

- And now for the 3rd & final basic area in which evil injustice can be done to you—or the only other realm in which you’re going to have to make Just Sonship Decisions ...

- THE 3RD COMPONENT of our Sonship *instruction of Justice.*

- (see Chart — OUTLINE of JUSTICE)

- This 3rd Component of our *instruction of Justice* is going to deal with Godly Justice in connection with Established Authority within the Divine Institutions. (Your relationship to established authority).

- The issue here is going to be how we, as sons, are to deal with those who are entrusted to administer Justice—and to legislate Justice.

- It should be noticed that this Component has more information contained in it than the previous 2 (combined).

- So it should be anticipated that this Component is a bit more complex than the previous 2. (and it is)

(read Romans 13:1-7) — and as we read it—don’t do what you’re so inclined to do—which is to think about this passage as an American—or to ‘Americanize’ it—but rather, think about what was going on in Rome at that time— the Romans leader or Caesar [dictator] was **Nero Claudius Caesar Augustus Germanicus**—fiddled while Rome burned; had his own Mother killed; persecuted Christians [had them set on fire to light his gardens]!

- And my point here is to just get you to recognize that this passage is NOT teaching anything about either the **kind, or the quality, or the form** of the Government—in fact, the kind, quality, and form of Government is totally irrelevant to anything this passage teaches!!! (This passage doesn’t teach what is the good, better, or best Gov.!) [And that’s the first ‘hurdle’ in your thinking you’ve got to get over!]

- It should be apparent at the very beginning—that the BIG ISSUE in this passage is the issue of **GOVERNMENT and how we are to relate to it; respond to it; and function in connection with it in a Godly way as properly educated and intelligent sons!**

- Government—(whether at the highest levels of a nation, or down to the lowest levels in our home town) — Government is often called a “Divine Institution” - or an Established Authority, invented and created by God Himself to restrain and control the conduct of men on earth. [that’s how it’s generally & most commonly thought of!]

- Now any time you deal with the issue of Government, it's a "Hot-Button" topic—but especially so among Christians.

- For example—should I pay taxes to an evil Gov. that takes my tax money and uses it for evil, ungodly purposes? (like abortion, promoting evolution, supporting other evil governments, sex change operations for prisoners, distributing condoms to elementary/middle/high school students)—and a whole bunch more things along these lines? [to say nothing of simply wasting my tax money on stupid and worthless pursuits—and to say nothing of Government's total inability to be responsible with handling our tax money!]

- Should Christians only vote other Christians into office?

- Should you vote at all?

- Should Christians "rise up" and make it so that the Gov. does "God's will" by its policies and laws?

- Should Christians fight to get the 10 Commandments displayed in all Government buildings?

- Can you even be a Christian and vote for a Democrat?

- And on, and on you could go....

- But notice that Rome was a evil, ungodly, wicked, God-less (though polytheistic) form of Gov.—and yet, this passage has **nothing** to do with changing your Gov., or calling on Christians to rise up and overthrow it, or anything along those line—in fact, it doesn't matter what the **form** of Gov. is!

- Bet it a: Republic; Democracy; Monarchy; Oligarchy (government by a few, especially families); Despotism; Dictatorship; Theocracy, etc.

- The **kind, quality, or form** of Gov. **is totally irrelevant!**

- And that begs the question Why—Why would you as a "son" **gladly** support a Government no matter what kind it is; no matter what quality it is (good or evil); and no matter what form (federal, state, local) it is? — What is it about Gov. that makes it so that you would desire to support it [gladly] no matter what??? (and see that support of that Gov. as the **GODLY** thing to do?)

- And in order to get to the answer to that question—my understanding is that you have to begin with an even more basic, fundamental question —

Q: What is the value of Government???

- Most commonly, the answer will be something to do with the restraint of evil, crime, and bad things happening to you. (The military is there to prevent our enemies from getting us—the police are there to keep the robbers & murderers from getting us—the fireman is there to keep the fire from getting us—etc.)

- Or that Government provides for the lawful function of a community; or a society; or a nation. (Of course, that's in view of law-breaking going on).

- But did it ever occur to you that Government was in existence **before** sin, evil, wickedness, wrong doing, and all that comes from it ever existed?

- The truth is—Gov. was in place PRIOR to sin entering into God's creation! (either on Earth or in Heaven!)

- see Col. 1:16 (Gov. existed prior to sin) —

- see Isa. 9:6-7 (Gov. will continue forever! even after sin is no longer in existence!)

- So, a better question that has to be answered is this:

Q: What is the value of Government TO GOD?

(and in time, we'll answer that question)

- For now—let's turn our attention to our passage (where we'll find the answers to these questions) - and let's just note the general 3-Fold Breakdown—because since “godliness” (or Godly Edifying) is in view, it has to address all 3 Aspects of Godliness: Godly Thinking/Living/ & Labor.

- Godly Thinking: (:1-2)

- Godly Conduct & Behavior: (:3, 4, 5)

- Godly Labor: (:6-7)

- And my understanding is—that because of what you’re told here—and by EXACTLY what you’re told here (i.e., not **adding** anything to it [like what you ‘imagine’ it should be, or by incorporating this information along with your existing, ‘course-of-this-world-built’ sense of Justice, or by whatever strongly held beliefs & opinions you have about Gov. and its function, patriotism, and whatever] — and not **subtracting** anything from it—like changing or leaving out words or concepts, or taking things out of their context) — my understanding is that a **“son”** (a properly educated son) **can function perfectly no matter what kind of Gov. he lives in; no matter how good or bad its quality; and no matter what form of Gov. it is!**

- And that means that every Gov. that exists—all have something in common—they all have this **“thing”** that allows for a son to **gladly** support it no matter what! — (The United States has it; Communist China has it; Russia has it; Sweden has it; Venezuela [under Hugo Chavez] has it... even Hitler’s Germany had it! ... and Rome [under the brutal Dictator Nero] had it in Paul’s day!)

- And we’re going to discover what that “thing” is by understanding and appreciating some **exact** terminology (right from the beginning of the Godly Thinking Aspect) in Rom. 13:1-2.

- And the terminology that I’m after are the words:

- **“powers” [plural]** and **“power” [singular]**
- and then the words **“ordained”** and **“ordinance”**

- Notice: the **powers [pl.] are ordained of God** — and the **power [sing.] is an ordinance of God.**

(and all of that is very significant!)

- Now, before diving into the details—let’s do something to help in getting our thinking and our attitude in the position God wants it in, in order to get the effectual working of this Godly Just Thinking — (and this is going to be tough, because of the strong emotional ties that many folks have [especially Christian folks] in connection with Government) as you read this—is there any mention of Nero? — any mention of Felix [the Roman Procurator before whom Paul was brought up on charges]?, or any Roman Tetrarch? any mention of the Praetorian Guard? or of the men who carried out the wholesale butchering of believers in Christ? **NO!!!**

- First of all—everything in (:3,4, &5) [in the Godly Conduct & Behavior] - and everything in (:6 & 7) [in the Godly Labor] will all make perfect sense when everything in (:1&2) [the Godly Thinking] is properly understood and appreciated.

- And that means that really, (:3,4, &5) and (:6 & 7) won't make much sense (or at least won't make the sense they ought to) unless the Godly Thinking of (:1 & 2) has first of all done it's effectual work.

- That means that there's a awful lot of critical and important things going on and sitting in those first 2 verses! — and like most of the Sonship Curriculum goes, you're most often going to spend the most amount of time in the Godly Thinking portion, than in the other 2 portions!

- (and that's the case here!)

- And the Godly Thinking that these first 2 verses are designed to produce within us—(and since there are no 'Persons' [so to speak] being mentioned or brought up [like Nero, Felix, ... Obama, Biden] — **it makes it so that we are to look THROUGH the Governmental authorities and the Governmental authority that you live under!**

- And you're supposed to look THROUGH it — **so that you look at what it is FROM GOD'S PERSPECTIVE!**

- And what I'm driving at here is: **You do NOT look at what the Government is DOING!!!**

- You don't look at its policies—you don't look at its administration—you don't look at its 'party platform' — you don't look at its form or kind—and you don't look at the individuals that currently occupy the positions of that Government! (none of that is the issue!)

- In this passage—there's no particular form of Gov. being either endorsed or refuted!

- The issue is simply to recognize something fundamental regarding human government, itself, — and then to look “THROUGH” it so that you're NOT focusing upon anything that it is actually *doing*—and as you look “through” it, you're going to look and see and Think about it **exactly as God does** in connection with **what it's ordained for in the first place!**

- And that's the Godly Thinking that God wants us to have established within us, first and foremost, in connection with the whole subject matter of human government.

- Because without that Core, Seminal Issue—which is that “First-Thought Response” that our Lord Jesus Christ Himself has—without that being the ‘touch-stone’ or governor for every thought we could ever have or ever will have regarding human government—all those other thoughts and feelings we ever have about human gov. will have the potential for being UN-GODLY!!!

- All those other thoughts have the potential for us doing and saying and acting STUPIDLY in connection with our lives under the human gov. in which we live!

- And unfortunately, that goes on a great deal in Christianity as a whole—and in Fundamental Christianity in particular—and even in the “grace movement” as well!

- The truth is—90-95% of the remarks most Christians make about Government are UNGODLY!

- And they're ungodly, primarily because they don't have that “First-Thought Response” of that Core, Seminal understanding and appreciation in their minds & heart regarding what the first 2 verses of Romans 13 says! (Oh, they can say & quote these words—but they don't know what in the world those things mean!) — they only have a ‘vague’ recognition of them, but at the exact same time, out of their mouth come ‘criticisms’ or ‘murmurings’ or complainings.

- (They ‘groan’ about paying their taxes!)

- And that all happens because they're looking at **what the Gov. is doing** — and NOT what God is **doing** with the Gov.!!!

- God knows that every Gov. out there is ungodly! But God doesn't care if you've got a Christian or a Non-Christian occupying the seat of power in the Gov. — in fact, more times than not, you're far better off if the person in power is NOT a Christian!

- Example: Bad as he was (and cowardly as he was), if it was left to **Pilate**, he'd of set free the Lord Jesus Christ!

- see John 18:28-19:16

- The issue for God the Father, God the Son—and you as an adopted, intelligent son—is NOT **who** is in the position of Authority—the issue is **what is that position of Authority designed to do, first and foremost, fundamentally, with respect to the plan & purpose of God?!**

- And in view of that—and with that being the fundamental 'frame of reference' that exists in your mind—therefore, every form of Gov. that is conceivable by man **will do what God designed it to do!!!**

- (even a Communist Gov. will do it! — it can't help but do it!)

- And that's what these 7 verses of Romans 13 are all about!

- And the Godly Thinking of (:1-2) are all about that—and the Godly Conduct & Behavior that (:3, 4, & 5) talk about, are in response to that—and the Godly Labor of (:6 & 7) is in response to that!

- Therefore, (as we will come to understand and appreciate), the reason **why** you and I ought to not only pay our taxes; but be **glad** to pay our taxes—**has absolutely nothing to do with what our Gov. does with those taxes! ... not a single thing!**

- It doesn't make one whit of a difference if the Gov. comes along and says, "We're taking 30% of your taxes and fund abortion clinics with it!" — (whoopee!) — **pay your taxes!** (and be GLAD to do it!)

- Or if the Gov. comes along and says, "We're going to take another portion of your taxes and fund Gay & Lesbian programs!" — (whoopee-doo!) — **pay your taxes!**

- It doesn't make a bit of difference—because you're not paying them *tribute, custom, fear, & honor* for WHAT they're doing—but you're paying them those things because as Paul says, they are a *minister of God* for a particular reason!

- Now by saying all that—my aim is to (since this is such a highly charged, emotional subject), my aim is to just ‘clear the table’ (so to speak) of all of the NON-issues in Romans 13:1-7!

- And when it comes to being properly instructed and educated as a son in Godly Civil, Societal Justice (which is what this issue is) — **you’ve got to be able to look THROUGH a human government!** (And that’s exactly what :1&2 do!)

- (:1-2) allow the ‘eyes of your understanding’ that came into existence that began to ‘blink’ and to perceive some things back when you went through Sonship Orientation & Sonship Establishment — (you began to look at some things that you could not see, physically [back in Ch.8]) — and now you’re going to be taught something that you cannot see (with your physical set of eyes) about human government!

- Truth is—about 99% of all those who sit in positions of authority in human government are completely unaware of it!

- (yet, you’re taught about it—and you’re told to always look at Gov. that way!)

- And the whole reason for being *subject unto the higher powers* is because of this fundamental, core, seminal, ‘First-Thought-Response’ that you have to perceive with the ‘eyes of your understanding’ looking **through** that gov. (and that has nothing to do with what it’s doing)!

- So therefore in this “Introduction/Pre-Doctrinal Exhortation” - there are 2 Major issues we have to get a ‘frame of reference’ for:

1) Godly Sonship Education in Civil, Societal Justice demands that you look **THROUGH** that human gov. — and that all of the issues of what that gov. is doing; who occupies the various ‘seats’ of that gov.; the kind, quality, and form of that gov. — **ARE ALL NON-ISSUES!** — and that you perceive what Gov. is to GOD—you look *through* it to see what the core, seminal, First-Thought-Response is all about!

- And that core, seminal, First-Thought-Response will be found in (:1) in what that singular *power* is all about—*For there is no power but of God.*

2) (and this will help us answer the question of: What is the value of Government ... to God Himself?) — Government is something that God Himself invented and created—but more than that, it was something He brought into existence BEFORE any sin, evil, wrong doing, or crime ever existed!

*For by him (God the Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, the 2nd Member of the Godhead) were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:
(Colossians 1:16)*

— and Government is something that God is going to have in existence for all eternity—even AFTER all sin, evil, wrong doing, and crime is NO LONGER in existence!

*For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.
Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.
(Isaiah 9:6-7)*

- Now the importance of all this is that it ‘clears the table’ (so to speak) of some other Non-Issues—and it gives us the beginning of having a ‘frame of reference’ for viewing the value and the reason for Government **from God’s perspective!**

- More often than not—the most common thing most people think about for the reason for why Gov. exists at all—is that it’s a ‘barrier’ to man’s evil, wickedness, wrong doing, crime, etc., against man—or that it’s a ‘barrier’ for the Satanic Policy of Evil.

- Now there is some truth and some validity to that thinking—but think, for a moment, about this—Government existed in the heavenly places BEFORE it existed on the earth!

- And that Government that God created in the heavenly places was **NOT** a ‘barrier’ to Satan at all—*thrones, dominions, principalities, powers*, and even ‘territories’ existed there, **first** — and according to Ezekiel 28, the Adversary had no trouble whatsoever in ‘trafficking in iniquity in his sanctuaries’!!!

*Thou hast defiled thy sanctuaries by the multitude of thine iniquities, by the iniquity of thy traffick;
(Ezekiel 28:18)*

- (The Gov. of the heavenly realm didn’t ‘prevent’ Satan from doing that at all!)

- So in order to get your ‘frame of reference’ set properly (in order to get to the very core reason for WHY God created Gov. in the first place—[which will give you that Core, Seminal, First-Thought-Response issue]) — you have to go back to the time BEFORE sin, evil, wickedness, wrong doing, violence, or crime ever came into existence, and find out why God desired to have Government in place—when it didn’t provide a ‘barrier’ for evil, wrong doing, and crime. (Or you have to think about why God will utilize Gov. in the ages to come when none of those things are an issue, either.)

- Now I’m going to stop right here and allow the **words** of God here in the first 2 verses of Romans 13 to do the job of getting to the bottom of all of this.

- We may have some advancement to our understanding and appreciation for the 1st Introductory Issue (the issue of getting to look **through** human gov., and look past all of the non-issues of what the gov. is doing; who sits in the positions of authority in it; what kind or quality or form it is) - but it’s not as advanced or as deep as it needs to be—and that will be dealt with by our passage.

- And as far as the 2nd Introductory Issue goes (the issue of grasping WHY God created Government in the first place; even before sin, evil, wrong doing, or crime was in existence) — we really haven’t gotten to the bottom of that issue at all; we’ve really only properly framed the question—but that will be answered in these first 2 verses of Romans 13 as well.

- So let’s begin looking at the details of the Godly Thinking of Romans 13:1-2

- Verse 1 (and vs. 2 as well) really is an “exercise” of the ‘eyes of your understanding’ — because you go from what you can see with your physical eyes (Sentence #1)—to a further ‘seeing’ or perception of something that can’t be seen with your physical eyes, but only can be seen with the ‘eyes of your understanding’ (Sentence #2)- (in other words, you see it only because your Father tells you it’s there—[it can’t be seen with your physical set of eyes])!

- Verse 1 is made up of 2 complete thoughts or sentences. The 2nd sentence being divided by 2 clauses.

- The 2nd Sentence begins with a “*For*” of further explanation and amplification for why you should do what the 1st Sentence tells you to do. (which is no small thing in light of the gov. that the Romans existed under!)

- And the 1st Sentence of (:1) acts as a kind of overall statement concerning the aim, goal, or objective of everything dealt with in all 7 verses.

- In other words—by the time you get to the end of (:7), you have been given enough information to make it so you can FULLY carry out what the 1st Sentence of (:1) says as a properly educated son—and do so in a Godly manner (just exactly as God the Father does; and as God the Son does)! [and you being *conformed to the image of the Son*, to the emulation of the Father!]

- Therefore just that 1st Sentence of (:1) carries with it a whole bunch of potential ways in which you can make Just Sonship Decisions—but **only** when the rest of (:1), and all of the rest of verses 2 has done their effectual work in your inner man! (to produce that Godly Thinking)

- So the most critical thing of all is to get the Godly Thinking effectually working that sits in (:1-2).

- So the aim, goal, and objective of the Godly Thinking that makes it so that you can properly relate to and deal with Civil, Societal Justice is:

Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers.

- Now I want to bring up a little detail that I’ve already mentioned—and that is, my understanding is that what you’re taught here

... is designed to make it so that you, (as a son/daughter), will **GLADLY** support a Government, no matter what kind it is; no matter what quality it is (good or evil); and no matter what form it takes—a properly educated “son” desires to **gladly** do that, no matter what!

- And what I’m after here is—why do I say that you would do that **gladly**? — is there anything in the whole 7 verses that tells you to do that with ‘joy’ or with ‘gladness’? — Does the word ‘joy’ or ‘gladness’ or any word like that occur in any of these 7 verses?

- Well, apart from saying that it’s the **joy** of a son to do what his Father instructs him to do (true/right as that is—and that’s not to be dismissed as why you are to do this ‘gladly’) — but there’s actually a couple of places where this is understood—but my understanding is that it’s first understood in (:1), and in the very first 3 words of the 1st Sentence of (:1).

- God says, *Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers.*

- Notice that He does NOT say, ‘Let every man be subject’ or ‘Let every person be subject’ — no — He says, *Let every SOUL be subject ...*

- Granted—that expression “*every soul*” can be taken to simply mean **every individual**, or **every saint/son** (in this context) - and it certainly does mean that. (But it means or signifies MORE than that!)

- Why does God use the word **soul** here? What does that signify or **imply**?

- As I said—it does emphasize every living person—and in this context, every saint or son.

- But the word *soul* implies something more—and it’s not the issue of distinguishing between ‘body, soul, and spirit’ - it’s not an issue of Systematic Theology: Doctrine of the soul type junk!

- First of all, the word *soul* (in this context and in this particular word order: i.e., **every soul**) indicates that something is to be intelligently understood in your Thinking, but then it goes into the *soul* where something else happens.

- What is one of the major things that the *soul* of a man does?

- A: It RESPONDS to the spirit—it EMOTES—it FEELS things!

- And as a son of your Heavenly Father (since He's perfectly content, satisfied, and 'happy' about how Government exists) - you're to take upon yourself (as His intelligent son/daughter) His Thinking and His Sentiments!

- Your *soul* is where you FEEL things—and my understanding is that by saying, *Let every soul be subject ...* it's kind of like saying, 'Your soul is in it' — you feel **GOOD about it**—you are **glad** to do that!

- By using the word *soul*—it implies that you feel it; you feel **good** about it—(because you have an intelligent understand and appreciate of it) —

— in other words, you are NOT to simply *subject yourself to the higher powers* in grudging or reluctant service!

- (your SOUL is in it!) — you don't come along and say, "Alright, I'll do it, but it's going to leave a 'bad taste' in my mouth!"

- It '**sits well**' with you—in your *soul*! (It's your PLEASURE!!!)

- *Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers.*

- **subject** = to be under the operation of an agent, agency, or process—here, to the rule or power of a government.

- *subject* in this sense carries the idea of being 'amenable' to power or influence founded upon a law of relationship—much like you are right now 'subject' to the law of gravity.

- *Let every soul be subject unto the **higher powers** (Plural).*

- The **higher powers** (Pl) are pretty easy to understand—that's what the Romans can SEE—(with their physical eyes) — and that's what you and I can see—we know what the *higher powers* are—and we know that there are men & women sitting in those positions of government.

- (such as President; Prime Minister; King; etc.—and then all of the *powers* that kind of descend like a pyramid type structure.

- And every saint (when they read [:1]) in every country knows what the *higher powers* are—what they're called, and the names of the men & women who occupy those *higher power* positions.

- And that's all that the apostle Paul is ever going to say about the actual individuals in those positions.

- And the rest of what he's going to say is to make it so that you're going to be *subject* to them **for the very reason God brought them into existence in the first place!**

- And so that you'll be *subject* to them regardless of what they do—and that you won't REBELL against them; & you won't RESIST them for any of the things that they do—no matter how **ungodly** they may be—or how **foolish** or how **stupid** they may be.

- But you'll be *subject* to them **for the one, primary, most fundamental reason that God has for them to be in existence in the first place!**

- (And that's what the 2nd Sentence of [:1] goes on to describe!)

- The truth of the matter is—when you look at Romans 13:1—that very first Sentence (*Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers.*) — [much like the last time we came across that little word “*Let*”], that Sentence acts as it did back in Romans 12:9—as an **Exhortation** that precedes the actual Godly Thinking.

- *Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers* exhorts you to do something that the rest of (:1) and all of (:2) will then give you the information of the Godly Thinking for WHY and HOW you're supposed to do that.

- So when it comes to Godly Thinking as a son in this dispensation of grace in which we live—a properly educated son looks right **through** that Government; right **through** what it's doing; right **through** the individual persons occupying the positions of that Government; right **through** the daily newspapers/editorials/commentaries about it; — you look right **through** all of that stuff, and with the ‘eyes of your understanding,’ you see that: ***there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.***

- And what God expects you to do (since He doesn't give you any explanation for what that *power (sing.)* is, God expects you to go right back to the issue of when He first established *power (sing.)*, and then when He *ordained powers (pl.)*).

- And when you get those issues understood and appreciated, the issue then is, it's as if God says, "Now I want you to think of human Government, and to *subject* yourself to it, **solely for these reasons!** (And there are 2 of them.)

- And my understanding is that those 2 Clauses that make up the 2nd Sentence of (:1) **are the 2 reasons of Godly Thinking** (of the very way **God Himself Thinks** about human Government on this earth) **for why you are to subject yourself unto the higher powers.**

- Therefore, unlike the previous 2 Components of our *instruction of Justice* that had a single Core, Seminal, First-Thought-Response—since there are 2 issues or 2 reasons that make up the Godly Thinking for Just Sonship Decision-Making in connection with Human Government (or Civil, Societal Justice) - since there are 2 issues involved in the Godly Thinking—**then there are going to be 2 Core, Seminal, Issues that we have to understand and appreciate **deeply!****

- There's going to be 1 Core, Seminal Issue to ***For there is no power but of God.***

- And there's going to be a 2nd Core, Seminal Issue to ***the powers that be are ordained of God.***

- And those 2 Core, Seminal Issues are going to be given some 'punch' by what gets said in (:2)!

- And so the work we have to do here is to go back and get an understanding & appreciation for what was in God's thinking when He brought into existence the *power (sing.)*; and what His thinking was when He *ordained powers (pl.)*.

- Those are 2 separate Issues and 2 separate Events!

- Actually, the 2nd issue (the *ordaining of the powers [pl.]*) is the easier of the 2 to understand—because the "*powers that be*" are the various human governments that exist on this earth.

- And where is it in God's word where most folks commonly go to point out where God instituted "Human Government"?

- A: Genesis 8, 9, 10, & 11. (Gen. 9, especially) - that's when "the powers that be" were "ordained of God."

- But those *powers (pl.)* didn't just 'come out of the blue' (so to speak) - because before that ever took place, **POWER** came into existence—(God brought it into existence)!

- Now when it comes to the issue of "*power*" - you can talk about *power* in a whole bunch of different ways.

- And we're not talking about 'creative' *power* here; or God's omnipotent *power*; or healing *power*, or spiritual *power* or anything along those lines.

- *Power* (here) is one of those 'context-sensitive' words—and the context here is all about **Governmental Power!** (Ruling power.)

- And when you think about *power* in that context—and you're trying to get down to the most basic, fundamental issue about ruling or governmental *power*—what is the most basic, fundamental thing that ruling or governmental *power* does?

- (And this is something that can be said about it—even if there is no sin, wickedness, wrong-doing, evil, crime, etc. in existence—and that's what we're dealing with—when you're dealing with this *power (sing.)* in that 1st Clause of the 2nd Sentence of (:1), you're going back to the time in which God brought Governmental *power* into existence BEFORE even Lucifer sinned—before any sin ever existed in the universe—when God created ruling, governmental *power* in the first place.)

A: It **CONTROLS** whatever ever it's ruling over! Most fundamental of all—it's the issue of putting **CONTROLS** ON SOMETHING—governmental, ruling *power* is the issue of putting **controls** on whatever is ruled over.

- Governmental *power* is fundamentally a **CONTROL system!** (God's controlling something with it.)

- But before He brought Governmental *powers* (Pl.) in to effect—He first brought a Governmental *power* (Sing.) into effect!

- When God originally created all things—He did so in a very particular ORDER—He first created “*the heaven and the earth*” (*Gen. 1:1*) - and at the time He created the *power* (Sing.) to exist in that realm (before sin, evil, corruption, crime, etc. ever existed).

- Immediately upon creating the realm of heaven & earth on Day 1—God brought a Governmental *power* (Sing.) into effect — in other words, **He brought a system of CONTROL into effect** that was of a singular, unified nature.

- Now it’s no big mystery that when you go back in God’s word to find out about both the *power* (Sing.) and the *powers* (Pl.) - that there’s only 2 logical places where that fits:

1) When it comes to: ***For there is no power* (Sing) *but of God***—the reality of that statement (being the true statement that it is; the factual statement that it is; and what it means), all takes you back to Genesis chapters 1 & 2.

2) When it comes to: ***the powers* (Pl.) *that be are ordained of God***—you don’t come across that ‘fractioning’ of that singular Governmental *power* (Sing.) to the point of producing Governmental *powers* (Pl.) [or human governments (Pl.) on this earth] with an *ordinance* concept attached to it until you get to the period of time **after the Flood of Noah** in Genesis chapter 9, especially, but really in Genesis chapters 8, 9, 10, and 11.

