomes identified as the I can do anything and God's holiness is lax so He won't judge it. So

there's always a battle, always has been a battle, all of our lives we have a battle to keep these two in balance.

Then we come down to the **Dimensions**. There are two aspects. We can flip out over either one of these. One is the Existential Present, this is the instantaneous obedience or disobedience, the moment by moment, I obey, and I disobey. The danger here is you can get so focused on the day to day and our failures that we go into depression, never remembering how far we've come. The other dimension, the Long-Term Growth says, look at the last ten years, look how far you've come. That keeps the balance. So we may fail here and there, we will, but the thing is get back up and keep walking, there's a long term dimension to our growth. Growth takes time.

Then we went to the **Enemies**, and we said that these enemies are left around in the fallen world until they're removed, they're going to continue. They will continue until that last moment when good is ripped away from evil. So there will always be the world, the flesh, and the devil. We learned from Jericho and Aijalon on the right side of the chart the strategy to victory is indirect. Let's think about why an indirect strategy. What did we say was the aim? The aim is loyalty to God. Is the aim the elimination of the enemies? No. The aim is loyalty to God. So when you read books talking about angelic beings, yes, they're there. But the emphasis, while we want to understand there are angelic beings good and evil in our environment, doing all kinds of stuff, some are good and they've probably saved us innumerable times from stupid things and we haven't even known it. Others are evil and they're out to deceive us and trick us, get our eyes on the wrong thing, confuse the issues. But the emphasis isn't on them. You'll get into certain Christian books and they are going to get everybody praying about the demons and this and that and the rest of it. Are there demons? Yes there are. But the emphasis in the NT isn't fighting against demons. They're there, they're recognized, we have to deal with them, but how do we deal with them? By being loyal to God! So all this works together.

When we come to David, we plugged David's life into this scheme because as it turns out David is the model believer, with all the mess he caused he's the man God says fully followed the word of God. And you say what? David committed great immorality, how can that be. What was it about David? He amplified the existential present decisions. In other words, on the knife edge

of time David screwed up, but David showed us the right response to that. David showed us how to get back in fellowship with God. Quickly reviewing the three parts: the conviction of sin, he's made aware of the specific offense toward God, and David had social fallout from that but that's not the issue in conviction, the issue is I violated God's standard, not the courts standard, the court doesn't make the standard, God makes the standard. That's why, when David said in Psalm 51:4, the realization that sins are against the Lord ONLY, not against society. There are social consequences, we are not denying this, but the sin is against God. And finally David confesses. And then the third part, God restores, He eternally forgives us... eternally! But, and that's a big "but," but the consequences often remain. Again, memory drill, what did David have to go through after he confessed his sins? What were four major events? The loss of son number one, the loss of son number two and three and four. Four sons died. Do you think Nathan's words were like a broken record every time another body bag came in? Do you think he may have been tempted to think, hey, maybe God didn't forgive me for that? Maybe He's after me. Probably, we all struggle, but that's not the truth. He was forgiven at the point he confessed his sin, Psalm 51. That sin is gone, it's not an issue any more, but the consequences are. That's what's so hard. David goes on, but there's still fallout from his sin. That's the challenge and that's the greater challenge, because now added to the previous problem you've got all this other stuff to walk through. But the Lord gives us the grace to deal with all that, the issue then is am I going to trust the Lord with it?

To give you a preview of coming attractions, next week when we get together we're going to talk about what Solomon teaches us about the loyalty to God issue. Solomon amplifies that. And that will bring us back to the issue of culture and the question of how the biblical faith relates to culture. How should it manifest itself in culture, that's related to the aim of sanctification. There are two verses to look at Isa 11:9, and Isa 41 because it's looking forward to the kingdom that's to come.

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