- And when it comes to you and I being able to fully understand and appreciate the Core, Seminal Issues in Government (even at this present time in the disp. of grace) - we have to understand what God understands about **Power** in the first place (when He brought it into existence in connection with the creation of this earth and man’s existence on it) — and then what God did when He brought in the “New World Order” after the Flood.

- Because at that time of the Flood—that’s when God ‘fractured’ the *power* into *powers*. (truth is—there are at least 3 things God fractured at the Judgment of the Flood: Earth/ Sea/ Power.)

- Now the BIG Questions is: WHY? Why did He do that? Why did He fracture the *power* into *powers*? What was he *ordaining* (**control-wise**) when He did that?

- And the only way that can be properly understood and appreciated is to understand what He did when He brought the *power* into existence in the first place as a *singular power* (Un-fractured).

- And as far as our passage goes in Romans 13:1, God our Father has put the information in the exact order and in the exact proper Sense & Sequence for us to get that proper understanding — because after the exhortation of the 1st Sentence (*Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers.*), the very first Clause of the 2nd Sentence is: ***For there is no power but of God:*** - and that colon tells you to stop/pause long enough so that if you don't know it already, then go back and get the proper understanding you need before going on.

- So, according to the Sense & Sequence of 'first things first' - that 1st clause that says, *For there is no power but of God* directs us to go back to Genesis chapters 1 and 2 and get the appreciation for what was in God's thinking when He brought Governmental Power into existence in the first place.

- And what we're going to be going after is—to get that 1st Core, Seminal, First-Thought-Response Issue that will enable us to look right through what a Government is doing; what kind/quality it is; and right through the people that occupy the positions of authority in it—and see it exactly as God does!

- So when the apostle Paul says, *For there is no power but of God*—the *power* is power in the sense of **CONTROL**—and what we're after is: **What was the original purpose of the Control???**

- Genesis 1

- When we go back to the very first time God ever confronts us with the reality of: *For there is no power* (no governmental power) *but of God*—we're dealing with the issue of Him bringing some **control** into existence.

- And when you don't have sin to contemplate yet—therefore when you don't have anything that indicates or would be conducive to disorder, or lack of control, or out of control or something like that—that means, therefore, that you've got to be thinking about the **control** even in a more fundamental way.

- And when the fundamental understanding of what that original control was for—then even when you do have sin enter the picture—and when ‘out of controlness’, disorder, devolution, (and worse) becomes an issue—even then, that same, fundamental reason for why God created the *power* in the first place is still going to be the BIG issue with Him.

- And any ‘adjustments’, alterations, or changes or improvements or whatever He makes are still to enable Him to do with the original purpose of the control what He designed to do with it!

- So we need to now identify what that fundamental **control** issue is all about in the first place. — And our goal here is (once we identify what that fundamental **control** issue is all about) - to then deal with it as events occurred *after* bringing it into existence whereby God made adjustments to it (fractured it) in order to preserve & continue to make the original purpose of that control still effectual—and still enabling it so that once the whole sin issue, and evil, and opposition, and everything else that is disruptive in nature gets taken care of & gets dealt with in its entirety and gets dismissed and pushed off the scene — that what God originally brought the **control** into existence for in the first place would just continue on as if it merely hit a ‘bump in the road’ (so to speak).

- (Review Chart #47) —

- DAY 1: heaven & earth—light & darkness—day & night.

- DAY 2: firmament—divided the waters—the firmament is called “Heaven” - Lucifer falls

- DAY 3: dry land, called “Earth”—waters gathered into Seas — grass, herbs, fruit trees

- DAY 4: sun, moon & stars (*set* them in the firmament)

- DAY 5: creatures in the waters—fish & fowl (birds)

- DAY 6: living creatures upon the earth—cattle, creeping things, beasts—man & woman

- Genesis 1:26-28 - Let's first of all think about what Adam was thinking and what he perceived—you kind of have to **put yourself in Adam's shoes!**
- Genesis Ch. 2 = looping parallelism—loops back to give further details about what happened when God created Adam on Day 6.
- read Genesis 2:7-9; 15-20
- At this point—even though God told Adam that this thing called “*evil*” existed, until God told him what it was, Adam didn't have a clue about it—but he did have some understanding about the kind of commission God commissioned him with back in Genesis 1:26-28 in connection with what his vocation was—Adam became aware of what God had done, and what was to be going on from that point on.
- There's something that Adam would have understood about *power* — and he understood it, **because God gave it to him!**
 - God gave that *power* to Adam in Gen. 1:26 (*dominion*) and in Gen. 1:28 (... *and subdue it: and have dominion* ...) - and Adam was to exercise it!
 - And when God gave it to Adam, Adam would have understood it *before* sin was an issue in the earth—he would have understood it untainted & un-influenced by anything other than God's most fundamental reason for bringing it into existence in the first place!
- Put yourself in Adam's shoes at one particular moment in time—Adam stands there commissioned as the Monarch of the Earth—no sin has entered the realm of the earth yet; there's no disorder yet; there's nothing 'out of control' yet; there's no rebellion that needs to be put down yet—but God talks to him about *dominion*—God commissions him to *subdue* the earth and have *dominion* over all that lives on it—
 - That word *dominion* can be used as a noun—but here it's used as a verb (“let them have *dominion*”) — and so it's taking the concept of **a rulership that has authority to it that imposes a control on something**, and then you're talking about **enacting it**.

- And then in Genesis 1:28, God actually gives that *dominion* (or controlling power) to Adam. (and he intends to give it to Adam's wife as well.)

- Then God immediately puts Adam to work naming all the animals—and as Adam stands there with this *power*, this **controlling power**—and as he looks out at all the animals—just before he begins to go to work—what did he know (at that moment) that the *controlling power* God just gave to him was for? (he knew he had it for a reason!) Why was Adam given “*dominion*”? (most basic & fundamentally of all?)

- Maybe it would help to say—that God gave Adam this *dominion* (or power) because of the **unique creature** that Adam was (a Godly creature)—and because of that, Adam was planned and purposed by God to be His “son”! — this is a sonship issue!

A: The whole purpose of the *power* (or the control that comes from *having dominion*) is because it's the methodology by which the business of God will get carried out!

- Now that may not make you ‘thunder-struck’ - but it's got to be said that way, and understood & appreciated that way—**because that's how a “son” Thinks!!!**

- A son is involved in his Father's business—and when it comes to our fundamental, initial education in the issue of our *instruction of Godly Justice* in the 3rd Component of Godly Justice pertaining to human government—God expects us to look at human government **as an extension of the original *power* that He brought into existence in the first place—which was the methodology by which His business will get accomplished within His creation!**

- Every aspect of His business gets accomplished through a **set of controls** that He puts upon His creation!

- And the fundamental purpose of that *power* is to allow Him to conduct His business!

- And the truth of the matter is—the fundamental reason for human government (when God fractured the *power* and brought it into existence in a multiplicity of forms) is to enable Him to conduct His business as the evolution of man's ungodliness **worsens!**

- And if a Christian will look at human government as an extension of the means by which God is able to conduct His business—it puts a whole new perspective on it!

- And it makes it so you can understand why you are to pray the way that I Timothy 2:1-2 talks about—and why you are to gladly pay your taxes—and so forth—

— because it's one of the most obvious ways in which you Labor together with your Father in His business!

- Because the whole thing (government) exists so that God can carry out His business!

- And therefore, that's what makes it such a **big problem** to the Adversary! (Because it's designed to enable God to carry out HIS business! — It's NOT designed to enable the Adversary to carry out his own business!)

- And when you go back to Genesis to find out that most fundamental of all reason for Government to exist in the first place—even before God fractured that Power (sing.) - when God created Adam and gave him that Power, Adam was a “son” of God—he was a ‘help meet’ for God (see again Gen. 1:28 & 2:18-20).

- And Adam understands and appreciates that he's been created **to carry out God's business**—(kind of like he's a ‘junior-partner’ in the whole business on this earth)!

- And when God gave Adam the “*dominion*” - He gave him the methodology by which His business is going to be carried out; and by which the objectives of His business are going to be accomplished!

- And when Adam goes out and does what he does there in Genesis 2:18-20—**that's the perspective from which he operates!!!**

- Now we only have a brief time in which Adam operated laboring with God in His business as recorded in God's word—but it's apparent to me that as it went on (if Adam had not sinned), that God would be educating him all the time.

- And had the Adversary not struck on the 8th day—Adam evidently would have (every morning) sat down with his ...

Father—and the Father would have gone over what the 1st Order of Business was (so to speak) in connection with [especially] that second week of existence—all in doing what was necessary in preparation for that **2nd Sabbath after the 1st**—which was the time in which God’s City (God’s residence, which will later on be called the New Jerusalem) was going to come down from the 3rd Heaven to the Earth.

- And what would have taken place (if the Adversary hadn’t stuck as quick as he did—[which shows that he’s not stupid]) — and what would have happened on the morning of the 8th Day was that Adam and his Wife would have sat down with the Lord Jesus Christ in the Garden of Eden—and the Lord would have (undoubtedly) declared what area within Eden needed to be fully prepared —

— and the animal creatures that were out there needed to be told about it, and needed to be organized in connection with their capacities and their abilities to provide for the establishing of the area with that City coming down and being set upon the *beams of his chambers* (Psa. 104:3).

- And my understanding is that over the course of the next 6 Days that followed the original Creation Week—all that territory within Eden would have been prepared—and would have been marked out—and the very kind of thing that Ezekiel was given to see (in Eze. 40-48), when he’s given to see the ‘frame’ of the City—my understanding is that Adam would have ‘framed’ the whole thing out!

- And the Garden area would have been all prepared; and the Orchard area would have all been prepared—and the areas for the animal’s domain and for the River (and for its widening) would have been prepared — and all that kind of stuff would have been set up.

- Now my point in all this is to say that—Adam’s thinking in connection with the 1st Order of Business he knows about, is to make all the necessary preparations for that City to come down.

- And what possesses Adam’s thinking is: I’ve been given all this *dominion* (or Governing **POWER** [sing.] OR CONTROL) in order to succeed with that 1st Order of God’s BUSINESS!!!

- And once that took place—and the City was down on the Earth—then the next Order of Business would have been given.

- And the issue is—that every further expression of the *dominion* Adam was given was to succeed with Business of God.

- Therefore the whole reason for God taking that original *Power* and giving it to Adam as the *dominion* he was to have—was that it is the methodology by which the Business of God gets accomplished!

- And when it comes to our passage in Romans 13:1 (and the 1st and most Fundamental reason for why a son is to *let his soul be subject to the higher powers*) — and the reason for that is expressed in the 1st Clause of the Godly Thinking: *For there is no power but of God* — is that a son is to be able to look right through the kind/quality of Government he's living in; look right through what it's doing and who's occupying the positions of that Government; and see that Government as a fragment of the original, singular POWER that is **OF God** (not 'by' God) — and he's to recognize that the 1st, most fundamental, core, seminal issue is: **The singular, controlling, governmental power of God is the methodology by which all His business gets accomplished!**

- And that's the fundamental, quintessential matter in connection with "*For there is no power but of God*" when He created it and brought it into existence and endued it upon the creatures that He gave it: man (Adam) on the Earth; & certain of the Angels in the angelic realm— their understanding was: This is how God's Business gets conducted!

And that can also be verified in the negative—that is, when Lucifer sinned—in connection with his formulation of his Plan of Evil—what he did was to take the *dominion* that had been given to him, and use it for his own business purposes (as outlined in his Plan of Evil) - and then he went and immediately trafficked in his iniquity amongst the ones in the angelic realm to whom the *dominion* had been given! (i.e., *principalities, powers, mights, thrones*, etc.) — because he knew that the *dominion* was the way in which The Business gets accomplished—and so he needs that to accomplish his own business — and to thwart the Business of God!

- And when that fundamental, *there is no power but of God* concept is understood and appreciated—that then paves the way for understanding “*the powers that be*” like God wants us to!

- And to realize that those *powers* are a fractured element of that original *power*—and God didn’t come up with something brand new or radically different when sin, evil, wickedness, wrong doing, and so forth came into existence.

- No. that *power (sing.)* is still there—it’s just that now it’s been broken up—**and it still retains, therefore, (in God’s plan & purpose) its original design & purpose.**

- And God’s still utilizing it in its ‘fractured’ state right now in its most essential, quintessential reason for it existing in the first place: It enables Him to accomplish His Business!

- Any Questions about the 1st Part (or the 1st Reason) for why you are to “*let your soul be subject unto the higher powers*” - any Questions about “***For there is no power but of God***”???

- You understand and appreciate that the original “Power” was God putting a set of CONTROLS upon His creation—and those Controls were (and still are) in the form of Governmental Power.

- You understand and appreciate that the fundamental reason for the Power (sing.) (the Original Governmental Power *before* any sin, evil, wrongdoing, ungodliness, crime, etc.) - the fundamental, Core, Seminal Issue for the Power in the first place is: that **the Power (sing.) is the methodology by which the business of God will be carried out!**

- And therefore all of the “*powers (pl.) that be*” are an **extension of the original “power” that God brought into existence in the first place!**

- That should then take us to the 2nd Clause of the Godly Thinking of (:1):
“the powers that be are ordained of God.”

- And what we need to focus upon—and get an understanding and appreciation for is that 1) The original Power has been fractured into “*the powers (pl.) that be*” - and 2) The issue that the *powers that be* are **ORDAINED** of God—that issue of God ordaining those *powers*.

- And as we've noted before—when it comes to getting the Core, Seminal, First-Thought Response Thinking of God the Father and God the Son in regard to “*the powers that be*” - there is a particular place in God's word where you can go to get that Core, Seminal Issue—which is where God deals with “*the powers that be*” for the very first time.

- And that place in God's word is in Genesis chapters 8-11 (especially 8:15-9:17)

- This is the same passage we looked at when we first saw how that God made certain adjustments to man's overall sense of Justice.

- But now we want to look for some matters in connection with God taking that Original Power (sing.) and **fracturing** it into the Powers (pl.).

- **read Gen. 8:15-9:1**

- Note: 9:1 — It's commonly pointed out here that this passage is very similar to Gen. 1:28, except God **leaves out** the whole issue of Noah and his sons “**having dominion**” over all the earth and the creatures that live in it.

- And the assumption is that since Adam lost the Monarchy of the earth—and that the Monarchy of the earth now rests with the Adversary, God simply doesn't say anything about “having dominion”. (as if that's one of the issues contained in God's Judgment upon the world at the Flood).

- However, my understanding is that is NOT the reason why the issue of “having dominion” is not spoken about with Noah and his sons — rather, it all has to do with God **fracturing** the Power into Powers — and therefore the “dominion” issue isn't going to rest in a single man (so to speak) - or to put it another way, the Power (sing.) isn't going to be in a man's possession like it was with Adam—now, in the New World Order, the Power is going to be fractured into Powers, and the “dominion” issue will now rest in various & sundry Governments on the earth—hence, God establishes Human Governments! (or “*the powers that be*”)!)

- read Gen. 9:2-7

(Gen. 9-11)

- When God brings in the New World Order—He describes the aspects of His business that He is going to be conducting with the ‘world at large’ now—based upon some Judgments that He had just brought in that made for some **radical** changes—Judgments that were done for the preservation of the human race—and for making it so that the human race doesn’t get itself in the exact same ‘boat’ of sheer stupidity in connection with the Adversary and his Plan of Evil — and God also made some changes in connection with the Adversary’s capabilities (which was not something unfair for God to do) —

— but when God sets up the New World Order (which includes the issue of the fracturing of the Power into “*the powers that be, being ordained of God*” — **it’s still all done for the purpose of allowing Him to continue to succeed with His business!**

- (Whether it’s a short-term aspect of His business; or a long-term aspect of His business; or whether it’s looking way out to the future time when the entire Satanic Plan of Evil in Heaven & Earth is completely dismantled, demolished, and destroyed and no longer an issue—it all comes back to the issue of: by fracturing the Power into Powers, it allows for God to continue to succeed with His business, even to be totally successful with it in the ‘long run.’)

- And Romans 13:1-2 is designed to produce that very same fundamental, First-Thought type Godly Thinking in us as sons in regard to the “*higher powers*” that we’re being told to be *subject* unto!

- Truth is—we’ve got every opportunity to look at “the higher powers” as the people of the world do—and to murmur and complain and to grumble and moan about them—but the issue is: We’re to look at them as to where they came from most fundamentally of all in connection with the existence of the Original Power in the first place (and what it’s all about, and what it’s all for) — and to realize that in the process of time; once sin entered the world, and the Plan of Evil got implemented in the world; God saw fit to fracture that Power; ordain the same, original purpose of that Power in a multiplicity form within Nations on the face of this earth— and the most fundamental thing for a member of the Church, the Body of Christ to **think** about in connection with that (in the face of all he’s confronted with on a daily basis that’s done by that Government: good, bad, or indifferent)

... is that the ‘eyes of his understanding’ is to be always penetrating through all that, right back to that Original, Core, Seminal Issue that the Lord Jesus Christ & God the Father think of first & foremost—and that is that God created that Power in the first place to accomplish His business!

- And the “Head” expects the members of His body to think that first & foremost—and to therefore be *subject unto those higher powers* **for that reason!**

- And my point in going over all this (repetitive as it is for some of you) is that **it’s by the effectual working of that initial Godly Thinking that produces the fundamental, genuine, Godly VALUE & ESTEEM (i.e., Love!) for the Power and it’s present Powers form!**

- And what I’m really after in all this is—that by the effectual working of the Godly Thinking of Romans 13:1 & 2—and by the effectual production of the fundamental, genuine, Godly Value & Esteem for the Power and it’s present Powers — (just as all of the Godly Thinking Aspects of all of the various Components of Wisdom, Justice, Judgment, and Equity) - **the by-product of the effectual working of the Godly Thinking is for the curriculum of Sonship Education (i.e., for the actual words of God Himself on the pages of His word) TO PRODUCE A GODLY DESIRE for the Conduct & Behavior and for the Godly Labor as well!!!**

- And the truth is—I can’t produce that!!! A Pastor/Bishop or Bible Teacher/Preacher can’t do that! A clever Outline or a creative, imaginative, ingenious sermon or well-turned phrase by a well-trained speaker can’t do that!

- Truth is—only a **supernatural** work of you being *led by the Spirit of God* through the word of God (the curriculum for your Sonship Education) can do that!!!

- And for you to have a Godly DESIRE to *let your soul be subject unto the higher powers* GLADLY, without murmur or complaint—and with real sonship intelligence—that can only be accomplished by the effectual working of the Godly Thinking!

- Now before going any further—(looking back on what we’ve gone over and what I’ve taught you [and how I’ve gone about teaching it]) — I think the wisest thing to do right here is to kind of draw back from the details of our text and talk about some overall issues that we probably should have talked about before we ever got this far.

- And my reason for this is because it is very easy to get lost in all that’s going on here. — It’s easy to kind of get a whole bunch of facts and things in your mind (or on the table) and really feel like you just don’t know what to do with all of them!

- (And that’s my fault!)

- As I just said—in order to get that Godly DESIRE generated within your inner man to GLADLY *let your soul be subject unto the higher powers*—only the effectual working of the actual words contained in the Godly Thinking of Romans 13:1 & 2 can accomplish that.

- And just to kind of give you a mechanical, “Step-by-Step” method in which that gets accomplished—when you look at the Godly Thinking of verses 1 & 2—how many “Steps” are there?

- A: There are 4—(pay attention to the periods and the colons)

- The Exhortation for receiving the instruction of Justice—and the overall issue in a son making Just Decisions where human government and established authority is concerned is:
Let every (i.e. your) soul be subject unto the higher powers.

- And to be willing, able, enthusiastic, and delighted to do that—it takes 4 Steps of Godly Thinking:

Step 1: To think: ***For there is no power but of God:***

Step 2: In light of that, to think: ***the powers that be are ordained of God.***

Step 3: In light of those 2 things, to think: ***Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God:***

Step 4: In light of those 3 things, to think: ***and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.***

- And by now you should have no problem at all with Step 1—*For there is no power but of God*—The Original Power God created was a set of Governmental CONTROLS put upon His creation—and the Seminal Issue in that is that the Power (sing.) or Control is the methodology by which God is going to accomplish His business with all that He created.

- But that doesn't tell you (or *fully* answer with Godly contentment and Godly satisfaction) why you would **gladly** *subject your soul unto the higher powers*—[it's a start, but there's still 3 more Steps to go until the entire Godly Thinking of Justice in regard to Government is fully established within you!] (that's just 1/4 of it!)

- Now since we're stepping back a bit (so to speak) from the details of the text—to just talk a little more about the what these 7 verses are designed to do and what they accomplish—it's commonly taught that what Paul is saying here is that a good Christian should always be obedient to the Government and to the 'laws of the land'; a good Christian should always pay his taxes; & if you break the laws of the land, you'll have to pay the consequences—which is all well and good ...

- But then some teaching arises that says that since those occupying the offices of Government are "ministers of God," then God apparently chooses (or *ordains*) those who sit in the seats of power in the Government—that God puts them in those offices by Divine Decree—and therefore "we get the Government that we deserve!" (Which is the very way I used to teach this!)

- And that **is** an ASSUMPTION—that's NOT what this is saying—and that's nothing more or less than corrupt doctrine!

- But the thing that's probably nagging you at this point is—ok, this is all well and good for a Government that doesn't have really ungodly, un-biblical laws—and this is all well and good for a Government that doesn't **persecute** you for being a Christian—but what about living in a Government that *does* persecute you for being a Christian (or a Government that wants to "take Christ out of Christmas" and make it a "Winter Celebration" - or remove the Cross and the 10 Commandments from the public square)? In other words, aren't there times when I'm supposed to resist the powers that be?

- And this kind of thinking usually stems from what Paul says in (:3) [which is the first part of the Godly Conduct & Behavior] — “*For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil.*”

- And the common thinking among most Christians is—that all Paul says here—that *letting your soul be subject unto the higher powers* is to be done only as long as the Government is NOT being a “*terror to good works*” — that is, that as long as I’m doing good, godly works and the Government is ok with that (and not terrorizing me for it), then I should be *subject unto the higher powers*—but when the Government becomes a “*terror*” to my good works, then I should resist that Government.

- And oftentimes the appeal is made to such passages as Acts 4:19-20 (*19 But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. 20 For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.*) — or Acts 5:29 (*29 Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men.*)

- But when you carefully pay attention to what is being said in Romans 13:1-7—**there is NO qualifier placed upon anything Paul says!**

- In other words—my understanding (especially of what Paul says in [:3]) is a truism REGARDLESS of whether your Government is persecuting you or not!!!

- In other words—*rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil AT ALL TIMES!!!*

- Romans 13:3 is NOT a relative statement—and we’re not being taught to look at it that way!

- In fact, it’s only taken that way (as a relative statement) because those 4 Steps of the Godly Thinking have not been properly understood and appreciated!

- And what’s especially misunderstood or not properly handled is the information sitting at the end of (:1) and the beginning of (:2) concerning what it means for God to have **ordained** the *powers that be*—and then what it means for those *powers* to have become an **ordinance of God!**

- And that means that what is also misunderstood is that when Paul says, “*good works*” - the ‘good works’ that he has in view there (even though those are very broad terms) — what he has in view are some SPECIFIC *good works*!

- And the common assumption (and misunderstanding) is that Paul says, “For rulers are not a terror to good works, **but to evil** (that is, “but to evil works” or evil doers) — BUT THAT’S **NOT** WHAT THAT VERSE SAYS!

- It says, *For rulers are not a terror to good works, **but to THE evil!!!***

- And my understanding is that Paul (and God) have a very specific and very particular “evil” in view: **THE EVIL!**

- And the truth is—before you would ever get to (:3), there’s some information and some terminology sitting back in (:2) that’s connected to some information sitting in (:1) that, when it’s properly understood and appreciated will make it so that you already know what the *good works* are in (:3) and what *the evil* is that (:3) is specifically talking about before you ever get to it!

- And when that’s properly understood and appreciated— (:3) was as true of George Washington as it was true of Nero; it was as true of Ronald Regan as it’s true of President Obama; it was as true of Stalin as it was true of Winston Churchill — and it was even true of Hitler!

- Back to **Genesis 9:1-7** (read)

- Here is the moment in history when God “fractured” the *Power* (sing.) into the *Powers* (pl.). [Div. Inst. of Human Government]

- And in order to get a fuller understanding and appreciation for the Core, Seminal Issue of the Godly Thinking of the phrase, “*the powers that be are ordained of God (Rom. 13:1c) - [Step 2]* of the Godly Thinking — you have to understand the reason for why God fractured the *Power* into the *Powers that be* right after the Flood.

- And the reason for that is because of what had taken place in connection with Satan’s Plan of Evil and sin entering the world—and then the rapid effects and ramifications of the Plan of Evil and sin in

in the world and what it all did and what it all generated in the interval between Genesis 3 and Genesis 6 when the Flood was brought upon the earth in Judgment of all that.

- By the time you get to Genesis chapter 6 the world (and the men in it; and even the animals in it) had rapidly gotten to the point in which man's very existence upon the earth could have come to a speedy **end**.

- The *old world* or *the world that then was*, really was just as Peter describes it: ***the world of the ungodly*** (*II Pet. 2:5*)!

- And there were things that took place that—when God responded to it with the Judgment of the Flood—and with the destruction of the *world of the ungodly* at that time—when God, having made provision for His business to carry on regardless of that—(which, of course, is what God saving Noah, his wife, their 3 sons and their wives is all about!) —

— when the Judgment is over, and the physical situation exists upon the earth for the resumption of God's business to carry on with Noah and his sons & their wives—God brings the New World Order in—and He makes 'adjustments' & 'alterations' and some 'changes' to how things "used to be" in that "*old world*" order!

- And there were several things God changed and adjusted—(one being the heightening of man's innate 'sense of justice,' [as we have already seen] — but another one of those changes is this issue of God fracturing the Controlling, Governmental Power (sing.) into *the powers (pl.) that be*.

- But even then—that is still to allow God to carry on with His business in view of the **devolving** effects of sin now in the world; and in view of the Satanic Plan of Evil in the world — and the reciprocal **Evolving** effects of man's ungodliness and Satan and his angels evolving ungodliness!

- (and both evolve—and get worse and worse)

- But the fracturing of the Power is done in order for God to continue on with His business—to continue on with His business *in* the New World Order, and to provide for continuing on with His business as He deals with the implementation of the Plan of Evil under the New World Order System **in** which He's determined that there **won't** be

another New World Order after it—(there will be the dismantling, demolition, and destruction of the entire Plan of Evil under this New World Order) - and then He'll get BACK to doing what He originally created creation for in the first place—and He'll accomplish it with all those to whom He provided Redemption and the ones who took advantage of it by getting themselves Redeemed.

- And that's a kind of overall package of information that hopefully allows for you to view the entire Time Line of events with that 'golden thread' (so to speak) of the Power (or Control over God's creation) and the reason for it in the first place, and then the fracturing of that Power into the *powers that be*—but you see that the original reason for that Power is always there—and you see that it's there, even now and on into the future—it never gets broken, there's no interruption in it—it's there from the beginning of creation; & it's still there today—and it's still there on out in the “*fullness of times*” throughout *the ages to come, world without end!*

- Now with that understood—let's now look at the details of Step 2 (*the powers that be are ordained of God*) - and let's **add** to our understanding of what the 2nd Core, Seminal Issue is about of a son's Godly, Just Thinking about Governmental Power that matches up with God's own Just Thinking.

- We know that “*the powers that be*” are the various Governments and Governmental Powers (or levels of government) that exist within any given nation on the face of the earth.

- Running from the King or President or Prime Minister or whatever—down to the lowest ranking position of your local county, city, or town. (easy enough)

- So what we need to get down to—is a good grasp upon what it means when God says that He took that original *Power*, fractured it into *Powers*—and then took those *Powers* and **ordained** them.

... *the powers that be are **ordained** of God.*

- And note that they are *ordained OF God*—(not “**BY**” God).

- Granted, *of* and *by* can convey very similar meaning—but when something is done *by* someone, it doesn't necessarily mean that the one who did it is the source or origin or author of it—the action could be done *by* someone, but they

could be far removed from any personal relationship or personal ‘ties’ to what they’re acting upon—but by saying that *the powers that be are ordained OF God*, that preposition “*of*” indicates that God has a personal ‘tie’ or relationship with the *powers* and the *ordaining* of those *powers*.

- It points out the Excellency of our King James Bible (most of the Modern Trns. have ‘by’) — “*of*” continues to underscore the fact that all Governing & Controlling Power (whether in its Original Singular *Power* or in its present fractured *Powers that be* [President down to Town Clerk] - that they all have their origin, [genesis, if you will], their source, and their ownership in God Himself! (Government/ Governments are NOT the invention of man!)

- And that’s a critical little detail—because by matching up the phrasing of Step 1 (*For there is no power but OF GOD*) with Step 2 (*the powers that be are ordained OF GOD*) - it indicates to you (and to your eye as you read it) that even though God had to fracture the *Power* into *Powers*, He never relinquishes authorship & ownership of them—even in their present ‘fractured’ state! And it indicates that the *powers* still retain the original intent of the *power*!

- Now then—that leaves one critical issue remaining in Step 2—and that is that *the powers that be are ORDAINED of God*—the issue of God ‘*ordaining*’ the *powers* He fractured.

- And both this *ordaining* concept, and the next concept coming up in Step 3 (:2) - (the “*ordinance*” concept)—both of those concepts are going to tell you something **further** about the fragmented *powers*—something more about them that’s resident back in Genesis 8:15-ch.11 that God wants you to base your entire Godly Conduct & Behavior upon when it comes to living underneath whatever Government in which you live.

- Now what we’re going to see is that Step 2, here, (God ordaining the powers that be), is a necessary Step—but it’s really the proper sense and sequence to get to an even more defined issue (which is the issue of God taking the *Power*; fracturing it into *Powers*; Ordaining those *Powers*; to ultimately make the actual Governmental *Power* under which you live to carry within it this *Ordinance* of God.

- And that's exactly what is going on here—God goes from the General—to the particular—and then one more time, He goes to the even more specific or the fine details of the issue.

- So we've got the word **ordained** in Step 2 of (:1) - and then we've got the word **ordinance** in Step 3 of (:2) — and more often than not, most folks think, Well, that's just taking the “ordained” concept of (:1) [which is in a verb form], and putting into the noun form of (:2) [i.e., “ordinance”].

- And grammatically or etymologically, you could do that.

- But the noun form (i.e., “ordinance”) is NOT the ‘pure’ (so to speak) noun form of the verb “ordain” — (ordination is actually the ‘pure’ verb form of “ordain!”)

- And it's interesting that Paul didn't come along and say in (:2), ‘Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordination of God.’ (as if you're simply resisting the thing that God ‘ordained’ back up in [:1]).

- The “ordinance of God” is NOT a mere repetition of God ‘ordaining’ the powers! God isn't saying the same thing over again in (:2) that He just said in (:1) as though you didn't get it!

- So why in our English language do we have 2 distinct noun forms for the word ‘ordain’? — and there is a reason—and it's because of that reason that God uses the word *ordinance* rather than ‘ordination.’

- And we'll find out why when we see some further things sitting back there in Genesis 8 and 9.

- And what we're going to see here is that there is an awful lot of things that when it comes to *the powers that be*—that God has built some things into them that can (and do) occur quite naturally—and what I mean by that is that they don't have either (in the bad sense) Satan coming along and getting into that Government and ‘stirring the pot’ (so to speak) to make it evil—nor do they have God Himself coming along and manipulating the “good” rulers to do the bidding and the will of God (so to speak) - [which is a mistake most folk make by not rightly dividing the word of truth—and they see God

doing such things back in Israel's program with Israel's kings and so forth] — but what is often failed to be understood is the fact that when God fractured the Power into Powers—He **ordained** those *powers that be*—and by doing that, He vested them with some capacities that they will ALL naturally have without His (or the Adversary's) intervention!

- And that means that even in this dispensation of grace, **ALL** (every Gov. on the face of this earth) - **all** governments, by nature, retain and possess what God *ordained* for them to be and what God *ordained* for them to possess—regardless of what kind it is, or what quality it is, or who occupies the seats of its government.

- And that's a critical "Step" to understanding and appreciating first and foremost what it means for God to have *ordained* the *powers that be*.

- In Genesis 8:15ff—it's apparent that God has fractured the Power—He could have just given it to Noah as He did with Adam (and then to Japheth as the first born, and on down through that 'natural' lineage)—but He didn't—He didn't tell Noah to have "dominion" - and therefore, it's very apparent that God is NOT going to vest the Original Power in one man (in the same manner in which He did with Adam) - but now the Power is going to be fractured and vested in a great many entities that make up the Divine Institution of Human Government.

- And now governments (or *the powers that be*) are going to carry with them (and within them) the original intent of the Power (sing.) - which is the issue of: that's the methodology by which God will carry out His business on this earth.

- And it's also apparent from especially Genesis 9:1-7 that what's going to exist now is no longer the Power (sing.), but *the powers that be*—and those *powers* are still there for CONTROL—and they're still the means by which God is going to accomplish His business in the New World Order that He brings into affect after the Flood.

- But when God fractures the Power—you've now got this concept of them being ordained.

- What does it mean to *ordain* something?

- (Webster, 1828) *ordain* = to set; to establish in a particular office or order; hence to invest with a ministerial function.

- (Which is why you have the issue of those occupying governmental positions being *the ministers of God!*)

- Simply put—when you *ordain* something, **you officially establish it and make it the RULE!** (i.e., “This is the way things are going to be—and this is going to be the means by which things are done from now on!”)

- And notice that you might think that *ordain* could also be said about the Power (sing.) - but God doesn't have the apostle Paul utilize the word *ordain* until he gets to *the powers that be* (or the fractured *powers* concept).

- And that's done to underscore the fact that this multiplicity of *powers* now are **not** man's invention, either!

- God establishing the Original Power is a 'given' (so to speak—it was in existence before man was ever created) - but God also wants to make it clear that once sin entered the world, and the world became “*the world of the ungodly*” and God Judged that Old World by means of the Flood—and in this New World Order (now that things have changed) - God wants to make it clear that when it comes to these multiple *powers that be*, that God Himself established them as well!

- Now by virtue of God saying that *the powers that be are ordained of God*—(and why He says it there, but didn't say that about the Original Power) - that makes it so that you have to think a little more about what was taking place in Gen. 8 & 9 when they were *ordained* — when the 'fracturing' did take place.

- Because when God fractured the *Power* into *Powers*—and made it, therefore, so that the singular *Power* issue was no longer going to be the way of doing things as it was in the Old World—**there was a particular REASON behind that!**

- There was a particular reason **why** the New World Order **NEEDED** the *Power* to be fractured—and **needed** *powers* now to be *ordained!*

- There was a particular reason **why** *the powers that be* **needed** to be established as the recognized way things were going to run from now on!

- And what we're going to see is that—there's a direct 'tie-in' with this issue of *the powers that be are ordained of God* — and then what comes up in (:2) [Step 3] in that concept of each one of those individual Governments that comprise "*the powers that be*" having this *ordinance* concept to them.

- And what we're going to have to do is—we're going to have to get to the point where we are going to think of these 2 concepts (**God ordaining the powers—and those powers possessing the ordinance of God**) both together! - because they go together!

- **MINI REVIEW:**

- The 3rd & Final Component of our *receiving the* initial & fundamental *instruction of Justice* in our Sonship Education is the issue of Godly Justice in connection with Established Authority within the divine institution of human government. (Your relationship (as a son) to established authority/government).

- First of all—the Father exhorts us to what our sonship Thinking, Behavior, and Labor will all be about (the aim, goal, objective of it):

Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers.

- The Godly Thinking that will get that accomplished comes in 4 Steps—each one having a Core, Seminal Issue that progressively builds & develops out of each preceding Step:

- Step 1 of the Godly Thinking: ***For there is no power but of God:***

- God Himself originally invented/created governmental ***power*** as a singular entity.

- The original governmental ***power*** was created by God for the purpose of putting a set of CONTROLS upon His creation.

- The original governmental ***power*** was created and in effect BEFORE any sin, evil, wrongdoing, etc. ever existed.

- **The Core, Seminal Issue** of the original controlling and governing *power* therefore is that: The whole purpose of the original *power* (or governing control) is because *IT'S* the methodology by which the business of God will be carried out!

- One other issue (or feature) about this original, singular *power* (that I failed to point out when we first went over it) is—that when you're dealing with a *power* that is a governing and controlling *power*—one of the major features and functions that governing & controlling *power* has—is the ability or capacity to **INFLUENCE!** (or to hold sway)

- (And that feature of its capacity to **influence** is something that exists **both** when there is no sin, evil, & wrongdoing in the picture, and when sin, evil, & wrongdoing has entered the picture!)

- For example, in a room that you have decorated (a lot or a little) - you have exerted your influence upon that room—and it, therefore, gives knowledge of (or speaks of) you being there or having been there!

- Or in the context of governmental power—a king, monarch, president, prime minister, governor, etc., has a particular **influence** upon the people and the area in which he governs (his administration). And during the time of his administration, the people and the land reflect that leaders' governing **influence!**

- And governing and/or controlling *power* having to do with how God uses it to conduct His business—at the exact same time has to do with Him utilizing the *power* to effectively and effectually demonstrate His existence (the knowledge of who He is) - as well as to influence and hold sway over all His creation. — (it's a marvelous mechanism to spread one's influence!)

- A good example of God demonstrating governmental *power* used to spread His influence in connection with Him carrying out His business on this earth is found in a familiar passage in Isaiah chapter 9.

- (read) Isaiah 9:1-7

- Here in Ch.9, Isaiah is focusing upon the Climactic Stage in God's Program with Israel (the 4th & 5th Installments of the 5th Course of Punishment).

- Hence, this is a passage the deals **greatly** with the way in which God is going to be carrying out His **business** with this earth.

- Note: (:1-2) — is quoted by Matthew in Matthew 4:15-16 — but in a marvelous example of the Holy Ghost (Who, as the Author of God's word, possesses the copyright on all the Bible) - the HG **omits** part of this passage —

- (read Mat. 4:15-16) — the HG omits the words: *Nevertheless the dimness shall not be such as was in her vexation, when at the first he lightly afflicted— and — and afterward did more grievously afflict her.*

- The words quoted by Matthew focus upon the Lord's 1st Coming (or 1st Advent), which is the 4th Install. of the 5th CoP (the first part of the Climactic Stage) — and the words that are omitted focus upon the Lord's 2nd Coming (or 2nd Advent), which is the 5th Install. of the 5th CoP! [What fantastic accuracy!] — (the 4th & 5th Install./5th CoP are the Climactic Stage of Israel's Program—the Climactic Stage of God's business on this earth!)

- Note: (:3-5 [don't read]) deal with God bringing the 5th Install. upon them.

- Note: (especially & read) [:6 & 7] —

- (:6) the government issue—the issue of the governing/controlling **power**.

- (:7) ***Of the INCREASE of his government and peace there shall be no end, ...*** (this is the issue of the INFLUENCE capacity that the *power* has!)

- and note (:7) ***The ZEAL of the LORD of hosts will perform this.***—the issue of God carrying out His business by means of governing/controlling *power* is such a BIG deal with Him that He uses one of the

most powerful and forceful words to express His enthusiasm, fervency and passion for conducting and carrying out His business by means of this governing, controlling **POWER!!!**

- Now once Step 1 has been properly understood and appreciated—we then take that Godly Thinking and moved on to Step 2.

- Step 2 of the Godly Thinking: *the powers that be are ordained of God.*

- Now we're going to talk about that governing & controlling **power** in the plural—and there was a time in history (and in God's word) when He 'fractured' the **power** into **powers**—and that's what's recorded in Genesis 8-11 in regard to what God did just after the Flood.

- Here we cross a line (so to speak) - and even though sin, evil, wrongdoing, etc. had entered the world before the Flood — it wasn't until just after the Flood that God deliberately fractured the **power** into **powers**.

- Therefore as one of the measures that God took in order for the human race to not get to the point of self-destruction as it did just prior to the Flood, God fractured the **power** into **powers** — and God is now going to talk about those **powers** a little bit differently because of how they now will exist and function and have capacities to them, but now all in the face of sin, evil, wrongdoing, etc., and how those **powers the be** will have an affect upon sin, evil, wrongdoing, etc.

- And at the outset, it's critical to understand and appreciate that God did NOT have to invent/create new powers; or come up with something new and different in order to now deal with the destructive effects of sin & evil—no, all He had to do was to fracture it and instead of putting it in the hands of a single person (like Noah or one of his sons), God puts the **power** into a great multiplicity of human governments upon the earth, called here, **"the powers that be."**

- And therefore when it comes to **The Core, Seminal Issue** of Step 2—most fundamentally of all, By fracturing the power into powers, it allows for God to continue right on to succeed with His business & be totally successful with it in the 'long run.' [nothing has changed where God's bus. is concerned!]

- But now (in the face of the destructive nature of sin, evil, and wrongdoing) God does something special to those fractured **powers that be**—He **ordained** them—(*the powers that be are ordained of God.*)

- So now we can add to our understanding of what the Core, Seminal Issue of Step 2 is, and get it's fullness:

- By fracturing the **power** into **powers** in the New World Order, and by God **ordaining** the **powers that be**—God has officially established **ALL the powers that be** as the **rule** by which He will succeed with His business in the 'long run.' Which means that ALL human governments that ever exist (no matter what kind, form, or quality) will have something in common that allows for God to continue to carry out His business and be successful with it in time!

- By **ordaining** the **powers that be**, every human government that ever exists will, by nature, contain the **officially established rule** by which God will succeed in doing His business.

- And so now—with those first 2 Steps—(1) God created governing & controlling power in the first place in order to be the methodology by which He carries out His business; (2) In the New World Order, God fractured the power into powers and ordained them all (as many as there will ever be) as the officially established rule for the long-term success of His business — with those 2 Steps properly understood and appreciated—we're now ready to move on to Step 3.

- Step 3 of the Godly Thinking of Justice in regards to your relationship with human government is contained in the first clause of Romans 13:2.

2 *Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God:*

- Now before dealing with all of the details of Step 3—let's quickly move to dealing with that issue at the end of the clause: ***the ordinance of God.***

- And I say 'quickly' because the issue of God ordaining the powers — and those powers possessing the ordinance of God—those 2 issues go together—and need to be thought of together!

- Again—when God fractured the *Power* into *Powers*, and made it, therefore, so that the singular *Power* was no longer going to be the way of doing things as it was in the Old World—but now the way of doing things in the New World Order would be by *the powers that be* — **there was a very particular REASON behind that!**

- There was a particular reason why the New World Order NEEDED the *Power* to be fractured—and NEEDED the *powers that be* to be ordained!

- There was a specific reason for why *the powers that be* **needed** to be **ordained** as the officially recognized and officially established way things were going to run from now on!

- In fact—due to the simple fact that just after the Flood took place (as we have already seen) - God heightened man’s natural ‘sense’ of Justice— even that goes hand-in-hand with an officially recognized & established governing & controlling *power* in the form of human government.

- But for now—the concept of God **ordaining** the *powers*, and that each of those *powers* possessing an **ordinance** of God—those 2 concepts go together—they’re integral, one to another—they’re purposefully related—and the truth is, they both took place at the exact same time!

- At the same time in which God brought in a heightened sense of Justice in man’s natural make-up—He fractured the *Power*; *ordained Powers* to be the norm from now on—and the reason for doing those 2 things **IS THE SAME!**

- The reason for increasing man’s sense of Justice & fracturing the *Power* into *Powers* is the SAME in both cases!

- And that takes us right back to **Genesis 8 & 9.**

- In particular—in **Gen. 9** (especially :4-7) - when God heightens man’s sense of Justice and when He *ordains* these *powers*—if you pay close attention, you’ll realize that God said something prior to that, in which He gives you the REASON for doing that! (and you understand that when He ordains the powers, He establishes an ordinance—an **ordinance** ends up being brought into effect!)

- And my understanding is that an *ordinance* is **not** the same thing as an 'ordination' —

— in this case (and in this context) - an ordinance is the **PRODUCT** of this 'ordination' — (it's the **product** of God's *ordaining* the *powers* in a plural form).

- And as you think about what God does in Gen. 9:4-7—when God establishes the *powers* He's just *ordained* as an *ordinance* — God, in essence, now puts those *powers that be* into man's hands on a multiplicity-type level—and by doing so, God therefore makes man **responsible** and **accountable** for it!

- And I only point that out to say that by doing it the way He did it—it takes this issue of government and governing, controlling power and it **intensifies the whole matter in man's thinking!**

- (Which is why government is something that man is always preoccupied with!) [men **never** come along and say, "Let's just forget about this whole business of government—it always gets screwed up— it's just a worthless idea, so let's just scrap the whole thing!"]

- no—man has a natural sense of accountability where government is concerned! - and it's just naturally blended in with man's heightened sense of Justice!

- So let's now look at what it was that God said previous to Genesis chapter 9 that points to the very reason for *ordaining* the *powers* and immediately producing an **ordinance** by *ordaining* them.

- By the way—this is going to clear up what God means in Rom. 13:3 when He talks about *good works* and "**the**" *evil*. [*For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil.*]

- Notice **Genesis 8:20-22**

- In this New World Order situation, God records the issue that (in :21) - *for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth;*

- Man's *heart* had not changed—the judgment of the Flood was not designed to change man's *heart*—rather, it was designed to remedy the **PRODUCT** of man's *heart*!

- And there were some changes God was going to make on the 'outside' of man's *heart* (so to speak) in this New World Order that will make it so that man's *heart* (and what it's capable of producing) cannot produce as **rapidly** as had been produced previously: "*the world of the ungodly*" that would necessitate God destroying the world and man in the world.

- Notice: (:21) - *for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth* — and that's not said outside of a CONTEXT—(and it doesn't say that 'the imagination of man's heart is "**sinful**" from his youth') — that's true, but God doesn't say that—because the issue that He's after isn't simply that man's a sinner!

- Truth is—if that was the issue, then God would have brought the Flood in right after Adam sinned!

- The *evil* that God has in view here is something that became an expression of man's *heart* after sin entered the world; after man began to multiply; after children began to be born—after you had man who had a state of youth!

- In other words—when it comes to defining that *evil*, it's defined back in Genesis chapter 6! (where God makes statements & observations, and declares the specifics of what the Old World had become).

- And the one particular thing that God has in view isn't that man's a sinner; and isn't that he sins—and isn't that his sins can be fornication, or adultery, or thievery, or disobedient to parents, or all sorts of the works of the flesh that we could name — rather, it's ONE PARTICULAR THING that man's *heart* '**tends**' unto, unless God does something to keep it in check!

- **Genesis 6:5-13** (read)

- (and the thing we're after is what God is going to define as *the evil* in this context)

- Look especially at (:11-13) - and even more at (:13) when God speaks to Noah and tells him the particular reason **why** He's going to destroy MAN with the earth.

- What is the specific *evil* in man's *heart* that's there from his *youth* that is the reason for why God's going to destroy *all flesh* with the *earth*?

A: **VIOLENCE!** - that's the issue! and that's the *evil!*

- Truth is—all 3 realms (angelic, animal, and man) had become ***violent***—and all 3 realms now, based upon their ability to influence and work on this earth have made it so that the whole earth had been ***filled with violence!***

- Now *violence* is also a broad-based term—so you're going to have to think about that in connection with man's Conduct & Behavior here.

- Because that's the CORE ISSUE here to God in the *ordaining* of human government—**it's designed to keep *violence* in check!**

- And that's why—regardless of what kind or what form that human government takes—**it will always be doing that!**

- Granted, some will do it better than others—but the issue is: **every form of government** (from the raunchiest dictatorship to the most wonderful Monarchy or Republic) - **it abhors, by nature, men being *VIOLENT* under its reign!**

- And that's *THE EVIL* that God *ordained* governments to be His *ministers*—and to *attend upon continually*: the issue of keeping man's ability to be *violent* under **control!**

- And the *good works* that Paul has in view in Rom. 13, are the works that are the OPPOSITE of *violence*—they're *works of peace, quietness, and orderliness.*

- And that's why it's called in Rom. 13:2 ***the ordinance of God!***

- **An ordinance is an established means of maintaining ORDER!**

- Therefore, when it comes to the Core, Seminal Issue of Romans 13:2a (*Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ORDINANCE of God:*) - the Seminal Issue in God producing an *ordinance* when He *ordained* the *powers that be*—is that:

God established every governmental power as a means of maintaining order and to ultimately keep man’s ability to be VIOLENT under control!

- And while it’s essential that when a son views whatever government in which he lives, just that way—and to be able to “see through” all of the garbage that most men get caught up in (such as the bad things the gov. does to them; or the ungodly laws it passes; or the taxes it imposes; or the waste and mismanagement it traffics in; etc., etc.) — while it’s essential that a son see through all that, and sees the vital issue that that government possesses this *ordinance of God* whereby it abhors men being VIOLENT under its reign, and keeps man’s VIOLENCE in check (under control) - actually, there’s an even more CRITICAL issue to all that!

- And that critical issue is: by carrying out the *ordinance of God*—and by keeping man’s ability to be violent under control—(by doing that), **it allows God to be able to continue successfully carry out His business in the long-term!**

- And if that sounds quite similar to the issue in Step 2—(when God *ordained* the *powers that be*), IT IS!

- It’s supposed to be closely tied together—and it’s supposed to be thought of together!

- By God endowing every governing & controlling *power* that He *ordained* with this *ordinance* (this ‘established means of maintaining order’)—God has ingeniously made it so that the *violence* that so characterized the Old World Order—(i.e., man’s ability to become so *violent* that “*the earth was filled with violence*” to such a degree that God had to step in; judge man, & animals, and the earth by means of the Flood) — the *powers that be*, possessing the *ordinance of God* put into place measures by which man’s return to that Old World state of *violence* would be retarded or slowed way down—and in fact, would never quite reach that state or condition again—at least would not reach it until God had successfully conducted His business with the earth!

- And that's why (in Genesis 9:4-7) - when Human Government is described for the first time—it's described in connection with putting CONTROLS on man's ability to express VIOLENCE to the extreme (which is to MURDER another man) [i.e., to "*shed man's blood*"].

- And my understanding is that—(just as God did when He gave the Law to Moses in those 10 Commandments as the 10 "Well-Head" issues, under which would fall a whole host of other Law issues) — my understanding is, that's the same thing God is doing here with Noah.

- 'Shedding man's blood' (or murder) is one man's extreme act of violence against another man.

- But there's going to be (and there are) 'lesser' acts of violence as well.

- And once the *powers that be* get established, they would be responsible for administrating all the other controls in connection with all of the other, lesser acts of violence.

- And the genius of God is that by stating the EXTREME or "Well-Head" issue—it's just naturally understood that all of the *powers* of human government (having this *ordinance of God*), will naturally be responsible for controlling all the 'lesser' acts of violence as well.

- And that issue of *the powers that be* (every government that has ever, or will ever exist on this earth) possessing *the ordinance of God* (the means of keeping man's ability to be violent under control) - that's the "Thing" that all governments have in common!

- And when you get to that Core, Seminal Issue of *the ordinance of God*—that's the issue that makes it so that every member of the church, the body of Christ (who's been properly educated as a son), under whatever Government in which he lives—will GLADLY subject himself to it; be glad it's in existence; and do all of the things described in the details of the Godly Conduct & Behavior; and especially the things described in the Godly Labor—he'll gladly pay his taxes; gladly give the *custom*; gladly give the *fear*; gladly give the *honour* to whom it's due—in connection with that government functioning as that ordinance of God that keeps an orderly society in existence—and that makes it so that the natural capacity that man has to be violent is kept in check—so that the results of that violence will not become what they *could* become!

- Now let's just deal with the details of Romans 13:2a—(or Step 3 of the Godly Thinking of Justice in connection with your relationship to government).

2 *Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God:*

- The *Whosoever* indicates 'anyone' or 'anybody' whether they are a member of the church, the body of Christ or not (believer or unbeliever; Christian or non-Christian; saved or lost).

- And what this does is to give you—as a member of the church, the body of Christ (and as a son) - it gives you PAUSE (so to speak) - it makes you have to SLOW DOWN and STOP AND THINK about what you're doing (or what you would be doing) if you did 'resist the power.'

- It makes you realize and recognize that 'resisting the power' is something that any unbeliever does and can do!

- And that is something that is just abhorrent to a son! (that is, to be 'lumped-in' with Thinking and Acting like any unbeliever! That's FOOLISH Thinking and FOOLISH behavior! That's the exact OPPOSITE of the way God the Father and God the Son Thinks and Acts!

- This is not only a marvelous technique of our English language; but it's a marvelous technique (by lumping you in with what even the unbeliever thinks and acts like) - of, when Step 1 & Step 2 have done their effectual job—by presenting the information in the exact way in which God does it in Step 3—it actually begins to go right after something in your heart: YOUR CONSCIENCE! (it 'smacks' it!)

- And that is only added to by some other terminology in (:2a).

- *Whosoever therefore*—the "*therefore*" tells you that Paul is now drawing a conclusion to the first 2 Steps here in Step 3—and it also underscores the fact that Step 3 (and Step 4 as well) is what God is driving at, but to get here you had to take those first 2 Steps!

- Which means that it's really here in Step 3 and 4 where everything should 'click' as far as the Godly Thinking goes!

- The conclusion of Step 3 & 4 is where some Godly **zeal** and Godly **enthusiasm** should begin to get generated in your heart (and in your **conscience** [where some Justice-type Sonship Decisions are going to be made!])

- Paul is drawing a conclusion based upon what's just been appreciated in (:1) - he's not just elaborating on (:1); he's not merely reiterating what he just said—he's concluding something—and the issue now is, Let's take this Godly Thinking one Step further!

- *Whosoever therefore resisteth ...*

(this is where some more “conscience” type issues get generated—and this is a term that directly indicates that when a properly educated son ‘lets his soul be subject unto the higher powers’ - that he does so GLADLY, (it's his joy and delight to do so!)

- *resisteth* = a broad & general term (the exact kind of resistance isn't spelled out here) - the word is from the Greek word ἀντιτάσσομαι which is a military term, meaning “to array in battle against; to oppose.”

- When you *resist* something or someone you literally “stand against” or “oppose” them—and in this context, *resisteth* is the exact OPPOSITE of doing something with gladness, joy, or delight!

- It's the 2nd of 3 indicators in (:1-7) that when a son ‘lets his soul be subject unto the higher powers,’ that he does so with genuine, Godly Joy! (because to ‘resist’ *the power*, indicates that **you're not happy** with your government!)

- *Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, ...*

- “*the power*” — though used in the singular, it's not referring to the Original Power of (:1) [Step 1] - rather, it refers to the particular governmental power (of the many fractured *powers that be*) under which you currently live and abide.

- The *power* here is singling out one of the fractured *powers*.

- Now we can put the whole thing together:

Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: (the governing & controlling power under which you live—having been fractured from the Original Power and *ordained* of God as the officially established rule for the long-term success of His business, has been endowed with an *ordinance of God*, which God has designed to be the means of maintaining order and keeping man’s ability to be violent under control.) [and your government has it!]

- Again—because of this *ordinance of God* that exists in EVERY government on the face of the earth—is the issue of keeping violence in check—and regardless of what kind or quality that the gov. is, it will always be doing that!

- **Violence** is *the evil* that is the *imagination of man’s heart from his youth*—and that’s going to be “*the evil*” of Romans 13:3 — and the “*good works*” are works of the very opposite of *violence*—such as peace, quietness, and orderliness!

- And you’re supposed to stop and take some time (maybe a great deal of time) and think about this—and let it ‘sink in’ that if you ‘resist the power’ then what you’re doing is, you are actually resisting the very *ordinance of God*—you’re resisting the very thing that God has designed & equipped to keep violence in check!

- And while you may not realize it as clearly or as deeply as you will later on in Romans 13, you need to recognize that no matter what kind or quality of government there is (or that you live under) - because of this *ordinance of God*, that’s a PROBLEM and a DETERRENT to the Adversary! (It prevents some things taking place that the Adversary desires to take place!)

- God’s business isn’t going to get accomplished in chaos, confusion, and violence! (either on this earth or in the heavenly places!)

- And the government under which you live may not be the best, it may not be the kind that God would prefer—but it still contains *the ordinance of God* and therefore it still puts violence in check, and it still “praises” a quiet, peaceable, orderly life!

- And it needs to be said—and you need to hear it—and you need to take some time to think about it—and that is this: **when you resist your government, you are resisting *the ordinance of God*—you are resisting the very thing God has established and designed as the means by which He is carrying out His business!**

- In essence—**YOU'RE RESISTING GOD HIMSELF!
(and there will be dire consequences!!)**

- The *ordinance of God* that exists in every government on earth is that they all (to one degree or another) determine to keep violence in check.

- Even Rome (under Nero) did that—and every government that exist today (some of which we would abhor) still does that!

- Government, by its very nature, (whether it's a Communist form or a Republic, or a Socialist or whatever) doesn't intentionally persecute people because they're quiet & peaceable and orderly—in fact, the bigger the Tyrant, the more he wants that! (the more he wants that from his subjects — Just be quiet and let me do what I want; let me take what I want from you!)

- Fidel Castro isn't upset with those in Cuba who live quiet & peaceably—but violence in Cuba is dealt with, with a strong hand—in fact, back in the 80's they shipped all their most violent folks to Miami! they certainly didn't want them around!

- And in that way, even Fidel Castro and his Communist country are not a “*terror to good works, but to the evil!*”

- And again—that should start to make a lot more sense out of a passage like I Timothy 2:1-2 — *I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; 2 For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a **quiet and peaceable** life in all godliness and honesty.*

- Every gov. on the face of the earth—if nothing else—keeps this *ordinance of God*—keeps violence in check; and keeps this earth from reaching a point where God would have to destroy it.

- Once again—the first Clause of (:2) says:

2 Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God:

- And that's the 3rd (and in some ways, the most important) Step of the Godly Thinking that makes it so your thinking as God's son matches the thinking of your Heavenly Father.

- When (:2) goes on with the Godly Thinking—(after [:1] has had you go back in time (so to speak) and appreciate what the Original Power was, and what it was created by God to accomplish—and then still go back in time and appreciate the time in history when God fractured the Power into Powers and *ordain* them [at the Flood]) — (:2) now goes on with the Godly Thinking—

— but by beginning a new sentence (and as well as a new verse in God's word) - what Paul is doing here is kind of taking the issue from the 'theoretical' (so to speak, of [:1]), and he's now bringing it down to the practical, "rubber-meets-the-road" type of Godly Thinking that you're supposed to think under the governmental situation in which you live — (whether you're a Roman [to whom this was originally written; or whether, when a copy of it was made and sent off to the Galatians; or to Antioch under Pisidian rule; or to those in Phrygia; or when the Corinthians got a copy of Romans under Achaia; or when the Philippians got a copy of Romans who were under a Roman Colony different from the rest [even though they were all under the Roman Empire]) —

— but the issue is, that from (:2) on—their Godly Thinking now begins to think about what (:1) just said in connection with that Core, Seminal Issue of the *power* being there as the methodology for the purpose of God accomplishing His business—and now they're going to bring that into the individual *power* that they live under (within the scope of all the *powers* that are out there) - and now they are to realize that if they *resist the power* under which they live, they are *resisting the ordinance of God!*

- And now they've got that *ordained* issue in connection with the *powers*—and then the *ordinance* issue of it that tells them that the *power* under which they live (no matter what else it is or does), **it maintains a degree of order by keeping man's ability to be violent under control!**

- And by doing THAT—God has made it so that He can be successful in accomplishing His business on this earth over the ‘long-haul’ - that is, until the Lord Jesus Christ has come and provided the Redemption—and until the time when God will Personally deal with the Adversary and his Plan & Policy of Evil (out in the Lord’s Day of Wrath)!

- And that’s the Godly Thinking that God wants you to have and to base your entire Conduct & Behavior upon when it comes to living under the government in which you live!

- But before we get to the Conduct & Behavior—there’s one more Step to the Godly Thinking:

- After you have paused long enough to get the full, effectual working of the first Clause of (:2) - [which is what that colon tells you], then you’re ready to move on to the final Step of the Godly Thinking ...

STEP 4: *and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.*

- Now there’s not a whole lot to deal with detail-wise in this final Clause of (:2) - but it’s an exercise (so to speak) in being able to allow the CONTEXT to tell you what every word means!

- And right off the bat—when you read, “*and they that resist ...*” — tell me the very first thing that “pops” in your mind when I ask you the question: When you resist WHAT???

- Government? WRONG!

- “**THE ORDINANCE OF GOD**” !!! (truth is, the word ‘government’ isn’t even found one time in this passage!)

- This final Step to the Godly Thinking has you to think about the dire consequences of resisting the ordinance of God.

- And how I just said that is critical—because when a son (a properly educated, adopted son of God who is *led by the Spirit of God*) - when a son thinks about the gov. under which he lives—he must (and he does) see “through” the gov.—or when he *thinks* about the gov. he sees, he always [and always] sees it in terms of *the ordinance of God*.

- And a son intelligently knows what that means!

- (How often do you hear Christians [even grace folks] talk about the ills of government? ... but how often do you hear them talk about “*the ordinance of God*” - almost never!)

- So then, in the context that the first 3 Steps has provided, Step 4 (and all the words used in it) should make perfect sense (because the context controls every thought you think about those words)!

... and they that resist

- **resist** = (we’ve already dealt with this in the previous Clause of [:2]) it comes from a military term in the Greek, meaning “to array in battle against someone”; to stand against; to oppose; to withstand the action or the effect of something [such as the *ordinance of God* as executed by the gov. in which you live]).

- George Crabb points out—*resist* is the action of setting one thing up against another—*resist* is always an act of more or less force when applied to persons—it is mostly a culpable action (= deserving of blame), as when men resist lawful authority; resistance is **always bad**, unless in the case of self-defence.

- And since we naturally reserve the word *resist* for contexts that, (when no issue of self-defence is in view) - we naturally reserve it for indicating that it’s *bad* to do so, hence, **wrong** to do so—this Godly Thinking of Justice in connection with Government is doing what it’s designed to do—it’s building upon our natural and innate Sense of Justice with God’s Sense of Justice of what is **right** and what is **wrong**!

- And by doing that—it establishes those Godly norms & standards for a Godly Just sense of what is right and wrong in connection with how we relate to established authority and the government in which we live—and it establishes it **right in the very area of our heart where right & wrong decision-making takes place: OUR CONSCIENCE!**

- So we have—and *they that resist* (i.e., resist or stand against the *ordinance of God* which your government possesses) **shall receive to themselves damnation.**

- Notice that it doesn’t simply say: *they that resist* ‘shall be damned’

- no—it says, *and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.* — **AND THAT’S THE ISSUE OF BEING LAWFULLY AND LEGALLY CUPABLE!**

- That is—**YOU BROUGHT THIS ON YOURSELF!**
(You’re **worthy** of **blame!** and the consequences of your actions are going to be DIRE [or terrible] consequences!)

- Note how that every word is generating an extremely sensitive *conscience* in regard to *resisting the powers that be* and the *ordinance of God!!!*

- *and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.*

- *Damnation* is exclusively a King James term—all of the Modern English Translations have changed that word (mostly because it’s determined by Bible Scholars to be just too harsh of a word)! [“That’s a curse word, for heaven’s sake!”]

- The Modern English Trns. usually have either the word ‘condemnation’ or ‘judgment.’

- Granted, the most basic meaning of *damnation* is = the action of condemning, or being condemned—furthermore, it’s the action of being condemned **by judicial sentence!** (It’s an act of JUSTICE!)

- And it needs to be understood and appreciated that the *damnation* in this context **IS NOT** talking about a person (saved or lost) being *damned* or condemned to hell! (A person’s salvation/justification is no where in this context!)

- Just as there are different kinds of *justification* in the Bible; and different kinds of *salvation* in the Bible — so, too, are there different kinds of *damnation* in the Bible!

- The *damnation* being spoken about here is being *damned* in a **LEGAL** sense, and in a government setting—when you have actively *resisted the ordinance of God*—i.e., when you have resisted the government under which you live—and thereby, *resisted* its power to maintain order and keep man’s ability to be violent under control, then you’re in danger of *receiving to yourself damnation!* (**SEVERE PUNISHMENT!**)

- The truth is—*damnation* is a far more excellent term to use in this context rather than ‘condemnation’ or ‘judgment’ or ‘punishment’ (ala Living trns.) — because *damnation* is a word reserved **only** for condemning a person & a person’s actions in the **harshest** of terms!

- It’s the most powerful term the English language can use for legally condemning a man and a man’s actions!

- But more than that—*damnation* (unlike ‘judgment,’ or ‘punishment’ or ‘condemnation’) **IS A FEAR-PRODUCING TERM!!!**

- It’s one thing to be in danger of being ‘punished’ or ‘judged’ — but it’s another thing to be in danger of being **damned!!!** (and remember: YOU put YOURSELF in that position when you *resist the power/ordinance of God!*)

- It’s a term reserved for **WRATH**—(either the wrath of God, or in this case, the wrath of the government [*the power!*])

- This is a great example of the “Thundering diction” of the King James Bible!!!

- If nothing else—*damnation* tells you God isn’t messing around—He’s not playing games here! This is serious business, with serious and dire consequences!!!

- Now, you’re going to have to think about this, in order to really perceive a whole bunch of ways in which, even what you may at first think are really mild forms of resisting the government—that a great deal of those seemingly mild forms of resisting really do ‘tear at the fabric’ (so to speak) of the *ordinance of God* (the power of the government to maintain order and keep man’s violence in check & under control)! [Such as not paying your taxes or *tribute* (which goes to fund the military, the police force and other means to keep violence in check! — and the same goes for *custom, fear, and honour!*)]

- So Step 4 of the Godly Thinking of Justice in connection with your relationship as a son to the governmental power under which you live is: (With the effectual working of Step 1; 2; & 3) — ***and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.***

- And the Core, Seminal Issue of Step 4 is: *Resisting the governmental power* under which you live—and thereby *resisting the very ordinance of God*—has extremely dire consequences—you put yourself in the position of receiving *damnation!*

- So there you have it—the Godly Thinking of God’s own Thinking when it comes to Justice and the governing, controlling power of human government and your relationship to it—and why you are to *Let your soul be subject unto the higher powers.*

Step 1: *For there is no power but of God:*

Seminal Issue: God created governing & controlling power in the first place in order to be the methodology by which He carries out His business.

Step 2: *the powers that be are ordained of God.*

Seminal Issue: In the New World Order, God fractured the power into powers and ordained them ALL as the officially established rule for the long-term success of His business.

Step 3: *Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God:*

Seminal Issue: God established every governmental power as a means of maintaining order and to ultimately keep man’s ability to be VIOLENT under control.

Step 4: *and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.*

Seminal Issue: By resisting the governing & controlling power under which you live—and thereby resisting the very ordinance of God, the consequences of your actions will be terrifying!

- Any Questions? Comments? about the Godly Thinking of the 3rd Component of Justice?

- This Godly Thinking is to be a son’s thinking regardless of what kind or quality of government he lives under—there’s no qualifying element (no exceptions) in this passage at all!

- The *powers that be*, having *the ordinance of God* contained within them is going to be in effect throughout the duration of time in which *the powers that be* are in effect and occupied by ungodly, unjustified people (or a mixture of both unjustified & justified people)!

- Regardless of the moral state; the political state; the economic state; or whatever state you find yourself in under the government in which you live—whenever & for however long you live in this dispensation of grace—verses 1 & 2 are to be your Thinking—and verses 3, 4, & 5 are to be your Conduct & Behavior — and verses 5 & 6 are to be your Godly Labor!

- And so—you don't ever have to come along and “compare” the way in which your government does things now **vs.** when you were a child or a teenager—or how it was in your parents day; or your grandparents day—or anything like that! (That's a total waste of time!!!)

- You don't have to look at your government historically and think— “Oh, if we could only get back to the way it was when _____ was president!”

- You look at it—and (:1-2) is to be you Godly Thinking **every day** for as long as you live as a member of the church, the body of Christ in this dispensation of grace!

- And the truth is—the Godly Thinking; the Godly Living; and the Godly Labor of Romans 13:1-7 ARE A CONSTANT!

- On a daily basis—with this Godly Thinking in connection with the category of human government—you cut through all of the ‘flack’ in front of you; and all of the garbage that you read about on the front page of your newspaper (or CNN or Fox News or the Internet whatever) — and the ‘eyes of your understanding’ just burn a whole through all that, **and are always looking at those Core Issues!**

- And the real question you're going to have to ask yourself—and settle out—is: By the effectual working of (:1-2), do you have a Godly zeal, enthusiasm, gladness, joy and delight to do what (:1a) says, and then what (:3-5) say???

- Do you have what you Father has: (Isa. 9:6-7)

6 For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

*7 Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. **The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.***

- REVIEW: (:1-2) - 4 Steps of the Godly Thinking—and the 4 Core, Seminal Issues that bring the Godly thinking to its fullness.

- Note: There in Steps 3 & 4 — by properly perceiving what Satan was able to do in the Old World Order, and then the measures God took in the New World Order (heightening man’s sense of Justice; fracturing the power into powers; establishing the powers that be with *the ordinance of God*) — the *ordinance* of God that you are to always be seeing and be aware of at all times (which is the means of maintaining order & keeping man’s ability to be violent under control) — truth is, [to a son], the outward expression of “Satanliness” is violence!

- This is the very thinking of God the Father, Himself—this it the very thinking of God the Son, Himself as well—and this is the way God views and **defines** “patriotism”! (or love of, and devotion to one’s country or government!)

- And one of the most difficult things you’re going to have to get over here is—that when it comes to ‘love of country’ and why you’re supposed to love your country, or ‘value & esteem’ your government—the truth is, (like most everything you’ll ever deal with as a son), what you’ve been taught when it comes to “patriotism” was NOT taught to you by your Father—it was taught to you by MAN!

- And it’s going to be especially difficult for an American—for a conservative Christian American—because for most conservative, Christian Americans, their thinking is that the roll of the government (boiled down to its most basic issue) is **to keep sin in check!**

- And when they see the government becoming ‘soft on sin’ issues—or promoting sinful behavior—or passing laws that protect sin instead of condemning it— it makes most conservative Christian Americans go NUTS!
(it just drives them crazy!)

- Added to that is this ungodly notion that both the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution are “inspired” “sacred” documents (throw in the Gettysburg Address, too) - and are as “Holy” as the “Holy Bible”!!!

- To be blunt about it—those are NOT “inspired” documents
 - those are NOT “sacred” documents—and they certainly are NOT “Holy”! (If you check closely, God didn’t put them in the Bible!)

- They are not the product of God’s “guiding hand” - they’re the product of **men**; and they’re the product of “The Age of Enlightenment” which also produced Darwinian Evolution, and some of the greatest attacks upon the word of God of all time: The Modern Phase of the Science of Textual Criticism!

- And that’s not to mention how much Calvinism has had (and continues to play) a roll in the frame of reference most conservative Christian Americans have about the country (and patriotism)!

- The truth is—the flag, the Declaration of Independence, and the Constitution are mere ‘FIG LEAVES’ that many Christians use to cover their ignorance of God’s word as well as to justify UNGODLY thinking; talking; acting; and behavior!

- And for those of us who have these very powerful “moorings” (so to speak) in our heart that hold us to the kind of conservative, Christian, patriotic elements of our country—this may be the very first time the “moorings” of your heart (that hold you to the thinking and the behavior of this world) are challenged, broken, and attached to something else—to the thinking & behavior of your Father!

- In other words—this may be the strongest challenge to the things that hold you to this world, **yet**, in your Sonship Education! (but there will be many, many more!)

- Now with the Godly Thinking of (:1-2) - we can now move on to

THE GODLY LIVING (CONDUCT & BEHAVIOUR):

3 For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same:

4 For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.

5 Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake.

- The truth is—(:1a, *Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers.*) is the encapsulation & summary statement of what all of the Godly Thinking is about; what all of the Godly Conduct & Behavior is about; and what all of the Godly Labor is about.

- So what we find in (:3-5) [in the portion dealing with the Godly Conduct & Behavior] is, in light of the Godly Thinking properly and sufficiently doing its effectual job, we find the natural ‘outlet’ for the Godly Thinking to go when it comes to putting into practice how you (as a son) are to conduct & behave yourself accordingly.

- And to put it briefly and simply—(:3-5) give some further information and further explanation of what that *ordinance of God* is all about—and how that extends to your conduct & behavior—and how you are to now **live** as a member of the church, the body of Christ in relation to the established authority (the governing & controlling power) under which you live.

- And there are 2 possibilities—One is Positive and good (or **right**); and One is Negative and bad (or **wrong**)!

- When you look at (:3-5) - you have 3 verses and 4 complete sentences.

- The first sentence of (:3) acts as a kind of ‘bridge’ between the Godly Thinking and the Godly Con. & Beh.

- And the remainder of (:3) functions as the “Positive” side of the coin (so to speak) in regard to the proper Sonship Con. & Beh.

- Then the remainder of the 2nd sentence in (:4) acts as a kind of a ‘bridge’ into the “Negative” side of the coin in regard to the INPROPER Sonship Con. & Beh.

- And finally (:5) gives the logical summation of the Sonship Godly Con. & Beh. in light of all that (:1-4) has taught you.

- There are 2 colons in these 3 verses—one at the end of (:3) [followed by a “*For*”] - and one in (:4) after the word *vain*, [also followed by a “*for*”] - and there are 2 implied “Whys” at each of the 2 colons - each one receiving an answer.

- And you're going to end up with 2 Major REASONS for doing what (:1a) says: 2 Powerful Reasons—and the LAST reason will be the MOST POWER REASON of all!!!

- The “*Wherefore*” of (:5) acts as one of those powerful ‘words of logic’ that our English language utilizes—and so it acts as expressing the natural and logical (as well as the Godly) consequence or natural and logical outcome from what has just been stated—and the only logical and Godly thing for a son to do at that point is to ***be subject*** (unto the higher powers), ***not only for wrath, but for conscience sake***.

- So now at this point—the issue becomes—how do you take that Godly Thinking that’s been generated in your heart from (:1 & 2), and begin to put that into practice in the details of your life as an issue of what is RIGHT vs. what is WRONG Conduct & Behavior (or **JUST** Con. & Beh.) in connection with Godly Living as a son under your particular government (or controlling *power*)?

- And to do that—it’s going to take a statement of further explanation and further amplification upon the Godly Thinking of (:1-2) that specifically makes a transition from merely thinking about it, to putting that thinking into practice—and that’s exactly what the first sentence of (:3) does!

- And I say it just that way—because without the particular **context**—and the particular **definitions** of the words of (:1-2) — and without the **Core, Seminal Issues** that form the ‘First-Thought Response’ of (:1-2) — without all that, you will **never** be able to properly handle the terminology sitting in that first sentence of (:3)!

- (:3) has some very **general** terms in it—but those terms (even though they are general & broad), those terms can be made to be very **specific** by the **context** itself!

- And if you’re not careful to allow the information sitting in (:1 & 2) to tell you what the terminology of (:3) is talking about—then you’re going to make some mistakes in (:3) — you’ll make the mistake of thinking that what (:3) says is all well and good if you live in a government that’s not persecuting Christians—and you’ll make the mistake of thinking that there are ‘exceptions’ to what God says in (:3)!

- But my understanding is that just as (:1-2) are a CONSTANT—that is, they are true for every government that has ever existed from the Flood on (i.e., from Genesis 8:15 on) — so, too, what is said in (:3), and (:4), and (:5) are a CONSTANT **with NO exceptions to the rule!**

- Now for the ‘transition’ statement in (:3) that, by giving further explanation and further amplification to the Godly Thinking of “*Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.*” — it makes the transition from the Godly Thinking to the Godly Con. & Beh.: and there needs to be one more thing said concerning government and its *rulers* in connection with someone who does *resist the ordinance of God* and *receives to themselves damnation*.

- And if (:1-2) are properly understood and appreciated—then by the time you get here to (:3) - you already know what the generic terms God has the apostle Paul use are all talking about—and in a sense, it will be ‘plug-and-play’ (so to speak) - and what is said here, therefore, should make perfect sense!

3 *For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil.*

- “**For**” = a ‘for’ of further explanation and further amplification—and this is going to further explain in a very practical, ‘rubber-meets-the-road’ type way what a government does ONLY in connection with being vested with *the ordinance of God* (keeping the violence of man in check), and therefore how it **responds** to those who *resist the ordinance of God* and *receive to themselves damnation*.

- “**rulers**” = the actual governmental *rulers*—those occupying the positions of authority and governing/controlling power over others (the citizens of that particular town, state, or nation).

- Mayor—(Vivian Jones)
- Governor— (Beverly Perdue [till January], Patrick McCorry)
- President—(Barak Obama)
- etc.

- “*For rulers are not a **terror** to good works,*”

- “**terror**” = (φόβος) = fear, dread, terror = that which strikes *terror* - — the term is used as a highly emotionally-charged term of extreme fear—a fear that “agitates the body and mind” (Webster) — *terror* causes a person to ‘tremble’ with fear—the word is used here because (if the *terror* is terrible enough), when a person is seized with *terror* it tends to DISARM that person! (which is why terrorism is so effective!)

- (The “disarming” that *terror* does to a person isn’t just the issue of ‘laying down one’s arms’ [which is true] - but it ‘disarms’ a person in the sense of causing a person **to no longer RESIST** the one wielding the terror-causing power [which is the *ordinance of God*, in this case!].)

- (Charles Smith—Synonyms Discriminated) = “A man of great strength and savage disposition would, **but for the protection of the laws**, be the *terror* of his neighborhood.”

- And just like the word *damnation*—*terror* (which is a further description of the *damnation*) is a term we naturally reserve for receiving **WRATH** (either from God, or in this case, from the *powers that be* [the government]!

- “For rulers are **not** a *terror* to **good works**, ...”

- Now here is the particular Conduct & Behavior that is that ‘natural outlet’ for the Godly Thinking of (:1-2) — **good works**—which is very generic; very broad and general—but the context defines and qualifies what the *good works* are—so, what are the *good works* in this context???

- *good works* = works of **peace; quietness; orderliness!**
(In other words, they are the exact **opposite** of works of *violence!*)

- The Godly Conduct and the Godly Behavior that is to be the **mark** of a properly educated “son of God” in terms of **Justice** in connection with the *powers that be* (the gov. under which he/she lives) - he’s to Conduct & Behave himself in **ORDERLINESS**, and living a “*quiet and peaceable life!*”

- And that’s a needful thing here in this earth; and it’s a needful thing out in the *creature* as well! (That’s part of what it means when God said, *For the creature was made subject to VANITY, ...*)

- *Rulers* (of **any** government at **any time**) are **NOT** a *terror* to works of peace/quietness/orderliness — and that’s a **CONSTANT**—that’s the way it’s always been since the Flood; that’s the way it is now; and that’s the way it will always be!

- You won't incur the WRATH of the government for living a quite & peaceable life! (That's what the gov. wants—even the biggest Dictator or Tyrant desires the people he governs to be peaceful and quiet and orderly).

- Some do this better than others—some worse—but they all do this to a sufficient degree! (sufficient for God's purposes)

- But *rulers* most certainly **are** a *terror* to something!

- “*For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to **the evil**.*”

- ***the evil***—even though the word *evil* is generic, broad & general—again, (just like it was with *good works*), the **context** (meaning, all of the background work that we did in [:1-2], and especially that issue in [:2] of the *ordinance of God*—that will define and qualify the terms: ***the evil***).

- (and note that we are alerted to the fact that what God is after here is a specific *evil*—because we have the use of the Definite Article “*the*” - ***THE*** *evil*. — there's a specific *evil* that God has in mind.)

- And this is extremely important—because the common way in which this ends up getting treated by a lot of Christian folks is that God is saying “*evil*” in the sense of **SIN**!

- And the biggest mistake you could ever make with this passage is to think that *the evil* being spoken of here is **SIN** in general!

- Because that leads to a great deal of erroneous thinking and outright stupid Christian behavior—and it all stems from the idea that government (especially our United States gov.) is designed by God to be a ‘restrainer of sin’!!! WRONG!

- And if this was properly taught & properly understood & appreciated by the members of the church, the body of Christ today—it would stop (not only a lot of stupid comments and stupid behavior), but it would stop a lot of worry and angst and anxiety every time our government passes laws to promote and protect all kinds of sinful behavior—(you can ‘fill in the blank’ as to “sinful behavior”).
(That's a “shocker” to a lot of Christians out there!)

- For years in this country, the old Soviet Union (Russia) [or any **communist** country, for that matter] was looked upon as an ‘**Enemy to Christianity**’ - because they were supposedly Godless nations who were doing the worst job of all when it came to restraining sin and promoting righteousness!

- But notice that God does **NOT** say, ‘For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to sin [or sinful works].’

- So then—what is the specific *evil* that God is referring to here in Romans 13:3? — **VIOLENCE**—man’s ability to be **violent**.

- And we know that because when God *ordained* the *powers that be* and vested them with *the ordinance of God*—(which took place, historically, immediately after the Flood)—and we know that because of what God’s word tells us:

*... for the imagination of man’s heart is **evil** from his **youth**; ... (Gen. 8:21)*

*And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only **evil** continually. (Gen. 6:5)*

*The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with **violence**. (Gen. 6:11)*

*And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with **violence** through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth. (Gen. 6:13)*

- And the truth of the matter is—ALL governments—(because they contain *the ordinance of God*) - ALL governments are a **TERROR** to **VIOLENCE** (or **THE evil**)!

- **Rulers are** a **terror** to chaos, upheaval, and being unruly!

- And the “**terror**” in this context is the issue of bringing the most severe form of Justice to bear upon violent acts and behavior! (WRATH)

- And history bears it out—from the time of Noah’s Flood on—there have been horrible, terrible, rotten, ungodly governments and Rulers—even horrible, terrible, rotten, ungodly Empires—and yet, mankind has never devolved to reach the violent state it was in that warranted and merited God destroying the earth with the Flood!

- God’s *ordinance* has worked! and it’s **still** working!
(And that’s a BIG DEAL to God—and it must be to His properly educated “son”!)

- No government allows someone to go through their neighborhood and kill a bunch of people, and then just go home and watch TV!

- And this should tell you something about the issue that a lot of you have thought about—and that is, What about when a government and the Rulers of it **do** persecute Christians? — and what that should tell you (at least fundamentally) is—since this passage of Romans 13:3 says, *For rulers are not a terror to good works* (to a quiet and peaceable life), *but to the evil* (to violent acts of men). — if nothing else, that should tell you that the issue of Rulers persecuting Christians **isn’t** what this is about, so the issue of Christian persecution must be dealt with in some other way (other than by **resisting the powers that be** (or by **resisting the ordinance of God**)!

- Because the truth of the matter is—the issue of *rulers not being a terror to good works, but to the evil* is true and consistent and constant EVEN when the persecution of Christians **does** take place!

- To put it another way—*rulers not being a terror to good works, but to the evil* **is NOT a contradiction** even when those rulers persecute Christians! (Persecuting Christians does NOT negate/contradict **anything** in Romans 13:1-7!)

- So then—your Godly Sonship Conduct & Behavior where Justice is concerned in regards to your relationship to your Governmental *Power* is to do those **good works** (to live a life of orderliness, quietness, and peace). That’s the mark of Godly Justice that characterizes a son’s Godly Living in connection with his government!

- And then (:3) ends by saying, **Wilt thou then** (in view of [:3a]) **not be afraid of the power?** — and the answer is: **YES**, you should be *afraid* of it!

- Because that *power* will bring the ‘hammer’ of Justice down just as swift upon you as it would upon any unbeliever or any one else who puts themselves in the ‘cross-hairs’ of its WRATH! (of that *ordinance of God*).

- A Christian can get the death penalty just as sure as anyone else can—(for example, Karla Faye Tucker was found guilty and convicted of murder in Texas, but when she was in prison, she became a believer in Christ and got saved—but the then Governor George Bush wouldn’t commute her sentence—and he took a lot of flack for that — she could escape the Judgment of God, but she couldn’t escape the *ordinance of God*).

- But the point is—*the powers that be*, the *ordinance of God*, and *rulers being a terror to the evil* (violence) should make it so that you are **AFRAID OF THE POWER!!!** (and rightly so!)

- Then (:3) goes on and says—***do that which is good*** (live a quiet & peaceable life) ***and thou shalt have praise of the same:***

- You will be viewed by those *rulers* with ***praise***.

- And the sense of *praise* here is the simple and most general issue of being viewed as “good” or “right” yourself in their eyes—and therefore not incurring their wrath!

- Put simply—***praise*** is the expression of the *rulers* for commendable Conduct & Behavior! (Though they may not recognize your Conduct & Behavior as “Godly”, they will certainly [because of how God has *ordained* the powers, and produced within them the *ordinance of God*], they certainly will view your Conduct & Behavior as **commendable!**

- And this isn’t an issue of gaining the approbation of *rulers* simply for the sake of flattery—a properly educated son knows that this is the issue of a necessary and beneficial result from his **serious attention** to His Father’s *ordinance* and not *resisting* it!

- It gives a son the benefit of living life under Justice—and of having further opportunity to live longer and therefore be trained longer as a son for laboring in his Father’s business!

- Not to mention the fact that you'll have longer life on this earth to **witness** to others of the Gospel of Christ—and to set forth more of the truth of who God has made you to be “in Christ” before the eyes of men!

- As a son—where Justice is concerned in regards to your government—you get the opportunity to put into practice the very things that your Father Himself **values & esteems** in connection with carrying out His business: PEACE, ORDERLINESS, AND QUIETNESS! (You get to ‘practice’ that on this earth with this Divine Institution God established called *the powers that be* or Human Government!)

- And you'll need to be ‘practiced’ in that when you are placed as “sons” in the Heavenly Places as a “joint-heir” with Christ!

- And as I said before—this is God’s way of defining “patriotism” (if you will) - [i.e., love of, and devotion to one’s country or government]. (And it’s radically different from what most folks think; and what most Christian folks think!)

- And that’s the ‘Positive’ side of the coin—when it comes to a properly educated son’s sense of Justice, and Just, Godly, Conduct & Behavior when it comes to how you are to relate to the Established Authority of Human Government.

- And again—what (:3) says is a **constant**—even when *rulers* are persecuting Christians (or are involved with religious persecution) — that still doesn’t contradict the statement that they are *not a terror to good works, but to the evil!*

- Handling persecution will ALWAYS be done in such a way that the Conduct & Behavior of a son/saint is NEVER one of *resisting the ordinance of God!*

- Even when the apostle Paul suffered at the hands of governmental abuse—(as he did on numerous occasions) — and when that happened, he **never once** thought of that abuse in the context of Romans 13:1-7! ... he never thought that those rulers were failing to be a *terror* to his *good works*—or were failing to *praise* him for them!

- Any Questions? Problems? or Comments?

- Now we're ready for (:4) — (read :4)

- Note the way in which (:3) ends—it's one of those features or capacities that our English language has (the 'style' of the English lang.) to 'beg a question' without actually asking a question.

3 For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: (WHY?)

4 For he is the minister of God to thee for good.

- Now while this is the final clause of a sentence or thought that began up in (:3) - the translators saw fit to put this final clause in (:4) — because they rightly saw that by the information it provides for, it acts as the Godly, effectual **restraint** for the **Negative** Conduct & Behavior (expressed in the remainder of :4) — i.e., Conduct & Behavior that is **Ungodly**, **stupid**, and **foolish!** (i.e., *resisting the power/resisting the ordinance of God.*)

- In fact—that final clause of the sentence (if it effectually does its job) should generate something **very powerful** in your **CONSCIENCE!**

- It 'rounds out' establishing in your conscience a **persuasion** and **convincement**—or a **norm & standard** (if you will) - that for no other reasons than what is said in those first 2 statements of the Godly Conduct & Behavior [in :3] (which only works when the Godly Thinking of [:1-2] is doing its job) — that all works together, therefore, to make it so that, based upon what now exists in your **conscience**, you are perfectly willing and **gladly** willing to *let your soul be subject unto the higher powers—not resisting the power/ordinance of God!*

- And the reason I say that is because the first clause of (:4) starts off with that word of Logic "*For*" — and in this case, it's a "*For*" of **advantage** or **benefit** or **use** (or **useful purpose**) — and that goes directly to the issue of what is RIGHT vs. what is WRONG! (i.e., a "conscience" issue!)

- If you see something as for your advantage; or for your benefit; or for your useful purpose—then you'll embrace it; you'll do (whatever you are exhorted to do) - you see it as: that's what's RIGHT (or the Right course of action to take)!

- And on the 'flip-side' - you WON'T do something that would obviously be AGAINST what is intended to be a benefit; an advantage; or of use to you—that's WRONG (or the Wrong course of action to take)!

- And that's what this first clause of (:4) sets up perfectly in your **conscience**!

- Therefore—why should you *be afraid of the power?* — why should you *do that which is good* (live a quiet & peaceable life) having *praise of those rulers* (i.e., having commendable Conduct & Behavior in their sight)???

- And the answer is: **For he** (that ruler is a **benefit** to you as a son—he's **useful** to you—he/she provides a **useful purpose** to you! — and he does so because **he is the minister of God to you for good!!!**

For he (the “ruler” of :3) **is the minister of God ...**

- Notice that the “*he*” or the ruler of the power is never named—and that's because the actual person is NOT the issue — the issue is **never** WHO is occupying the position of a ruler—the issue is: because God Himself created the power in the first place; *ordained* the power; and vested it with *the ordinance of God*—therefore ANY person (no matter if he is as “godly” as can be, or as “ungodly” & wicked & evil as can be) - any person occupying a ruling position in government is (by default), **the minister of God!**

- Some rulers would NEVER think of themselves this way, because they may not be believers in God at all (they may be total Atheists!) — and on the other hand, some rulers may think they not only are *ministers of God*, but they may fancy themselves AS GOD — and some may think of themselves as *ministers of God*, but because they don't have a proper understanding & appreciation of this doctrine, they have (for lack of a better term) a “goofy” [goofed-up] understanding for being a *minister of God!*

- In other words—he may see himself as God’s *minister* in the sense of being some kind of guardian or fighter against **sin** & sinful behavior (playing into that wholly **un**-Biblical notion that government & governmental rulers are supposed to be a restrainer of sin)!
- **“minister”** - (this is the 1st of 3x that this term is used—[twice in :4, 1x in :6]) = one who executes the commands of another; one who acts under the authority of another; an agent appointed to transact or manage business under the authority of another)
- *Rulers* of a government are NOT *ministers of God* in the sense that God has pre-ordained or pre-determined or decreed in His Eternal Divine Decrees that a particular **PERSON** (such as Barak Obama) is ordained by God to the position of President, or King, or Governor or whatever. NO!
- But the word *minister* IS directly related to the fact that God did, indeed, **ordain** something!
- Because the *ruler* of a government being this *minister of God* is related to what God did when He established Human Government after the Flood—when He fractured the power into powers.
- So, if you think your way back through the information you’ve been given—you’ll find the connection.
 - (Going backwards) — this *minister of God* is one of the *rulers* of (:3) —
 - and that *ruler* (“*ruler*” being an **office**, not any particular person, but the **office**) - that rulership **office** is in existence by virtue of there being a government that is designed by God and vested with (by God) the capacity to keep man’s ability to be violent under control (or the *ordinance of God*) [:2] —
 - and that ruling office contained in a government that keeps man’s violence in check was **ordained** by God to be the means of keeping man’s violence in check so that God will be able to carry out His business in the long-term! [:1]
- Therefore—there IS a natural connection with, and reason for why God calls a ruler of government “*the minister of God*.”

- Truth is—the word *minister* **does** connect with that term ordained—
 - Remember that the word *ordain* = (Webster’s 1828) to set; to establish in a particular **office**; hence **to invest with a ministerial function!**
- Therefore, God **never** pre-ordains the **PERSON** who occupies a governmental office—rather, He has *ordained* the **OFFICE** in which the person occupies—and because He did that, it can then be properly said that a *ruler* (whoever he/she is) is, indeed, a *minister of God!*
 - That is, he occupies a particular office established by God, and because of that, the OFFICE is invested with a ministerial function!
- To put it simply—God ordained the OFFICE (not the person) - or you could say, **God ordained the WHAT, not the WHO!!!**
 - A governmental ruler is NOT an ordained minister of God in ANY **Calvinistic** sense whatsoever!!!
- It doesn’t matter to God WHO the ruler is!!!**
- This makes it so that you (as a son) **never**, therefore, look at a MAN (or woman) as *the minister of God*—rather, you look past the person and see the OFFICE he/she holds as being the office of *the minister of God*—and that makes all the difference! (that’s radically different than the way most folks think and **behave** towards a governmental ruler!!!)
- So you have in (:4) — *For he (that ruler) is the minister of God to thee for good.*
 - What is the “**good**” that that *ruler* is *ministering*? What is the **good** that Paul is talking about here?
 - The *good* is NOT talking about a ruler *ministering* for God so as to keep sin in check and promote God’s righteousness in the land where he governs!
 - The *good* = the core, seminal issue of what his office is there for in the first place—to keep the violence of man under control so that God can continue carrying out His business in the long-term!

- The **good** is the issue of ‘keeping the peace’ - of keeping an orderly, quiet, peaceable empire, nation, state, city, or community! (He keeps man’s violence in check!)

- Now one other thing needs to be said here—when God, through the apostle Paul says, ***For he is the minister of God to thee for good.***—my understanding is (just as it was for that phrase up in :3 that said, ***For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil.***) - my understanding is that THIS IS A CONSTANT—in other words, a governmental *ruler* is ***the minister of God to thee for good ALL THE TIME (at all times) - even when religious/Christian persecution DOES take place!*** (no exceptions!)

- And that can only make sense IF you properly understand and appreciate what the **good** is; and what **the evil** is in the **CONTEXT** that Romans 13 is talking about!!

- And if you get yourself caught up in violent *resistance* against the *power/ordinance of God*—that *ruler* will ‘lower the boom’ of Justice down on YOU! (hence, the rest of the vs.)

- So then— with that needed and additional information effectually doing its job, you’re ready for the Negative side of the coin—or the Un-Godly, **foolish** and stupid Conduct & Behavior that is indicative of a son or a saint who is NOT properly educated!

- And it begins with a very strong adversative conjunction — **“But”** (here’s the other side of the coin—the OPPOSITE of a son’s Godly Conduct & Behavior).

But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; ...

- What is the **“evil”** Paul is talking about here?

A: *Resisting the power / resisting the ordinance of God.*

“be afraid” - Why? (this is, again, an example of English Style that begs a question—that asks the question “Why?” without having to actually state it). — So Why? Why should you **“be afraid”**?

- And this isn’t “mildly fearful” or merely “respectful”—this is to be **TERRIFIED!** (scared to death, so to speak) — this is real FEAR of **loosing your physical life!!!**

- Why “*be afraid*”? — ***for he beareth not the sword in vain:***

- “**sword**” (μάχαιρα) = used here as the symbol or instrument of penal justice—the authority of a ruler to punish offenders—the power of human government to execute or put to death violent criminals!

- And that’s a further description of what it means (back up in :2) to *receive to yourself damnation* when you *resist the power/ordinance of God*. (*Damnation* is the death penalty!)

- Rulers are **not** a terror to good works, but to the evil—they are the ministers of God—and they do **not** bear the sword of executing violent criminals *in vain*!

- “**vain**” = as having no effect or no force; powerless; futile; unavailing; ineffectually; uselessly; to no purpose!

- Then you have that hard pause (the colon after the word *vain*) to indicate that you are to pause there long enough for that statement to ‘sink in’ - to do it’s effectual job.

- And then Paul adds some further explanation of the job of the ruler of that government who *bears not the sword of Justice in vain* — and this, again, just underscores all the more, and builds the final blocks (so to speak) of the norms & standards of your Father’s heart when it comes to relating to human government into the very fabric of your CONSCIENCE!

... for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.

- Paul, once again, picks up that ‘thread’ of a governmental ruler being *the minister of God*—but then he adds some more critical information to that.

- That ruler (as *the minister of GOD*) is a **revenger**!

- *Revenge* seems to be odd term to use—in fact, it may seem to be wrong and improperly translated—it may seem to be a rather extreme term—(which is because we live in a time when our English language is in sharp decline—we almost **never** use the term *revenge* in a **good** or **positive** way)!

- And that's borne out by the way in which almost all of the Modern English versions of the Bible have changed that word *revenger* to 'avenger' or 'agent' or 'servant'!

- But that actually waters down and WEAKENS what God intended to be a very intense and powerful term!

- It's supposed to be EXTREME and SEVERE—and it's supposed to 'smack' you right between the eyes (so to speak)!

- While it's true that in our modern declining stage of the English language, we almost always reserve the word *revenge* for a bad or negative context—the truth is, the word *revenge* can be used in a context to indicate something very GOOD!

- "*revenge*" = most commonly means, the act of doing hurt or harm to another in return for wrong or injury suffered; satisfaction obtained by repayment of injuries. — And it has been so narrowed down and standardized that it has come to be used ONLY in a **bad** sense—as something only a bad person would do, something indicative of wrong-doing.

- However, notice, for example II Corinthians 7:4-11 (:11)

- The truth is, in older English, the term *revenge* could be used for **putting Justice into force**—and it carried a shade of meaning in the realm of Justice and the Court system of a government (or even in one's personal, Just dealings with one another) of: **setting aside any concerns of pity or emotion for the overriding principle of JUSTICE!**

- And that's how the word *revenge* or *revenger* is being used in Romans 13:4—that *ruler, beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger*—(that is, one who will set aside any concerns of pity or emotion [about your being a "Christian" or whatever] for the overriding principle of Justice!)

- A governmental *ruler* (by virtue of his office being what God designed for it to be: *the minister of GOD*) is a *revenger*—he's one who will justly execute violent criminals **without passion**; without **respect to persons** due to the overriding principle of JUSTICE!

- And in order to keep things ‘on track’ - and in order to keep that word *revenge* in the context of something that is GOOD in God’s sight—God adds the final expression in (:4) —

... *to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.*

- *wrath* = violent anger; **just punishment of an offence or crime!**

- And that’s also the final description of what it means to be *damm*ed in the sense of (:2) [*damnation*].

- So what does the word *evil* mean here?

A: It’s “the *evil*” of (:3) & the “*evil*” of (:4) = VIOLENCE!

- So (:4) should make perfect sense:

For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.

- Furthermore—(:4) should [by its effectual working] completely install God’s own norms & standards where human government is concerned into your heart, so that your CONSCIENCE now possesses **His** norms and standards whereby *letting your soul be subject unto the higher powers* is now a matter of, not only would you do so because you fear the *wrath* of the government’s “*sword*” - but for an even greater reason: because it would bother your **conscience greatly** if you didn’t *subject yourself unto the higher powers!!!*

- And I say a “greater reason” because what Sonship is all about is the issue of installing the heart of the Father into you, His son—and a “son” doesn’t need to be reminded of how he’s to Conduct & Behave himself by a badge on a police officer’s shirt; or by seeing a courthouse; or by seeing the ‘gallows’ or the ‘electric chair’ or the death chamber or laws on the books — no, all he needs is what is in his HEART!

- A “son” can go from nation to nation; country to country—and he doesn’t have to read the laws of the land—he already comes to that nation/country with the proper Godly Conduct & Behavior of Justice in connection with that government!

- **In summary of (:4)** - a properly educated son views the rulers of the government under which he lives as *the ministers of God*—and just as you would **value** the office of the Bishop or Pastor-Teacher in your local assembly—so, too, because those rulers are *ministers of God*, you also **value their office** and **their function** as a *minister of God*.

- And even though those rulers may be ungodly and may do a lot of ungodly things—you are to **recognize** the function they have for your “good” (which is the issue of keeping **violence** in check, and providing for a peaceable existence in society—you recognize that they therefore make it so that **God’s business can continue to be successfully carried out in the long-term**).

- And because they function in those offices/positions of Gov. as a *minister of God*, then they’ll have to answer to God Himself for all of the things they do that are **not** “good.”

- And the warning to you is: *But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.*

- Therefore, if you (even as a justified “son” of God) - if you *do that which is evil* (i.e., if you **resist the powers that be/ordinance of God**, and get involved in **violent activity** yourself) - you’re to be very *afraid*—because even as a justified “son” of God, you’re to expect the *sword* of that Gov. **to be executed against YOU!**

- In other words—your justified status will NOT keep you from having the **wrath** of the Gov. come down upon you—and that’s just the way God intends for it to be, and has designed for it to be!

- And that means that this function of the Gov. [and the *rulers* of the Gov.] (that is, their being a *minister of God to thee for good*—and being a *revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil* [**violent acts**]) - that *ministry* is **so important** to God, that even a “son” of God is subject to the *wrath* that God has put into the hands of those *rulers*!

- You **won’t** suffer the “wrath of God” in the Lake of Fire—but if you choose to *do that which is evil*, you **WILL** suffer the *wrath* of Government—which could include your own **DEATH!**

- In other words—**your justified status before God doesn't justify you before the Gov., if you do "evil"** [violent acts]!!!

- God will NOT intervene—He won't ask other saints to intervene: **YOU DESERVE TO DIE!**

- And the reason why I bring this out—is, that it tells you just how **VALUABLE & IMPORTANT** this *ministry of God* is to God Himself!

*And surely your blood of your lives will I **REQUIRE**;*
(Gen. 9:5) - **God REQUIRES it!!!**

- In fact—it would be more important (and take the priority) for the *ministry of Government* to be executed against you by the *sword of Gov.* (in order to maintain peace and orderliness in society) - rather than for your *ministry* to continue on!!!

- And at this point in the book of Romans, you should be able to identify several *ministries* that you have as a saint & as a "son" of God —

- You have a ministry to other saints in the assembly.
(you occupy an *office* in the assembly)

- You have a ministry in connection with your job or *business*.

- You have a ministry to lost persons (which will later on be called, *the ministry of reconciliation* as an *ambassador of Christ*)!

- And yet—if you get involved in *the evil* (violent acts of resisting the *ordinance of God*) - the Gov. has the right and the responsibility to **punish you** (which could include your own death)!

- Therefore that *ministry of God* that the *rulers of government* perform is actually **more important to God** than any of the other ministries **you're** carrying out!

- God doesn't come along and say—Ok, you did *the evil*, but since you have a *ministry of reconciliation* to the lost, or a ministry to other saints—then that takes precedent, so I'll just intervene to let you go. **NO!!! you get the *wrath of the Gov. executed upon you!!!*** (all your *ministries* come to an **END!**)

- Maintaining order in society & checking violence in men's heart is more important than allowing that saint to carry on in his other Labors with God!

- And God gives to ungodly, unjust, and often times vile men the power & authority to take a life of a **justified** man!

(so, **BE AFRAID!**)

- Any Question? Comments? Problems? with (:4)?

- Now—with all of the Godly Thinking of (:1-2); and all of the Godly Conduct & Behavior of (:3-4) - now Paul is going to make the next and final **logical** step (**Godly** Logic, not man's logic) - and in view of the effectual working of (:1-4), the next logical step for a son's Godly Conduct & Behavior is to do what (:1) said, (*Let your soul be subject unto the higher powers*) - and Paul is going to state the 2 major reasons that have emerged from (:1-4) - and the SECOND reason is the most critical reason of all: the Sonship reason!!

- And this “final word” (so to speak) on the matter of Godly Just Sonship Conduct & Behavior in connection with your relationship to the Government under which you live gets stated in (:5).

5 Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake.

- And the truth of the matter is—(:5) is the most important and most critical verse of the 7! (Especially the last 5 words!)

- It makes it so that a son's Godly Con. & Beh. is one of: ***being subject***—no hint of, or thoughts of, or inkling of any opposition to the Gov.—no rioting or any of the common things that go on in ***this world*** when people rise up and express their displeasure and their contrariness to the Gov. under which they live.

- (:5) begins with that wonderful English ‘word of logic’ ***Wherefore***

- ***Wherefore*** = is NOT “just another way of saying, Therefore”!!!

- ***Wherefore*** and ***therefore*** do NOT mean the same thing—nor are they used in the same way!

- First of all—***wherefore*** is **NOT** a **concluding** word of logic! (Paul isn't making a conclusion here at all. [That happens in (:7)]!)

- More often than not, the word *wherefore* occurs after a whole bunch of information has been given, and certain information has to now be gathered together.
- Generally, *wherefore* is used to take some information that has just been given, and on the basis of that information, **it presents another essential point to the argument** before the final conclusion can be drawn.
- In other words—whenever you use the word *wherefore*, you’re generally using it because the amount of information you’re dealing with is quite extensive (either in the sheer volume of the information given, or in the depth to which that information goes) - either way, due to the amount of information covered, it requires or demands having to gather that information together in order to now be able to logically say something about it, in view of all that information. (But you’re still not at your conclusion, yet!)
- *Wherefore* actually functions kind of like an Accountant’s Adding Machine —
 - You add up a whole bunch of items—and then you have a need to do a ...
 - **Sub-Total** = *Wherefore* (but we’re still going to add or subtract some things)
 - Then you do a **Total**.
 - Finally, a **Grand Total** = *Therefore*
- And when *Wherefore* is being used in its more common summarization use within a body of information—it is used to give you a summarization that gives you a REASON for something! (In other words—you’re dealing with a **WHY** that something is so!)
- And that’s exactly how *Wherefore* is being used here in (:5).
- And this *Wherefore* is going to present 2 reasons—and 1 is a more ‘typical’ reason—and the 2nd is NOT a ‘typical’ reason—it’s a SONSHIP reason!
- For us as “sons” - there’s MORE than just the ‘**typical**’ thing that would make it so that a person in *this world* would end up ‘subjecting’ themselves unto the *powers that be*.

- And so we're going to have 2 reasons:

1) Typical—the reason why every unbeliever/lost/unjustified person—every person who is of *this world* would be ‘subject’ unto the higher powers: ***for wrath’s sake!***

2) Non-Typical—the reason why every saint, every justified member of the church, the body of Christ who has been properly educated as a “son” of God would be ‘subject’ unto the higher powers: ***for conscience sake!***
(In other words: there’s also A SONSHIP REASON!)

- So Paul says:

Wherefore (gathering up all of the information in [:1-4], here is one more essential point—the next logical step in view of all that information) ***ye*** (2Per.Pl. Nom. of the Personal Pronoun = every saint; ***all/every*** properly educated “son”) ***must needs be subject, ...***

- Notice what Paul **DOEST NOT** say—He doesn’t say, ‘***Wherefore ye must be subject, ...***’ — no, he says, ***Wherefore ye must NEEDS be subject, ...***

- Why does he say it that way? (We’ll come back to this later on).

- But for now—we have these 2 compelling reasons: 1) *not only for wrath*—and 2) *but also for conscience sake*.

- And the wording is very critical here, too — “***NOT ONLY for wrath, BUT ALSO for conscience sake.***”

- And there’s a reason for why it’s said just that way. (And we’ll come back to this later on, too.)

- For now—let’s focus our attention upon those 2 reasons our Father gives us for why our Sonship Conduct & Behavior should be one of being “*subject*” to *the powers that be*.

- Remember back in the previous 2 Components to our *instruction of Justice*—back when we first talked about & dealt with the issue of God making some adjustments to man’s innate ‘sense of justice,’ and that the course of this world had built it’s own norms & standards of Justice on top of that—and how God is going to have to tear all that

man-made sense of justice down to the foundation, and then build God's own norms & standards for Justice on our natural, innate sense of "survival" justice—and one of the things we talked about is that in each of the Components that make up our initial *instruction of Justice*, our Father is going to give us some Thinking, Con. & Beh., and some Labor that is of a Godly nature—or that **lifts** the issues of Justice out of what man & the wisdom of men Think & Do, and **ELEVATES** it to what God Himself Thinks, Does, and is Working to get accomplished.

- And there were some things that we encountered in that 1st Component (Rom. 12:17-18); and in that 2nd Component (Rom. 12:19-21) that did, indeed, **elevate** the issue of Justice from the justice of this world, (or a lower order of Justice), to Godly Justice, (or a Higher Order of Justice).

- And that's what's going on here, too.

- When it comes to a person of *this world*—they, more often than not, end up 'subjecting' themselves unto the *powers that be* **out of a fear of the consequences** of going up against the Gov., or in respect to their Conduct & Behavior, being disrespectful; disorderly; challenging the power; etc. — when it comes to that person of *this world*, their 'subjection' to the *powers that be* is one of **fearing** WRATH!

... **not only for wrath** — the threat of WRATH—the threat of being judged by it; and being punished by it—that's what keeps them 'in check' (so to speak).

- And, of course, when you're dealing with the most fundamental Core Issue of all—it's the issue of the control on violence—and the production of a 'civil' society that allows things to take place orderly & peaceably & productively, and that, (as far as we're concerned), allows God's business (when it comes to the 'outworking' of His business under this 'fractured' power system), it allows that to take place.

- But as "sons" - we don't have just your 'typical' run-of-the-mill "fear of the consequences" reason for 'subjecting' ourselves unto the *powers that be*—but with that said, it IS pointed out here as A reason; (not only for wrath) - hence, it IS legitimate; it's something that needs to be recognized as a **reality** for **us**—and none of this is to say that we are not to be swayed by that reason! (That's a legitimate reason!)

- Because if we do “buck the power” (so to speak) - just because we are members of the church, the body of Christ **doesn't mean** that the *power* is going to come along and say, “Ok, you've got an excuse; you're off the hook; I can't touch you.” — no — they CAN and they WILL bring *the sword of wrath* to bear upon you just a quick as anyone else!

- But there IS something in all that we've been taught and that we've come to understand and appreciate in Romans 13:1-4 that (just as it did in the previous 2 Components), that **elevates** our Thinking and our Conduct & Behavior (and will do to our Godly Labor as well) **above** that which is a common, natural component of man's innate 'sense of justice'!

- And at the outset—when Paul brings up this issue of *wrath* (*not only for wrath*) - it could be easily thought that that's not really 'elevating' anything at all for us.

- And the truth is—that element is NOT elevating this 3rd Component of Justice any at all for us!

- But there's a naturalness behind *not only for wrath*—and that's because of the fact that if we **do resist the power** (as Paul said in :2) - there isn't any 'exemption' for us—we're NOT immune to the power's Authority or *wrath*!

- And it's designed to deal with disorderliness—it's designed to deal with unruliness—and it's designed to deal with anything that comes within the scope of VIOLENCE—(from the most mild form you could think of; or the most extreme form you could think of) - the truth is, the Government is designed to RESPOND to it!

- And in view of that—it's designed to respond to any threat to its capacity to DO THOSE THINGS!

- And, therefore, if we are going to resist *the ordinance of God*, then we're going to find ourselves subject to its *WRATH*—(to its Authority to deal with contrariness and opposition to its most vital, fundamental, foundational reason for existing!

- And so, we DO have to be 'subject' for wrath's sake!

- Because, just as it says in (:4), *But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain*:— and the “*sword*” is the Just Vengeance of the *Ordinance of God!*

- As one of the *powers that be*, (being *ordained of God* & possessing the *ordinance of God*) - Gov. has the *sword* of Justice—the power/authority to dispense vengeance/*wrath* in order to quell violence!

- But in the sense of *Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath*, ... that really isn't ‘elevating’ this 3rd Component of Justice above the reason why any normal, everyday, run-of-the-mill man of this world subjects himself to the *power* of Government.

- But we do have something that DOES ‘elevate’ our ‘sense of Godly Justice’ above & beyond the norm: **and that’s the issue of our CONSCIENCE!**

... *but also for conscience sake.*

- What is the *conscience*?

- Most commonly, the *conscience* is considered to be our “**evaluator**” (so to speak), when it comes to making a decision.

- (Webster’s 1828) - *conscience* = internal judgment of right and wrong; the faculty, power or principle within us, which **decides** on the lawfulness or unlawfulness of our own actions and affections, and instantly approves or condemns them.

- Again, the most common understanding of the *conscience* is that it is the part of our inner man that has a knowledge of what is right and what is wrong.

- And more often than not—when most folks deal with what Paul says here: ... *not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake*—most often, the idea is that what Paul is saying is that you are to *subject* yourself unto *the powers that be* because of your sense of what is right vs. what is wrong.

- But my understanding is, that this is **NOT** merely the issue of what is right or what is wrong—because the *conscience* is not only the ‘evaluator’ of right & wrong decisions—but in order for the *conscience* to make those decision, it has to have some **information** in order to make those evaluations/decisions!

- In other words, the *conscience* has to have some **KNOWLEDGED** in it!

- And while it is less commonly thought of this way—it’s actually one of the **most** common uses of the word *conscience* — and that is that one’s *conscience* is: **knowledge within oneself; inward knowledge; inmost thought!**

- And my understanding is that the word *conscience* is being used here in the sense that we **KNOW** something about *the powers that be* **that your common, run-of-the-mill man DOESN’T KNOW!**

- As “sons,” we have **GOD’S** viewpoint—and **HIS** understanding & appreciation for *the powers that be!*

- We have the “***the mind of Christ***” therefore, in connection with that issue of “*the power*” and “*the powers*”!

- And in view of THAT Godly Thinking operating within us—our being *subject unto the higher powers* is based, not only upon the reality that we **could** be subject to its *wrath* (if we, ourselves, are STUPID enough to be violent & disorderly in its face) - **but MORE than that, we have this “conscience” issue!**

- We have (operating with us) something that NO MAN of “this world” has operating within him!

- And that **marks** our Conduct & Behavior **out** as **DIFFERENT** than the average man’s Conduct & Behavior—it marks our Conduct & Behavior as being one **of a properly educated SON of God!**

- And that IS an “elevation” above and beyond the normal, everyday man’s Conduct & Behavior—whereby his ONLY reason for subjecting himself to the *powers that be* is one of “*for wrath’s sake*”!

- And that takes us back to an issue that I talked about a while back, but said that we’d come back to it later on—and that is that there is a specific reason why God has Paul say, “*Wherefore ye must needs be subject, NOT ONLY for wrath, BUT ALSO for conscience sake.*”

- And that expression, “***not only... but also***” - indicates that there is an issue for us as “sons” that *is above and beyond the norm*—it indicates to you that we have 1 Reason for *subjecting ourselves unto the powers that be*: (i.e., for *wrath’s sake*—which **all** men do), but **more than that** (or “*not only*” that), but we *ALSO* have a 2nd Reason that is *elevated* above that 1st Reason—and that reason is a **Sonship Reason**: (i.e., *for conscience sake*)!!!

- And that’s why the wording is as it is—and that’s why each word is carefully chosen for getting across PRECISELY what God intends to get across to His sons!

- And it’s because of *conscience sake* that ought to be the **MOST influential** of the 2 reasons to a son!

- And the wording here is designed to be **EMPHATIC**—it’s designed to emphasize one thing over another—and the emphasis is upon the issue of *for conscience sake*.

- And that’s the issue that ought to **dominate** our mind & our Thinking so that makes it so our Godly Con. & Beh. naturally and zealously **DESIRES** to *be subject unto the higher powers*.

- And that issue **DOES** ‘widen the gap’ (so to speak) between ourselves and “the world” as the effectual working of the Godly Wisdom is doing its job; and the effectual working of the previous 2 Components to the Godly Justice are doing their job—and then when we get down to this Final, 3rd Component in connection with Godly Justice—we’ve got something that **much more** now operates within us.

- And it makes it, therefore, so that our **whole reason** for responding to the Authority of Human Government in this honourable, orderly, peaceable way — (and really, our zeal and desire is to never even entertain the notion to put ourselves in opposition to it where it would think of us as being against it, or being a hindrance to it, or anything along those lines) — is that, the idea of opposing it becomes **ABHORRENT** to us! - it’s a **reprehensible** concept to us!

- And that’s because it’s now a matter of *conscience* to us now, based upon the understanding & appreciation we have for it—the **Godly** understanding & appreciation for it!

- And that's the 'potent' way in which the Godly Conduct & Behavior Issue concludes—but it's also designed to be the means that carries us into the Godly Labor Issue in (:6 & 7).

- Because it's *for conscience sake* that makes it so that we desire to Labor with our Father as it's laid out for us there in supporting the Government under which we live—and in giving it what it needs to be able to do its job—and to see us as an ASSET to it—(and not as a threat or a detriment, or anything like that to it).

- By the way—that's going to be an issue in *the creature* (in the heavenly places) - because being now *subject to vanity* — with all of the violence that now exists in the creature among the rulers of it—and those rulers not being able to 'get along' (so to speak) in an orderly, peaceable way with its subjects—if my understanding is correct, one of the things that will take place when we're placed as "sons" in it will be — that the creature will gladly and willingly be subject unto our rulership in it—and we will see it as an ASSET to us; and it will view us as an ASSET to it!

- In other words—the angelic realm that we will govern over will view us as an asset to them—and they will gladly subject themselves unto US!!! (Because the intelligentsia of "the new creature" [us as sons], we will no longer view its subjects [the angels] as a threat or detriment to it—to us!)

- And that's why (:6) starts off with those double "For's" — *For for **this** cause*—(that is, *For conscience sake*, NOT *for wrath's sake*)!

- And so it's that issue of "*but also for conscience sake*" that takes what is considered the common, natural component of man's innate sense of Justice (*for wrath's sake*) and ELEVATES it above and beyond it to an understanding and a knowledge that is Uncommon: a Godly knowledge and a Godly understanding!

- Now there is one more thing we need to address before going on to the Godly Labor Issue in (:6-7) - and that has to do with the other thing I pointed out earlier and said that we'd come back to it later on—and that's the issue of why God has the apostle Paul say, *Wherefore ye must **NEEDS** be subject*.

- As we come to the close of the effectual working of (:1-5) - because of the fact that this particular Component of Justice in connection with how we view and think about and live and act in relationship with our Government—due to how we, as American citizens (and as conservative, Christian Americans commonly think & behave: not being taught by our Father, but by the wisdom of men) — there’s a potential problem (maybe it’s not a problem at all), but there’s the potential, at this point, that you may feel a bit ‘let down’ because so much of what you based your patriotism upon wasn’t at all the things by which your Father defined patriotism!

- And the ‘risk’ here—or the possible problem that may arise is that the kind of **zeal, enthusiasm, delight, and joy** to do what (:3-5) say (and what the Godly Labor of :6-7 says) isn’t really there; or you kind of have to **force yourself** to be zealous & joyful to pay your taxes, and to *render tribute, custom, fear, and honour* to whom it’s *due*.

- So I think a bit of Godly Exhortation is in order here.

- Really—in view of the progressive development of all that’s been going on Edification-wise since we began the Sonship Curriculum back in Romans 12:3—(as each Component builds upon the preceding one; and each Form of Doctrine builds upon the preceding one) - along with all that, there’s something else that should be taking place.

- (And really, the way in which :6 starts off, it kind of makes this issue stand out.)

- And that’s the fact that—if the Godly Edification has been effectually working within us as God has designed it to—then the initial Godly enthusiasm, ambition, & zeal that we started off with at the end of Romans chapter 8 (for getting our Sonship Education under way—and that caused us to “present ourselves” at the Sonship Checkpoint of 12:1-2—and that had us ‘buckle down’ and get our education going) — the truth is, there’s an expectation that there will be an INCREASE in ZEAL!!!

- Come back to Proverbs 3 — and remember how the last section of the exhortation that corresponds to the *instruction of Wisdom* ended (not only ended *Wisdom*, but prepared for getting *the instruction of Justice*).

- read Pro. 3:13-20

- Notice there in (:13) - that issue of **“Happy is the man ...”** - that’s the issue of Godly satisfaction & contentment—and as you go down through the information here—that Godly satisfaction & contentment kind of has 2 Aspects to it: 1) Leans back; 2) Leans forward

- That is—in 1 Aspect, the happiness/satisfaction/contentment leans back or looks back (in a son’s thinking) to what his Father told him **would** be the case when his education got underway; and now it **dawns** upon the son (**after** the Wisdom has been gotten) that what his Father said really was true.

- (At the beginning, his Father told him that the only place where you’ll ever find happiness/satisfaction/contentment is by means of his Sonship Education—but the son, even though he can agree with his Father that that will be the case, it’s really not until the son has actually **experienced** that; **AFTER** the first form of doctrine of the Godly Wisdom has been concluded that the son gets the full awareness and reality of that issue!) - because now you’ve got the experiential PROOF of it (when you’ve responded to it Positively & Properly at the end of it)!

- Genuine, Godly happiness/satisfaction/contentment then begins to develop within the son.

- And then—when that’s done—a son begins to realize that without the Education continuing on—unhappiness settles in—dissatisfaction settles in—discontentment settles in.

- And what that does is to provide for a ‘boost’ (in a sense) and **fuels** a son’s enthusiasm & his ambition & his delight for his Sonship Education all that much more!

- And that’s when the ‘leaning forward’ concept comes in.

- Notice again (:17-18) - *17 Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace. 18 She is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her: and happy is every one that retaineth her.*

- Now you’re to a perception and a realization that **all her ways are ways of pleasantness**—(not just what I’ve gone through already: but ALL of them are) - and if there’s Godly happiness/satisfaction/contentment that comes out of just this 1st Form of Doctrine (of the

Godly Wisdom) - and it's GREAT/FANTASTIC, and the experiential proof of having gotten it has generated that Godly happiness/satisfaction/contentment to the degree that it did—if this “*path*” is **this GREAT, then what about all the other ones?!?!**

- Well, they've got to be just as great, if not greater!!!

- Then there's the realization that “*She is a tree of life*” to me, as I *lay hold upon her*—and that's the issue of **FULL, FUNCTIONAL LIFE!**

- In all of her ‘branches’ and in all of her ‘fruit’ - in everything that you partake of here is going to be functional life, upon functional life, upon functional life—and the happiness/satisfaction/contentment will just continue on!

- And that's the issue of a son ‘leaning forward’ - or desiring to press on in his education with even greater enthusiasm, and with greater ambition, and greater zeal & delight!

- And as that's all taking place—there's something that is expected to be taking place in the NEXT Form of Doctrine (the Godly Justice) — and what begins to manifest itself is that **increased ZEAL!**

- And that increased zeal manifests itself (especially) in not only **wanting** the Sonship Education—(wanting to get the *instruction of Justice* underway) - but there's also a particular way in which that zeal manifests itself—and that's in the Godly LABOR.

- And that comes out in each of the Godly Labor Aspects that's found in those 3 Components to the *instruction of Justice*. (And the very terminology used in each of the Labor Aspects of the *instruction of Justice* brings that out).

- In each of the 3 Labor Aspects to the Godly Justice, there's a **heightened sense of excitement** in them.

- (Rom. 12:18) - Notice the “tone” of ***If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.***

- That's not just worded that way to underscore our responsibility in the matter (true as that is) - but it's also worded that way because that's what we should be **enthusiastic** to do!

- We are to—as *much as lieth in us*—in other words, we’re to ‘go out of our way’ - and if it looks like peace just can’t be had between us and someone who has done us ‘dirt’, we want to sit down and figure out Why— we want to take the responsibility upon ourselves and figure out what we can do to make sure that we live *peaceably* —

— *if it be possible*, we’ll figure it out!

- And that’s because that “zeal” has GROWN—and that love for Laboring with God in what He’s doing has begun to increase and amplify—and it’s becoming **dominant** in our thinking!

- Same thing in (:21) — and the main reason why the Godly Conduct & Behavior there is: *if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head* is because you WANT to ‘thaw’ the ice that’s there—you want to make it so that if it’s possible for this *enemy* to no longer be an *enemy*, you’re going to do what you can to do it!

- And so when that *evil* is done by that *enemy*—(as :21) says, you’ve got some enthusiasm NOT to be *overcome of that evil*—but you’ve got an enthusiasm to *overcome that evil with good!* (And you’re going to make it a LABOR issue, to do that!)

- And just by the way it’s worded—you’ve got a ‘**tone**’ of **excitement** there! you’ve got **energy** there—there’s **fervency** within the mind in connection with that! And that’s because there’s been an increase, and an amplifying in the **desire** to Labor with God in what He’s doing!

- And then it comes up one more time in the 3rd Component as you transition out of the Conduct & Behavior and into the Labor aspect.

- And that’s one of the reasons why it says in (:5), *Wherefore ye must NEEDS be subject, NOT ONLY for wrath, BUT ALSO for conscience sake.*

- The *conscience* now has within it, the privilege of having an understanding & appreciation of viewing that Human Government issue EXACTLY like God does, and see the **genius** of what He did when he ‘fractured’ the *power* into

powers—and to see exactly what it is that that Gov. is designed to do—and to be able to have the ‘eyes of your understanding’ cut through all of the garbage that governments get wrapped up in (and you’re not going to bother with ‘Political Science’ type issues, or debating the virtues of one kind of Gov. against another—or any of that kind of bologna) - but you’re going to just come along and recognize that that *ordinance of God* issue IS THERE! (And Thank God that it’s there!)

- And you understand that it’s not just there for the orderliness of it & being able to check violence—but along with all that, you understand that at the core of that *ordinance of God* is the methodology by which the Business Operations of God are designed to be carried out—and the government that you participate in and under which you live is designed, therefore to carry that out!

- And so there’s to be an **excitement**, therefore, to now Labor with God in the support of that government –and that takes you right to the issues there in (:6 and 7).

- With the Godly Thinking of (:1-2) and the Godly Conduct & Behavior of (:3-5) - we can now move on to: **THE GODLY LABOR.**

6 For for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God’s ministers, attending continually upon this very thing.

7 Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour.

- **“For for”** - (this is the only time in Paul’s Epistles that he uses this double “for”) - and what you have here is a double use of the “for” of Reason.

- And this is going to make it so that the Godly C&B attaches itself to the Godly Labor—in other words it’s going to go back and take **one specific issue** (the most important issue of all in the Godly C&B) and grab hold of it, and then attach it to the Godly Labor as the **main reason** for the Godly labor.

- And this really is a marvelous example of the POWER of the English language to be absolutely PRECISE!

- And when you have a body of information that has some complexity to it (like we've just had in :1-5) - and when you want to be very specific and point to just one particular issue—it would be too vague to simply say, 'For this cause pay ye tribute also' — (wait a minute, there were **2 causes** at the end of :5 ... so which one are you talking about?) — you have to be more specific than that—and at the same time you want to put heavy emphasis upon the specific thing you're after—so you word it in such a way as to avoid confusion!

- And so to avoid confusion—and to be **precise**—the use of the double "*for*" puts the emphasis upon the nearest issue to it—and that's the issue of: *for conscience sake!*

- And that's what this first phrase of (:6) is doing—*For for THIS cause*—and the nearest *cause* or reason to this phrase is that final issue sitting at the end of (:5) - *for CONSCIENCE sake*—it's *for conscience sake* (that Sonship reason) that *ye pay tribute!*

- In other words—it's what you **KNOW** as a SON (what's now in your *conscience*) that materially affected the way in which you Conduct & Behave yourself like God does that now materially affects the way in which you spend your time Laboring together with God under the Governmental System in which you live!

- So (:6) says, *For for this cause* (for conscience sake) *pay ye tribute also:* — and that colon tells you to pause and consider that statement.

- It's *for conscience sake* (it's because you have some knowledge/information now existing in your *conscience* that's PRIVILEGED information that only a properly educated son has) that makes it so that your first act of Laboring together with your Father in connection with the particular *power/human government* under which you live is to *pay tribute!*

- And if you **don't** *pay tribute*—if you **don't** *subject yourself unto the higher powers* and Labor with God to support that Governing/Controlling power by *paying tribute*—then your *conscience* is going to **bother** you—to put it plainly, if you don't **gladly** support your Gov. by *paying tribute*, then you just won't sleep well—your conscience will bother you that much! [Because you know very well how BIG of an issue this is to your Father! ... and it should be to YOU!]

- And this is now the 3rd time in these 7 verses that you've been told something that should (if everything has done its effectual work) make it so that when it says up there in (:1), *Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers*—that you should **GLADLY** do that! (With real, genuine, Godly joy, zeal, enthusiasm, and gladness!) [Gladly pay your taxes!]

- 1) *Let every soul ...*
- 2) *resisteth (the very opposite of gladly)*
- 3) *for conscience sake—you will be unhappy if you don't!*

- *For for this cause (for conscience sake) **pay ye tribute**:*

- What is *tribute*?

- *tribute* = a sum of money paid to the government in return for peace and protection—*tribute* is a species of a tax—it's a tax that's forced upon the citizens of a nation in return for protection against violence (in support of police/law enforcement & the military of that nation; and generally serves to enrich the government).

- It's the general term used to indicate the monetary support of a government so that that government can continue doing it's job.

- And that money that's paid can go for a number of things—(for police, military—but also for roads and infrastructure, and even for a whole bunch of things that may be wasteful; or stupid; or even evil and sinful!)

- But your job in laboring with God as a “son” is to pay that *tribute* for *conscience sake*! — A son knows that even though a large part of his money is going to be wasted and put towards evil, sinful pursuits, a son knows that there is a BIGGER issue at hand: support of *the ordinance of God*! (And that government WILL use some of it to keep man's violence in check!) ... so he happily pays it!

- And even though you know it—it needs to be said: **WHEN YOU ARE PAYING YOUR TAXES (as a properly educated son) YOU ARE LABOING TOGETHER WITH GOD IN WHAT HE'S DOING!** (You're laboring with God in one of His Operations He wants to get accomplished!!!)

- And we again have another one of those times (right after the colon) here in :6 that ‘begs the question, Why?’ — and the remainder of :6 sets forth one more time (and re-enforces one more time) all of the “Steps” you took in your thinking to get to this point where you’ll gladly *subject yourself unto the higher powers*—and then actually DO IT (*pay ye tribute*) - and it won’t be by force or by coercion, or by pretense or done reluctantly or anything along those lines—(and because this issue is one whereby you can so easily get ‘off track’) - one more thing needs to be stated **and further amplified upon.**

- One more time—God has the apostle Paul emphasize the fact that your Thinking; and your C&B, and your Labor is DIFFERENT than anyone else’s—and it’s different because of what **DOMINATES** your thinking!!! Once again, God points to what makes His sons different and what **marks** His sons as His sons: **they Think, Live, and Labor exactly like God the Father does & like God the Son does!!!**

6 *For for this cause pay ye tribute also* (“also” - that is, along with being *subject* in C&B, also pay tribute): Why? ***for they are God’s ministers, attending continually upon this very thing.***

- And the final part of :6 is designed to take you right back to that most fundamental, Core, Seminal Issue when it comes to you, as a son, living in relation to the Authority of Human Government!

- That’s what dominates your thinking!

- “***for they are God’s ministers, ...***” — this is the 3rd time in this passage where God states this—3 times God confronts us with this issue—probably for a reason, right?

- What that does is, at 3 critical points in the passage, our Father kind of gives us a ‘test’ (so to speak) - in other words, He makes it so we are forced to think our way back to that most fundamental Core Issue of all—the issue of *the ordinance of God.*

- Just like before—the rulers of Gov. are *God’s ministers*—and the word *minister* takes you back to the issue when God ‘fractured’ the *power* into *powers*; *ordained* the *powers* to be the methodology by which He carries out His business in the ‘long-term’ (Post-Flood) - and He vested them with *the*

ordinance of God whereby every Gov. that will ever exist will seek to maintain order and keep man's ability to be violent under control and in check.

- That issue of a Ruler of Gov. being a *minister of God* acts as a 'trigger' mechanism for all that went on to get God's Thinking and God's Heart on the matter installed properly in your Thinking and in your heart!
 - And God's **not one bit** interested in WHO sits in that position of Gov.—it doesn't matter at all—even a rank unbeliever; a vile, wicked individual may be in that position—it doesn't matter—he/she is still *the minister of God.*
 - And I find that a fascinating matter—God can use even an unbeliever (even an Atheist!) as a *minister of God!*
 - And we may suffer great evil and great ill-effects from rulers of Gov.—but because they are *ministers of God*, THEY WILL HAVE TO ANSWER TO GOD FOR WHAT THEY DO—they'll have to deal with God's wrath and judgment for how they carried out their *ministry* & for abusing that *ministry!*
 - But you don't have to worry about that!
 - You and I are only asked to view Gov. the way our Father does; Think about it the way He does; Conduct yourself under it the way He would Himself; and the Labor with Him by perpetuating that Gov. by *paying tribute* so it can continue to exist.
 - Because as long as they're doing ONE THING—everything else is irrelevant—you might not like all the other things it does, but there's only ONE THING that Gov. has to do to be **valuable**:
- 6 ... *for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing.*
- And the ONE THING they do is what Paul says here is: **this very thing** — and they *attend* to it **CONTINUALLY!**
 - **They never stop**—(in all of stupid & goofy & evil they do) they never, ever stop *attending to this very thing!*

- And the **very thing** that ALL Rulers **attend continually upon** is: to maintain order in a civil society & keep the violence of men in check!

- In other words—the One Thing that all rulers of gov. **attend to continually (ALL OF THE TIME) IS THE ORDINANCE OF GOD!**

- And as long as they do that, then that Gov. is valuable, needful, and are functioning in a capacity that God created and designed for them to function in as His *ministers*.

- Rulers are NOT functioning as *ministers of God* when they feed the poor, impose universal health care, or any other way in which they think they are carrying out the “Golden Rule” — no — rather, they are *ministers of God* ONLY when they **attend continually upon this very thing** (maintaining order & keeping man’s violence in check!) [Because that’s what *the ordinance of God* is all about!]

- So — 6 *For for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God’s ministers, attending upon this very thing.*

- And now everything has been done—all of the effectual working of (:1-6) has finally come down to this—all of the adjustments have been made in your inner man—and now the concluding matter of Godly Labor can be stated.

7 *Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour.*

- **Render** (to pay, to give, to contribute, to furnish) **therefore** (here’s the conclusion to the whole matter of this 3rd Component of Justice) **to all** (all Rulers of Gov. as ‘ministers of God’) **their dues** (that which is owed to them by means of support in order to maintain the Gov. that contains *the ordinance of God*):

- And that colon at the end of *dues* is not so much designed as a pause, but is used in another function of a colon, which is to enumerate a list of things—and Paul lists 4 things which can be grouped into 2 groups of 2.

- (1st Group) *tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom;*
(“Tribute” and “Custom”)
- (2nd Group) *fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour.*
(“Fear” and “Honour”)

- And even though we can say some things about *tribute, custom, fear, & honour*—these are still very generic terms—and they’re generic for a reason.

- And that’s because by being generic (or broad & general) God is having the apostle Paul use such generic terminology in order to describe a RANGE of things that falls under 2 particular categories that are the 2 **legitimate** categories for a son’s Godly Labor (to subject himself to the powers that be, and gladly support that government).

- And this is something a son can do **even if that Gov. is persecuting him!**

- By virtue of Human Government being *ordained of God* — being vested with *the ordinance of God*—and its Rulers being *ministers of God*—you as a son, have a Sonship Obligation to render therefore to all their dues—put simply, Knowing what Government is designed by God to do, (and that takes a lot of doing) — therefore, you are obliged to support it—and there are 2 basic ways you will do that:

1) *Render tribute* to whom it is due; and to *render custom* to whom it is due—(*Tribute to Custom*)

- *Tribute* (as we noted before) = a species of tax whereby a sum of money is paid to the government in return for maintaining the peace; for protection from criminals and foreign enemies; and for such things as roads & infrastructure that maintains an orderly society.

- And **ALL** citizens pay *tribute*.

- *Custom* = another species or form of a tax—but more particularly, it’s a tax paid by merchants on goods or merchandise that are either imported or exported—a tax usually passed on to the customers.

- *Custom* is therefore a tax on commodities that you consume; or a tax on the use of certain services— (what we call today an excise tax—on such things as tobacco, gasoline, and your internet provider).

- The *custom* is what's paid by the customer to the merchant as a tax upon the items or services he purchases or consumes within a country. (And it may vary from country to country, hence it's what's customarily charged by that country—whatever is the *custom* of that country or state).

- And where ALL citizens pay *tribute*—only those who purchase items or services that have a *custom* tax put upon it, pay *custom*. (Not necessarily all citizens pay *custom*.)

- So the range of *tribute* to *custom* goes from the general to the not-so general.

- But the point is—that the **range** of *tribute* to *custom* covers the whole range of what is considered any thing that would come under the category of monetary or financial support that a Government imposes—any taxation system comes under the category of either *tribute* or *custom*.

- Then the 2nd most basic way in which you are obliged to support your Government (knowing what it's designed by God to do) is:

2) *Render fear* to whom it is due; and to *render honour* to whom it is due—(*Fear* to *Honour*)

- *Fear* is the bigger of the two expressions in the sense that it's a dreadful appreciation for, or apprehension of impending danger or the prospect of some possible evil—and in view of the Government being vested with the authority to put to death violent men—that power & authority deserves to be rendered *fear* by its citizens—it's not to be 'trifled' with!

- And those in law enforcement, military, and in certain judicial positions fall under this category.

- i.e., those who ‘wield the sword of justice’.

- And I say it’s the ‘bigger’ issue of the 2, simply because this issue is **life-threatening**—you don’t mess around with the power & authority that can take you life!

- And your Godly Labor as a “son” is to **ever fear** that Governing/Controlling Power—and to **never NOT** be afraid of it; never challenge it; never oppose it—because it contains the very *ordinance of God* that keeps man’s ability to be violent under control!

- *Honour* = the esteem and respect paid to something or someone of worth; to regard something/someone with high respect due to their station, position, or office.

- Therefore, whereas the issue of *fear* goes toward Government in general (and its ability & authority to *execute wrath upon him that doeth evil*) - the issue of rendering honour goes toward the particular offices and positions that make up the Gov. under which we live.

- And the issue of rendering *honour* to whom it is due is NOT the issue of rendering *honour* to the actual **person**, but the **OFFICE** that the person holds!

- For example—it’s much like the issue of *honouring* your **parents**—and a father or a mother may be a SORRY person/individual—but even at that, they still hold a position or an office that demands respect and *honour*!

- And the issue of **rendering** *honour* is mainly an OUTWARD exercise or act—and what is the main way in which you act or show that you are *honouring* your parents? ... YOU **OBEY** THEM!

- And, chiefly, your Godly Sonship Labor in *rendering honour to whom honour is due* is going to involve your **obedience** to the offices & positions that make up the Gov. under which you live!

- And you're being obedient and *rendering honour* to those positions & offices because you see **past** the person—and you see the value and worth of those offices—you **value & esteem them** just like your Father does as *ministers of God* who are *attending continually upon this very thing* (providing peace & order by keeping the violence of men in check)!

... you're *rendering honour* to the very methodology by which your Father has determined to accomplish the long-term success of His business!!!

... and that's a gracious, joyful, magnificent privilege of Sonship Labor!!!

- So in view of all that, the issue of rendering *honour* is somewhat more 'narrow' in its scope than the issue of *fear*. (It's looking more at the individual offices that make up *the powers that be*.)

- And just as it did with *tribute* and *custom*—the range of *fear* to *honour* goes from the general to the not-so-general.

- The point, once again, is—that the **range of *fear* to *honour* covers the whole range of what is considered to be all forms of respect!**

- So then—there are **2 general, legitimate** categories for a son's Godly Labor in connection with Justice as it regards your Sonship relationship to Government (or *the powers that be*):

1) To Labor together with God **in the support of the STRUCTURE of the Government**—(by *rendering tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom;*) — financial & monetary support through taxation keeps the structure of the government functioning.

2) To Labor together with God **in the support of the OFFICES/POSITIONS that make up the Government**—(by *rendering fear to whom it is due; and honour to whom it is due*) — respect & obedience in support of the offices that administrate and/or *minister* the authority of the government.

- And when you properly understand & appreciate those Core, Seminal Issues (in the 4 Steps of the Godly Thinking) - which generates the Zeal for the Godly Conduct & Behavior—then there should be an appropriate Godly **Zeal & Enthusiasm** to *render* to the Government (or *the higher powers*) what is *due* in it a **Godly manner**:

1) To **GLADLY** support it financially by paying whatever taxes it imposes. (From the Federal, down to the Local level).

2) To **GLADLY** give respect to the offices of *the ministers of God*—knowing that they are the custodians of *the ordinance of God!*

- And remember that one of the major reasons for you being trained by your Father as His son in this issue of Justice and your relationship to Governing/Controlling Power—and one of the major reasons for why you should be zealous & enthusiastic to Labor with your Father in this way—is because **you're going to be part of His Government**; part of His Governing & Controlling Power in *the creature!* (When you are placed as a son & receive the *joint-inheritance with Christ*, you'll be placed in one of those ruling positions that make up the Government of the Heavenly Places!!!)

- Now I want to end this 3rd Component of Justice by taking you back to that Exhortation that we began with up in (:1) —

Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers.

- The truth is—after all that we've gone through—some 39 Lessons; over 15 weeks to get the full, effectual working of these 7 verses—having the very Thinking and Conduct & Behavior of God Himself effectually working within your inner man — you should now be able to look back at that Exhortation, and without one whit of reluctance; without one iota of force or coercion—GLADLY subject your soul unto the higher powers!

- And when I said that a son would gladly pay his taxes; and a properly educated son would gladly & enthusiastically be subject to the Government under which he lives—that should now make PERFECT SENSE to you! (And anything less, just wouldn't be the proper Sonship response!)

- And one other thing—you should now have a totally different understanding and appreciation for what “patriotism” is—(loyalty & devotion to one’s country) - that’s radically different from what you had before—your devotion to your country, your nation—isn’t because of its form of government; or its flag; or its venerated documents; or its national anthem; or even its military (per se) ... rather, your loyalty & devotion is toward the very same thing that God your Heavenly Father’s is—and that’s the issue of ***the ordinance of God*** that your nation and its government is vested with by God Himself!

- And folks, that **IS** radically different than the average patriotic American—or the average Christian Conservative American!

- And it’s radically different because in the area of Government, you have been *transformed by the renewing of your mind* and by that, you’ve been *conformed to the image of Christ!!!*

- And with that—your “Lower Order of Justice” that you have had built upon your general ‘sense of Justice’ by the course of this world and by the wisdom of this world—that should now be completely dismantled and dismissed—and fully replaced with Godly Justice: A Higher Order of Justice!

- A Higher Order of Justice in regards to your Personal Justice towards men in general who do you ‘dirt.’

- A Higher Order of Justice in regards to your (and your Father’s) mutual ENEMY.

- And A Higher Order of Justice in regards to the Established Authority of the Governing & Controlling “*higher powers*” of the Government under which you live.

- Your basic & fundamental *instruction of Justice* is now complete!

- Any Question? Comments? — (see Acts 25:1-11)

- VOLITION TESTING POINT: RESPONDING **POSITIVELY** & **PROPERLY!** (Proverbs 3:1-4—review)

- Now at this point—having now *received the instruction of Justice*—and having responded to it Positively & Properly—the expectation is that in all 3 of the Components that make up *the instruction of Justice*, there is (as we talked about several sessions ago) [there should be] an increase in the Godly Zeal, Ambition, & Enthusiasm (and gladness, if you will) to Live & Labor together with your Heavenly Father, just as He has taught you to do in Romans 12:17-13:7.

- And that's an important issue—because it provides for you to have some features or some expectations of the Father that allows for you to 'measure' your Sonship progress, and to ensure that everything is running 'well' in your Godly edifying.

- But there's another issue that we have to be confronted with before moving on to the next Sonship Decision-Making Skill (*receiving the instruction of Judgment*).

- In fact—when you reach the end of the instruction of Justice, you're at one of the most important and critical points in Level I, Phase 2, Sonship Edification.

- And if everything has been properly doing its effectual job—and if, since we began the Sonship Curriculum back up in Romans 12:3 right up until this very moment at the end of Romans 13:7—if everything's working as it should, then as far as the Godly Edifying goes, there are some things that your Father is getting “built” and generated within your inner man—some are just getting underway, others have already been underway for some time now—and these are some things that kind of are at work in the ‘background’ (so to speak), and are not always directly addressed in the Curriculum (sometimes they are, but sometimes they're not), but they're being developed in you, none the less—and there's an expectation that the Father has that you're getting these issues developed—[and there are ways to measure their development]. But there's one particular issue that your Father has been developing that needs to be looked at once again.

- And it just goes hand-in-hand with that issue of the increased Godly Zeal & Enthusiasm for Thinking, Living, & Laboring with your Father in the field of Godly Justice (The Higher Order of Justice).

- And just as we noted the progressive development and growth in the Godly Zeal (to the point that you would “gladly” *let your soul be subject unto the higher powers*) - hand-in-hand with that (and working perfectly together with that) - and as a “**hallmark**” feature that testifies to the fact that your godly

edifying is going well & proper up until this point—is that there should be (along with the Godly Zeal), a corresponding **GROWTH IN GODLY LOVE!**

- And one of the main reasons why it's so essential to make sure that it's developed to the point where it's supposed to have developed at the end of the Godly Justice—is because the 2 Components of Godly Judgment that come up under our *instruction of Judgment*—the 1st Component demands that a certain level of Godly Love has been developed and is effectually working—**otherwise there will be NO capacity to make Godly Judgments solely on the basis of Godly Love!**

- And going on is pointless.

- The growth of Godly Love has been ongoing since we began our Sonship Education back in Romans 12:3.

- And since then, 3 Major Features of Godly Love have been generated: Selflessness, Kindness (Lovingkindness), and Tenderheartedness.

- And a 4th Major Feature of Godly Love has been generated by the effectual working of all 3 Components to our *instruction of Justice*—(i.e., from Romans 12:17-13:7).

- But before we deal with that—I think we need to address something so that we don't get off track here—and that is, due to our background in our old days of Systematic Theology and “ICE” teaching—you might get the idea that when you're talking about things like “Selflessness” and “Kindness” and “Tenderheartedness” and other things that we will come to understand & appreciate are Major Features of Godly Love—you might get the idea that those are just Attributes or Virtues that pretty much are ‘stand-alone’ issues—or, as we used to say, Those are just “categories” of Bible Doctrine all to themselves—and therefore should be dealt with as categories all by themselves.

- But that's NOT how God looks at them or deals with them—that's how Systematic, Categorical teaching **compartmentalizes** them!

- To illustrate how God Himself views these things—let's notice something about how our Father instructs us in the issue of His Godly Love—and how He so often does, teaches us about something and then at the appropriate time, He then tells us in a single word, what all that He's been teaching us can now be called.

- (see/read Romans 14:15) — That’s the very first time in God’s word (and the very first time in your Sonship Curriculum) that the word *charity* has been used—and notice that it isn’t analyzed; it isn’t defined; it isn’t explained at all—you’re simply expected to know what it is by this time!

- By the time you get to Romans 14:15, Godly Love & Charity is supposed to have been generated, and begun to function properly.

- [Note to self: At this point we dealt with the difference between “love” and “charity” — see Additional Notes on “Charity” pgs.1-3]

- (Note also I Corinthians 13:1-13)

- Notice how God gathers up a whole bunch of attributes or features of *charity* all together—He doesn’t (**always**) deal with them as “stand-alone” categories. (though sometimes He does have reason to do so).

- Now to get this next, 4th Major Feature of Godly Love that is expected to be generated by the time you get to the end of *the instruction of Justice* you’re going to have to go back over those 3 Components of Justice and think some more about each one of them—and try to perceive what kind of a feature of Godly Love is being dealt with in those 3 Components.

1st Component (Romans 12:17-18)

- [think about Rom. 2:4, and God having the power and the right to pour out His wrath, and yet holding it back and instead demonstrating His *goodness, forbearance, & longsuffering*, knowing that *the goodness of God leadeth to repentance*].

- That’s God’s “strength under control”!
[individually]

2nd Component (Romans 12:19-21)

- [think about Rom. 9:22-24 {which, by the way, tells you when the rapture will take place}]

- Again, that’s God’s “strength under control”!
[dispensationally]

3rd Component (Romans 13:1-7)

- [think about when you have the power to “resist the ordinance of God” but you don’t resist it—think about *letting your soul be subject unto the higher powers*]

- Now that’s your strength (as a son) under control! That’s you being pliant, bendable, amenable, submissive ...

- And when you’re talking about being pliant, bendable, amenable, submissive—when you’re talking about ‘strength under control’ - what is that? what can that be called in a single word? and what is the word God uses to describe these things?

- MEEKNESS (being MEEK)!

- By means of the Godly Thinking, the Godly Conduct & Behavior, and the Godly Labor of all 3 Components of our *instruction of Justice*—our Father has produced and generated in us the 4th Major Feature of Godly Love & Charity: MEEKNESS!

- Let’s just run some verses—and all I’m after here is that you see how (at times) God doesn’t always take the issue of *meekness* and consider it as a ‘stand-alone’ category of doctrine, but rather (at times) regards it as a feature or characteristic of Godly Love —

- I Corinthians 4:21
- Galatians 5:23; 6:1-3
- Ephesians 4:2
- Colossians 3:12-14
- I Timothy 6:11

- And let’s just note the instance where I’ve said that you were kind of ‘tipped off’ to this issue of meekness—or maybe a better way to say it is that you were ‘prompted’ to think about this feature of meekness in the Exhortations of the book of Proverbs where you find the corresponding post-doctrinal exhortation that a son receives after he has completed receiving *the instruction of Justice* —

- Proverbs 3:21-35 (see :27-35 [**34**])

- Now before going on to deal with and define and describe this issue of *meekness*—I want to say some things in connection with this “list” of these 7 Major Features or Characteristics of Godly Love that we’re compiling and being taught about.

- When we talk about Major Features of God’s Love as being *selfless, kind, lovingkindness, tenderheartedness, & meekness*—while those are Major Features of God’s love, at the exact same time, those are also features or aspects of God’s own Character & Essence—they are attributes of who God is.

- And the truth is—if you were to boil down all of the aspects and attributes of who and what God is—the most fundamental feature that God presents about Himself when it comes to His relationship with His people is that He is **LOVE!** (as John says, “*God is love*” [I John 4:8])

- And if LOVE is the term that God uses to do that—and that, therefore, covers EVERYTHING He ever does with anybody—well then, ALL of the words and terms that could be used to describe a **facet** of that Love are rather extensive.

- But in Level I Sonship Education—we get the Main, Major terms and terminology and features and characteristics of God’s Love taught to us—and there are 7 of them—and they all encompass (by what they say) **everything that is true** in connection with God’s Love—and all of the other words and terms that could be used to describe a nuance, or a particular trait or a sub-feature that would fall under these 7 Major Features—they are all gathered up under these particular 7 Features (just as all 7 of these Features are covered under the one issue of God’s Love).

- It’s like what God says to the Thessalonians: *But as touching brotherly love ye need not that I write unto you: for ye yourselves are **taught of God to love one another.*** (I Thess. 4:9) - (and there’s an awful lot contained in that phrase: “*taught of God to love one another*”!!)

- And as that’s taught to you of God—you come to realize that there are some Major terms/Features that you get taught that have names given to them that kind of ‘stand out’ (or are outstanding Features) of God’s own Love.

- They are definable and describable Major Features.

- And my point here is just to say that it's quite possible to think about (or hit upon) a lot of terms and phrases that may not at all be wrong, but may be more of the 'sub-feature' variety—but what we're after here are the **Major** Features of Godly Love.

- So my understanding is that the next Major Feature of Godly Love that gets generated by the time you come to the end of *the instruction of Justice* (at the end of Romans 13:7) is that Godly Love is MEEK (meekness).

- And you need to appreciate that *meekness* is a further progressive development of Godly Love being *selfless*, *kind*, and *tenderhearted*.

- In other words God's Love is **not compartmentalized**—*meekness* is **not compartmentalized**—(nor is the *selflessness*, or the *kindness*, or the *tenderheartedness*) - but rather, NONE of those things exist separate from the others—it's the issue that one of them is the most fundamental or radical root of them all (which is the *selflessness*, for none of them would exist without the *selflessness*) - and when it comes to God *teaching* us to love one another and to love like He does—He teaches it to us in a way that's designed to **naturally develop** within us!

- And God's designed it so that when one has been generated, then next one naturally grows out of, and naturally develops out of the that first one—and then the next one naturally grows/develops out of the first 2—and then the 4th one naturally grows/develops out of those first 3—and so forth.

- And if you think about it—by means of 2 things: 1) by the effectual working of the Godly *selflessness*, *kindness*, and *tenderheartedness*—and 2) by the effectual working of what the 3 Components of *the instruction of Justice* does to further advance the issue of Godly Love—the next, progressive and developed Major Feature of Godly Love is the issue of *meekness*—because all 3 of those Components of Justice has you being *meek* in some way in every one of them.

- In fact—*meekness* is an issue that's most often manifested when **Justice** situations are in view [though not exclusively]! And because this Feature of Godly Love is developed within the context of Justice—that underscores (all the more) my understanding that the next Major Feature of Godly Love is **Meekness**.

- And the truth is—the term that we were after (*meekness*) really has more to do with Justice than with anything else. (And we'll confirm that later on.)

- **MEEK/MEEKNESS**—what does *meekness* mean? what is *meekness*?

- *meek* = (Webster's 1828) The primary sense is flowing, liquid—to melt—Mild of temper; soft; gentle; not easily provoked or irritated; yielding; given to forbearance under injuries.

- (Webster, cont.) - humble, submissive, not proud,

- (OED) Gentle, courteous, kind—free from haughtiness and self-will; humble and submissive; patient and unresentful under injury and reproach.

- Oftentimes people don't define the word *meekness* properly—or they oftentimes make it out to be something bad and a stain upon someone's character—because when *meekness* is used in an improper way, some folks come along and describe a person who is *meek* as one who is **WEAK!**

- And because of that, we have a catchy or pithy old English saying or maxim that was developed to try to stave off that improper meaning of *meekness*: “**Meekness is NOT Weakness!**”

- And what is meant by that is—that someone who is *meek* is NOT someone who, by nature, is weak or inept or a “weak-sister” (a person who is timid/indecisive/undependable) - someone who easily cracks under pressure.

- In fact, oftentimes the way being *meek* is miss-used, is that person is often described as being a “**milk-toast**” (easily softened by milk) — used to describe a bad/undesirable trait in a person whereby they just ‘wilt’ in the face of any opposition or adversity!

- But the truth is— “**meekness is NOT weakness**” — in fact, meekness is actually “**strength under control**” — and even the Lord Jesus Christ Himself described Himself as being “**meek**” — “*Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: ... (Matthew 11:29).*

- The misuse of the word *meekness* is often used to describe a 90lb. weakling who couldn't express POWER or MIGHT **if he wanted to!**

- (Charles Smith, “Synonyms Discriminated,” pg. 454)

Meekness differs from mildness, gentleness, and softness, in being never applied, like them, to the deportment, but only to the temper or character. But with the world at large it is not in favour; whence has been imposed upon it the idea of *excessive* submissiveness, and an absence of that “spirit” which more readily finds admiration. It may be observed that *meekness* at least **excludes obstinacy** as well as **pride**; while persons who have softness in manner are often found by no means wanting in self-will. *Meekness* results from the absence of arrogant self-will or self-assertion. **It is the quality which meets not violence with violence, or force with force, or clamour with clamour, but endures provocation and submits to wrong.**

- (George Crabb, “Crabb’s Synonymes,” pg. 359)

Meekness consists not only in an **unresisting**, but a **forgiving** temper, a temper that is **unruffled by injuries and provocations**.

- Notice how Noah Webster, Charles Smith, and George Crabb can't talk about *meekness* without injecting it into the context of JUSTICE!

- The truth is—you can't be *meek* unless you have a **Just cause**, and a **Just right** to **expend authority or power!**

- And therefore, you've got a Just cause/right to seek retribution or to seek recompense or to seek Justice.

- In other words—*meekness* is NOT the unwillingness to do something like that—rather, ***meekness* is the containment within yourself of your “rights” to redress something because you would rather pursue a course that, for some reason, is more important and more meaningful to you!** (*That's* why you're “*meek*”!)

- Now let's verify/confirm that.

- Isaiah 29—Here you have the issue of the remnant of Israel experiencing some injustices and some unfairness and some ungodly expressions in connection with the issue of Justice.

- And here God takes apostate Israel to task in connection with their own corruption, wickedness, and contrariness and rebelliousness.

- And He says some things here that contrast the attitude and the character of the righteous Remnant within the nation Israel with the apostate element within the nation Israel. (Especially as it exists out in the 4th and the 5th Install. of the 5th CoP.)

- And as He does that—God uses a term to describe the Remnant’s character in the face of the **great injustices** that they are receiving.

- In other words, the Remnant will be on the **unjust** end of receiving EVIL from apostate Israel—when apostate Israel becomes their *enemies*!

- And that righteous Remnant is going to **patiently wait** for the LORD to **avenge** them (as the Lord Jesus Christ Himself teaches them in Luke ch. 17 and 19).

- And there is something that is supposed to characterize their longsuffering and their patience in the face of all those injustices—and it’s something that is to characterize the way they had been learning and had been taught to think (which, of course is the issue of their Godly Sonship Edification).

- And the context here is one of the Remnant having to deal with injustices, and evil treatment—undeserved, unmerited unfair treatment.

- (see/read Isa. 29:18-21)

- Notice in the last 2 verses (:20-21) - you’ve got that issue for the reason for what (:18-19) says—and you’ve got this issue of “*the terrible one*” and he’s “*brought to nought*” - and you’ve got “*the scorner*” who gets “*consumed*” - and you’ve got “*all that watch for iniquity*” are being “*cut off*” — and they’re the ones who particularly “*make a man an offender for a word*” (and that’s a **legal offender**) - they’re out there scrutinizing the conduct of the members of the Remnant of Israel, and they’re looking for what they consider to be any *iniquity* so they can declare that person an *offender*—and haul them before the judicial system of apostate Israel, and hopefully put them to death!

- And that “*word*” of course, is the issue saying that the Christ/Messiah of Israel is Jesus of NAZARETH!

- And in the face of all this evil being done to them by the members of apostate Israel and by “*the terrible one*” (that Anti-Christ), the context here is one of a Judicial setting.

- And in this context—God uses a word to describe the members of the Remnant of Israel as they find themselves in this judicial setting and **NOT fighting against any of these injustices.**

-And that’s the word found in (:19) - *The meek ...*

- *Meekness* is the characteristic of Godly Love that is displayed by a properly educated son in the realm of **Justice**—and when **injustice** is done to him—

— When a son receives ‘dirt’ done to him and *evil* done to him by those he deals with on a daily basis—when it’s in his ‘rights’ and ‘power’ to *recompense* it back (or pay it back) in kind, he rather CONTAINS his ‘rights’ and CONTAINS his ‘power’ to pay back in kind, in order to pursue a course of action that is more important to him—and that is to deal with the one who has done him ‘dirt’ and *evil* on the basis of *goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering*—(and here’s the more important course of action) - *knowing that the goodness of God leads that person to repentance.* [It’s far more important for you to *provide things honest in the sight of all men!*]

- That’s a son operating with MEEKNESS!

- And when a son receives opposition and resistance and *evil* from his *enemy*—when he has the ‘right’ & ‘power’ to avenge himself—he rather CONTAINS that ‘right’ & ‘power’ in order to pursue a course of action that is more important to him than avenging his own cause—he puts *wrath* in its proper place (in the Lord’s Day of Wrath), and he pursues a course of action that will provide for a softening of his *enemy*’s thinking & heart in order to keep the door of opportunity open to present the Gospel of Christ to his *enemy* — and if he responds positively to it, no longer be his *enemy*. (and that’s more important to him than avenging himself!)

- That’s a son operating with MEEKNESS!

- And when a son lives under a government that does stupid, evil, wicked, and vile things to him—and when he has the ‘rights’ and the ‘power’ to resist it and oppose it, and become violent himself (like a “Zealot” in the Lord’s day—[even one of His 12 apostles {Simon, not Peter} was of this Jewish political party that did not hesitate to use violence and force to achieve their ends] - a son will rather CONTAIN his ‘rights’ and ‘power’ to redress, resist, and oppose *the powers that be* in order to pursue a course of action that is more important to him—he let’s his *soul be subject unto the higher powers* because he knows that *power contains* and maintains the ordinance of God; and the *ministers of God* that make up its offices & positions have the authority and the right to take his life, if necessary (and God’s won’t do anything to stop them from taking his life) - and the continuation of *the ordinance of God* (and all that that means) is more important to a son than resisting & opposing that Government.

- Who cares about all the ‘trashy’ things; and the no-consequence, meaningless things that you can get yourself wrapped up in as you read the newspaper every day & get bombarded with the news, telling you what’s going on in your local Gov., and your state Gov., and your National Gov., and the UN! Whoopie-do! — there’s something **far greater** at steak: that *ordinance of God!*

- So when you’ve got the opportunity to pay your taxes, pay them for THAT reason—Who cares if they give it to abortionists? God will settle the score with them about ALL that—and until then, you be meek and pay those taxes without complaint!

- And that’s a son operating with MEEKNESS!

- In all 3 Components of Justice, God our Father has, in each of those 3 Components, given us something that is FAR MORE IMPORTANT than pursuing our legal right or using our legitimate power to do otherwise!!!

- And in doing so, He has ingeniously taught us the 4th Major Feature of Godly Love & Charity of: MEEKNESS!

- Let's notice another place in God's word where *meekness* is dealt with in the context of Justice and having a Just cause and a Just right to expend authority or power.

- But where those who are *meek* are containing within themselves their "rights" to redress something or to recompense something—but because they would rather pursue a course of action that is far more important and more meaningful, they patiently **wait** & "give place" (as it were) to their vengeance and wrath.

- **Matthew 5**—The Lord's Sermon on the Mount—(The Beatitudes) [9 of them]

- By the way, the word "Beatitude" does not occur in the Bible—not that it's wrong to call them that) - but the word "Beatitude" = supreme blessedness—it comes down to English from the L. and F. for "blessed" + Latin suffix "tude" = a state of being; hence, a state of being blessed.

- (read :1-12)

- Setting: after the Lord's 'temptation' by Satan—at the very beginning of His public, earthly ministry —

- The SotM is NOT written you today! It is NOT designed to effectually work in you! — the SotM is designed to operate ONLY in God's program with Israel!!!

- In order to properly understand & appreciate the Lord's SotM, a MASSIVE amount of background work in connection with God's program with Israel needs to be understood and appreciated before you ever get to Matthew chapter 5! — but for time's sake, we'll just note a couple of things that will hopefully jog your memory and set the context enough to deal with the passage that we're after.

- It's often thought by many Bible teachers that the Lord Jesus Christ just kind of randomly walked around and just randomly said a bunch of nice things—kind of like He just made it all up as He went along! (WRONG) - the truth is, where He went & what He said was almost "scripted" (so to speak) back in the prophets!

- (see Isa. 61:1-3) - this is what the Lord began doing in Mat. 5—in the face of apostate Israel and all that they had done & were doing to the members of the nation Israel, and to the Remnant in particular!

- This is where the SotM (and the ‘Beatitudes’) comes from!
 [And a properly educated Jew would know that when the Messiah came, this would be one of the things He would do!
 — he would expect the Christ to do this!]

- Notice in (:1-2) that there’s a bunch of terminology that are **Justice-type issues**.

- Now to confirm all the more that when the Lord delivers the SotM in Mat. 5ff—the context involves evil, wicked, horrible injustices being done to the Remnant of Israel by the vain & apostate religious System of Israel

- (see Psalm 37:1-22) - [note: the *evildoers* and the *wicked* = the vain, [Psa. 149, too] religious leaders of Israel itself!]

- This is all about IN-Justices!

- This is all about containing their rights/power to recompense and avenge themselves for something far more important!

- This is all about waiting, instead, for the Lord to avenge their cause!

- **THIS IS ALL ABOUT MEEKNESS!!!**

- (back to Matt. 5:5—*Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.*)

- These 9 ‘Beatitudes’ are not just randomly put together—rather, they’re put together in a particular order that goes down through the way that Apostate Israel has badgered, and has brutalized, and has manipulated, and has mistreated & taken advantage of the members of the Remnant of Israel (in particular) [and the people in general].

- And by the time they get to this Climactic Stage in their program, they’re now going to be learning some doctrine that gets taught to them by their own Messiah (the Christ) - and He’s going to put it all together for them in an ‘Outline’ Form within that SotM—that is going to enable them to respond to all the unfairness and injustice that they’ve been on the receiving end of—and to do so in a way that’s going to be **rewardable** for them when the Kingdom gets established!

- And if you pay attention to what the Psalms & prophets set forth about the way in which the Remnant will be treated by the apostate, VRS of Israel—you’d know that one of the first things that they are going to be on the receiving end of: are all these **injustices!**

- And that's why the first of those Beatitudes are what they are—and why you have the *meeek* being mentioned within those first 3.

- And the issue is: *Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.*

- And when you go back in the Psalms and the prophets and get all the background work—and you look at the *meeek* in a larger context as it's set forth there—the LORD God talks about it there, and the Lord Jesus Christ talks about it in His earthly ministry —

— and you have Him taking the issue of the *widows* and the *fatherless*, and talking about the brutal treatment they received at the hands of the apostate, VRS of Israel—

— and you have the issue of the *widows* being the ones who have their lands taken away from them —

— and the *fatherless* are the ones who have their birthright taken away from them—(they can be the “*firstborn*” son, but since their father is not alive, those scoundrels of apostate Israel come along and deny them their right of inheritance) — or they ‘super-tax’ the land of their inheritance as the *firstborn*—and basically function like a “K-Street Lawyer” (so to speak) in connection with them - and “milk” them for every dime they’ve got!

- (see/read Isaiah 10:1-3)

- That's the “*meeek*” in the context of Matt. 5:5—and that's just a small part of the kind of **injustices** they are receiving from the VRS of apostate Israel!

- And the issue here in these Beatitudes and in the SotM is—that the Lord now comes along and teaches them to NOT get involved in the Law Courts and to waste their time in legal wranglings—and not to get involved in trying to ‘bribe’ one of the Judges in the Gate so that they’ll get a fair hearing, and all this kind of business.

- And He says, Look, they may take away all your inheritance and all you land—but you *meeek* ones, you WILL “*inherit the earth*” - because I’m going to GIVE it to you!!!”

- As part of the issue of God's Jehovah-ness & grace—He's going to do FOR them what they could not do for themselves!

- And as part of the entire "Salvation Package Deal" that they receive—and as part of the fulfillment of the Redeemer, Deliverer, and Avenger Mandates of the Davidic Covenant—and as part of the reward they'll get out when that Kingdom gets established—they WILL receive the *inheritance of the earth!!!*

- And on their Calendar of Events—that time was right on the 'door-step' of happening—so, so what? if they lose it all under the apostate VRS of Israel—they'll temporarily lose everything under the 5th Install. of the 5th CoP anyway—but right after that, they'll get their *inheritance of the earth!*

- And one of the things the Lord does in this SotM is to teach them, and to generate in them all this *selflessness* that He teaches them about in that SotM (which is the basis for their being *meek*) —

— and based upon their *selflessness*, they're able to come along and patiently **wait** upon the Lord in *meekness*—and recognize that there's a time coming when God is going to address all those concerns—and He's going to redress FOR them; and recompense FOR them; and avenge FOR them in connection with all these who have "fleeced" them and brutalized them!

- And as long as that 4th Install. went on, they were therefore taught to simply be *meek* in the meantime—
(see/read **Matt. 5:39-42!**)

— if they hit you on the right cheek, turn to him your other cheek; if they had to pay the guy off, then pay him off; if he's going to demand your coat, then give him your cloak also; if he demands you walk a mile with him, then go the extra mile and just get the guy off your back!

- And this is all because the issue is that there's something **far more important** going on—Who cares if he takes all your land and all

your money? — because the truth of the matter is: once that 5th Install. starts, and the Time Schedule starts—you're only going to have 3 1/2 years before you have to run into the mountains and into the wilderness, and you're not going to have your property anyway!

- And you have the **far more important** and **far more meaningful** issue of the Kingdom getting established; the Lord Delivering and Avenging His cause (and you); and the issue of reward out in that Kingdom that makes anything you possess in lands and businesses PALE by comparison!

- And so that's why you're going to be *meek* right now.

- In any other circumstances, you wouldn't have 'contained' your rights & your power to do something about it—but now you're going to 'contain' that—and you, instead, rather choose a different course of action for something that is **far more important!** ... you're going to be *meek!*

- And so you see that the *meek inheriting the earth* has NOTHING to do with you in this dispensation of grace whatsoever! — in fact, you ask most Christian folks today: What shall the *meek* inherit? ... and they'll rightly say, THE EARTH! — but they don't have a clue what that means! (they think that means they'll inherit it ... somehow)

- But the issue of *meekness* **IS** for us in this dispensation of grace! Because it's one of the Major Features of Godly Love & Charity!

- And our being *meek* has NOTHING whatsoever to do with us *inheriting the earth!!!* — that's NOT the “far more important and far more meaningful thing” that makes it so we are *meek!*

- But there **IS** something that is far more important and far more meaningful for us that makes it so that we **will** 'contain' our rights to redress; and our power to avenge ourselves—you may have the legal right to *recompense evil for evil*, but there's something **far more important than that**—and the “something” that's far more important is you making an IMPACT that's profitable & beneficial on the one who 'did you evil' (which is why, in your Con. & Beh., you're going to *provide things honest in the sight of all men*) —

— you're going to **provide** that individual with something!

— you don't want to take something FROM him—in fact, you'll actually PAY whatever you can (*as much as lieth in you*) to *live peaceably* with him!

- Because the issue is—there's something **greater** at stake here—and that's the issue of **being able to witness to him and to give him the Gospel of Christ so he can be saved from the debt & penalty of his sins!!!** (i.e., *knowing that the goodness of God leadeth him to repentance!*)

- And that's the same thing with your *enemy*.

- And the same thing applies to the Government in connection this time with preserving and maintaining that *ordinance of God!*

- So, once again, by this point in our Sonship Edification—along with our Father instructing us in fundamental Wisdom (and the ability to make wise Sonship decisions); and instructing us in fundamental Justice (and the ability to make Just Sonship decisions) - as that progressive development has been taking place—Godly Love & Charity has also been progressively developing.

- And at least 4 Major Features have been generated:

1) Selflessness, 2) Kindness, 3) Tenderheartedness, 4) Meekness

- And, again, our 'working definition' of Meekness goes like this:

Meekness is the containment within yourself of your "rights" to redress something because you would rather pursue a course of action that, for some reason, is more important and more meaningful to you.

- And the truth of the matter is—there is a 5th one that has already begun, and will need to be brought out some time in the 1st Component of our instruction of Godly Judgment.

- Now to kind of sum up this issue of Meekness being the next Major Feature in the growth of Godly Love & Charity—I want to remind you of something I said earlier on —

- One of the main reasons why it's so essential to make sure that godly Love & Charity has developed to the point where it's supposed to have developed at the end of the Godly Justice—is because the 1st Component of Godly *Judgment* demands that a level of Godly Love & Charity has been developed and is effectually working—otherwise there will be NO capacity to make Godly Judgments *solely* on the basis of Godly Love!

- And that's why Romans 13:8 says, *Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.*

- And most of the time when ever people deal with verses 8, 9, and 10—they almost always only deal with the fact that whatever is done by Love is well-pleasing in God's sight.

- (Which is perfectly true and right—and I'm not trying to either deny that or to downplay that—because that IS right and true and proper—that's NOT wrong.)

- But Paul didn't need 3 verses to tell you that.

- Truth is—what Paul says in just (:8) alone makes it so that you automatically know that.

- But the reality is — Paul is dealing with much MORE than that!

- And what he says in all 3 verses, is said in a way that is designed to “click” with Godly Love & Charity when it has developed to a point where it has the capacity to make decisions SOLELY on the basis of IT and IT ALONE!!!

- And when it comes to *Judgments*—which is the issue of being able to make a decision upon a matter that requires **discernment** and **discriminating perception**—(because you don't have a ‘clear-cut’ declared response given to you—i.e., you're going to have to figure it out) — Godly Love is therefore expected to develop (in our edification) to a point where it's able to do that!

- And my point in all this is that—the effectual working of Romans 12:3—13:7 (when that's effectually working like it's supposed to), then our Godly Love is in a position to begin making discerning, discriminating decisions all on it's own!

- And therefore, in a sense—what we've arrived at here at then end of Romans 13:7 (and before going on to :8) - is another one of those Sonship Checkpoints—(it's really a **Mild Sonship Checkpoint**).

- And so, therefore, what we're going to have to do at this point—is to kind of put our studies in the book of Romans on “pause” (so to speak) - and we're going to have to do some work back in the Exhortations back in the book of Proverbs.

- And my understanding is that when you reach the end of Romans 13:7, you're at a '**transition point**' - because the corresponding Exhortations & Expectations back in the book of Proverbs indicate that in order to move into the *instruction of Judgment*—the decision-making skill of *Judgment* REQUIRES that you have all of the Godly Wisdom and all of the Godly Justice running well—because it's going to take all of the Godly Wisdom and all of the Godly Justice in order to make the *Judgments*.

- And a father knows that even though the first thing in his son's education is going to be the receiving of the 4 Sonship Decision-Making Skills—the father knows that those 4 skills are actually grouped into 2 sets of 2.

- And therefore when you as a son reach the end of the first 2 Decision-Making Skills—you've come to the point where a LEVEL OF ATTAINMENT has been reached.

- And the skill-sets you've gained, and the additional issues that those skill-sets have produced within you—(in order to not just give you the “doctrine,” but also produce your Father's mind & heart within your own heart) — those first 2 skill-sets (and your heart) are now developed to a point where they can now take on more and even advanced decision-making skill-sets—(the *Judgment*, and the *Equity*).

- And what's going to happen (if you DON'T have the full, effectual working of the Wisdom and the Justice and [at the very least], those first 4 Major Features of Godly Love) - you're going to get into what might be called a 'diminishing return' on all the doctrine in front of you.

- That is, you won't be able to get a sufficient enough effectual working of the *Judgment*—and then you'll get an even lesser amount of the effectual working of the *Equity*—and then you'll just get less and less and less of the end of Level I, and less and less of Level II.

- And, therefore, when it comes to *Equity*—you won't have the capacity to make the kind of equitable judgments you'll be called upon to make—because you're going to be able to not only come along and be able to identify a “weaker brother” as being “weaker” - but you'll also be able to identify what's making him “weak” - and you're going to be able to identify a whole bunch of things **without ASKING bout it!!**

- In *Equity*, you're going to be able to walk that 'fine line' between being a brother **with** him—and NOT being a "tutor and governor" **towards** him!

- And that's going to require all your *Wisdom*, your *Justice*, & your *Judgment* to do that!

- So—we're now at this kind of "Mild" Sonship Checkpoint.

- By now, things (your life) should have changed in a very noticeable way.

- The Father now takes you as His son who has now received the fundamental *instruction of Wisdom* and the fundamental *instruction of Justice*—and at this point you've kind of reached this 'landing' or this Mild Sonship Checkpoint—and it's like He takes his arm and puts it around your shoulders and kind of looks out at how things are going with you right now—and you and Him look at what life is now going to be like as a "son" with Wisdom & Justice.

- And you get to "see" how you'll be looked at by the world when you're MEEK!

- And you get to see what it's going to be like to encounter some opposition from the world—and more importantly, how your own FLESH is going to rise up and oppose your putting your sonship life into practice.

- And all those undesirable traits that the world ascribes to Meekness will now be ascribed to YOU!

- (see/read Matt. 27:35-44)

- Here, the Meekness of the Lord Jesus Christ is put on display. (This is all done in a context of Justice!)

- The Lord was being treated unfairly and unjustly — and He had every right to exercise His Justice against such brutality and injustice being done to Him—**but He doesn't do that!**

- And the reason He doesn't avenge, doesn't recompense, doesn't pour out His wrath ...

... is because He **sees** something and He **desires** something that is far more important to Him than the exercise of that Justice just yet! (REDEMPTION!)

- And so, as He's showing Meekness and holding back that wrath (and is "rejoicing against that judgment") - it's because He has the legal right and righteousness to act judicially if He wants to—but He perceives something else that He considers more important at the moment—and He therefore takes a course of action of Meekness—and He **contains** Himself (He contains His power and authority to execute wrath upon those dealing with Him so unfairly & unjustly).

- He says within Himself, "I've got the power and the authority and the right to judge and execute judgment and wrath, but because of a far more important issue at hand, I'll make the **choice** to **contain** all that for now" — **He's NOT being weak**, He's being Meek— He's not being reluctant; He's not impotent; **HE'S BEING MEEK!** (and the setting is one of Justice!)

- (see/read Psalm 25:1-9ff)

- And one of the many things that David brings up here (and that the Lord Jesus Christ dealt with in His earthly ministry as He provided for the fulfillment of the Redeemer Mandate of the Davidic Covenant; and that the Remnant of Israel will face in the Climactic Stage of God's program with Israel) will be all those things (especially in connection with the injustices done to them) [and is true of the kind of 'dirt' done to you; and the injustices done to you] — are all the things that produce FRUSTRATION in you!

- (and you got a 'taste' of that back in the 6th Component of Wisdom where the Tenderheartedness got developed) - [Romans 12:14]

- Because there, (in Rom. 12:13b, 14) you dealt with situations that could be genuinely **frustrating!**

- And when you're frustrated, you are tempted (either properly, or either improperly) to deal with someone in a way that 'gets them out of your way' (so to speak) - and redresses what they're doing that's frustrating to you.

- And once you've got some experience dealing with that under *Tenderheartedness*—that then paves the way for dealing with it in more intense situations when it's a judicial setting that produces the frustration, with a temptation to respond in a way that addresses what frustrated you. (and **get even** with that one who did you 'dirt').

- Now at this Mild Checkpoint, what we're going to be checking on is:

- 1) The effectual working of the doctrine contained in the 6 Components of the Godly **Wisdom**; [**REVIEW WISDOM!**]

(along with the Positive & Proper response to all 6 Components) [**REVIEW**]

(and along with your recognition of and perception of God's "Grand Design" for the Godly Edification of the Wisdom that's taking place within you) [**REVIEW**]

- 2) The effectual working of the doctrine contained in the 3 Components of the Godly **Justice**; [**REVIEW JUSTICE!**]

(along with your Positive & Proper Response to all 3 Components)

- 3) The progress and growth of Godly Love & Charity.

(that the Selflessness, Kindness, Tenderheartedness, and Meekness is really there)

(and most of all—that there's a steady **increase** of especially the issue of Selflessness that's supposed to be increasing and increasing all along the way).

- **Proverbs 3:21-35**—The Corresponding Exhortations to receiving the *instruction of Justice*.

- REVIEW THE IMPORTANCE OF THE EXHORTATIONS!

- The “mortar” concept. (the exhortations provide for the human spirit to be ‘**primed**’ to receive the information properly—and for that information to become permanent!)

- It’s here that our Father is going to insure that you (as His son/daughter) have responded Positively and Properly to what you’ve just learned.

- But it’s also in the Exhortations that our Father is going to expose a great deal of His own Godly **sentiments**—that is, He’s going to open up to us His “**heart**” on the matter—and therefore we’re going to get a lot of both His zeal, His ambition, and His enthusiasm—His sense of how **valuable** and **important** and **critical** the doctrine is He’s just taught you — as well as His sense of the dangers, opposition, and potential problems that we are apt to face once we’ve learned the doctrine He’s just taught us!

- And therefore, that means that more and more, the Exhortations are going to include the Father’s EXPECTATIONS for how we are to fully put what we’ve learned from Him **into practice** in all of the details of our lives! (**100%**, — not 10% or 50% or 70%)

- Which means that He’s not only going to exhort us and encourage us—but He’s also going to warn us and admonish us according to what we’ve just learned and how it’s going to have some **increased resistance and opposition** from various sources. (because we undergone an increase to our being *conformed to the image of His Son* and an increase in our emulation of **Him**)!

- And that’s a Big Deal to Him, **because He knows what you don’t know** in connection with the kind of opposition and resistance you’re going to get as you put ‘godliness’ into practice and on display in this world! (and how that will affect you!)

- As you scan over the Exhortation to our *instruction of Justice*—there are 5 sections to this Exhortation—marked off by the paragraph markers.
 - And if you paid attention to the structure of the Exhortations to our *instruction of Wisdom*, you'd notice that there are 4 basic sections of Exhortation, followed by a final section (or an addendum) that contains some further information (viz. :13-20).
 - And the Exhortations & Expectations that we receive at the end of our *instruction of Justice* are going to follow that same pattern.
 - And it's critical that you understand and appreciate that our godly Sonship Education (being an issue of Godly EDIFICATION) is NOT going to 'set aside' the *instruction of Wisdom* and merely focus upon the *instruction of Justice*—but rather, **the two** (Wisdom & Justice) are to be looked at as being JOINED TOGETHER (edification-wise) — and they (together) are now going to begin to effectually produce their "fruit"!
 - And just as it was with the Exhortations & Expectations to the Godly Wisdom—(i.e., having 4 sections, followed by an addendum type issue at the end) — our Father's Exhortations & Expectations for our Godly Wisdom & Justice (which is how it's supposed to be looked at) is going to have several sections to it (4 sections) with another 'tagged-on' addendum-type issue that's a further matter that you are expected to benefit from—that by the effectual working of everything you've learned so far in you Sonship Education, gives you the capacity to deal with it to it's fullness.
- Over-Simplified Outline:
 - (:21-26) — Outlines the benefits you're going to get if you keep all that you've learned before you and if you make full use of it.
 - (:27-29) — Exhorts and Admonishes you to 3 things that you're NOT supposed to do, having the effectual working of Godly Wisdom and Justice.
 - (:30) — Admonishes you to not be the source of "strife" toward others, but to maintain a peaceable relationship.

- (:31-32) — Admonishes you to not get ‘sucked-in’ by the temptation to ‘*recompense evil for evil*’ along with the men of this world and their ungodly ‘lower’ order of justice.

- (:33-35) — The Addendum or ‘tagged-on’ further matter—containing 3 matters of positive benefits given by the LORD as the son properly puts his Wisdom & Justice into practice in the details of his life—over against the negative and detrimental actions the LORD will take against the ungodly, lower order of Just actions that the paths of the men of this world take — (there’s a cursing for the *wicked* and a blessing for the *just*; there’s a curse for the *scorner* and a blessing for the *lowly*; there’s a blessing for the *wise* and a cursing for the *fool*.)

- Now, just taking a ‘surface’ reading of this passage—if you were to put your finger on a particular **word** that appears to be a kind of re-occurring ‘theme’ - what single word seems to just ‘stand out’ over all the rest?

- That word “**NOT**”!

(*let them not* — *Be not* — *Withhold not* — *Say not* — *Devise not* — *Strive not* — *Envy thou not*)

- In fact—the word “*not*” occurs 5x in (:1-20) in the Exhortation to Wisdom.

- But it occurs 9x in (:21-35) in our Exhortation to Wisdom & Justice.

- And I point that out because that will give you a sense of the **nature** of these Exhortations and Admonitions.

- And all these “*nots*” tells you that (overall) what the Father has in view here is that you are now going to encounter some very powerful TEMPTATIONS in connection with putting your Godly Wisdom & Justice into practice.

- You’re going to experience the issue of not seeming to “get ahead” while other men of this world **do** get ahead.

- You’re going to experience some problems and frustrations when you DON’T exercise your “rights” to redress something—but in meekness, pursue a course of action that is more important & meaningful to you.

- You're going to experience what it's like to be seemingly 'victimized' by others—all the while seeing them prosper while you're not.

- And the temptation is going to be for you to just start living like LOST people and walking in their paths and avenge yourself and be unjust like they are—and get a benefit NOW, rather than just 'staying the course' and believing that your Father will give you the benefits later on.

- And that means that the nature of the Fatherly Exhortations and Expectations are such that you're given to understand & appreciate that you may not see any benefit right away.

- Now at this point we need to say some things about how we're going to have to handle the information contained in Proverbs 3:21-35 that's very critical for us as we exist now in this present dispensation of grace in which we live as members of the church, the body of Christ.

- We need to understand and appreciate that there are some things said here that are strictly in the context of God's program with Israel - and strictly in the context of the Remnant of Israel having to live out in the Extension of Forbearance & Mercy— and in the first part of the 5th Install. - and there are things said that are germane to them, (exclusively within that setting).

- For example—especially there in (:25 [read]) - that's in their program - there's a promised time when the *desolation of the wicked comes* - (we don't have any such thing in this dispensation of grace).

- Now it's not that what's said in (:25 & 26) has absolutely no value as to the **nature** of what's being set forth there - it's just that you've got to honestly acknowledge the fact that when God wrote this portion of His word and set forth the format for Sonship Education — it's in God's program with Israel.

- (and when we were back in Romans chapter 8, we acknowledged the fact that we're only looking for the FORMAT for Sonship Education as found back in the book of Proverbs - and we're not following the actual doctrine that was given to the Remnant of Israel under God's program with Israel, because that won't help us in this dispensation of grace).

- And so some of the actual doctrinal details just don't fit with our program.

- And that makes it so that what you're after here is the issue of: Why would the Father come along - and after giving His son the instruction in Godly Justice - why would He now have to say some specific things about **it** exhortation-wise and expectation-wise that, even though He's taught the son what He taught him in Godly Justice, why that wouldn't be adequate enough for him to simply move right on to receiving the instruction of Judgment?

- But rather, instead of moving on, there's some uniqueness and some peculiar aspects - and some other matters that come up at the end of the instruction of Godly Justice - (especially since that's all ADDED to and ATTACHED to [edification-wise] the Godly Wisdom you've already received).

- And so when you look at Proverbs 3:21-35 - what we're after here is the issue of WHY are these things said (and not so much as WHAT is actually said) — and the **WHY** of it is applicable to us, even in this dispensation of grace when we've received our instruction of Wisdom and then built upon that, the instruction of Justice.

- And so one of the things we're after here is to take special note of the "TONE" of these Exhortations - (and that will tell us some very critical things).

- And one of the very obvious things about the **tone** of these Exhortations is that - as the Father is admonishing His son (at times), and exhorting His son - He makes it clear that REAL TEMPTATION is going to come his way!

- Now before moving on and looking further at the Fatherly Exhortations & Expectations at the end of receiving the instruction of Justice—I want to say some things in connection with how the Exhortations are structured at this point.

- And what I'm after here is that—at this Sonship Checkpoint, because of the critical point which you are at in your Sonship Education, it makes it necessary for the Father to exhort you a bit differently than He has before.

- And basically (and very simply put), because of what is going to take place next (in the instruction of *Judgment and Equity*) - the

Exhortations are going to do 2 things (and are going to be put into 2 groupings):

1) The Exhortations of Proverbs 3:21-35 are going to function as a “look back” as to what you’ve just learned with receiving the instruction of Wisdom and Justice.

- And while the nature of what is said there certainly deals with some real temptations that you (as a son) are going to have—those temptations are not really of the nature that stems from sin in your members, or from an increased opposition from the Policy of Evil—but rather are temptations & problems that stem from not making full use of the doctrine you just learned.

- But then—for the first time in the book of Proverbs—in chapter 4:1 you don’t have a “My son” - but you have “*Hear, ye children, ...*”

- And there are some 1) unique features behind Proverbs 4:1-9 that act, not so much as a Pre-Doctrinal Exhortation—but as a “Checkpoint” to ensure that all the Sonship doctrine you have learned is up and running well - all in preparation to the receiving *the instruction of Judgment*—and that’s the 2nd thing that these Exhortations are going to do.

2) The Exhortations of Proverbs 4:1-9 are going to function as a “look forward” and act as the actual “Checkpoint” in which you’re going to have to ensure that everything is running well up to this point — and to get an awareness of even greater temptations that you are going to face that mainly focus upon the increased resistance from sin in your members—but also looking forward to having to deal with resistance from the Satanic Policy of Evil.

- Now saying that—it should be understood that while real temptation is going to be faced by you at the end of Justice—that temptation is of a nature or of a variety that isn’t coming from sin in your members per se.

- (read Pro. 3:21-26)

- (:21) is an Admonition & wise counsel from the Father to the son to make FULL USE out of the instruction of the Godly Wisdom & Justice he’s just been given—and NOT to ‘cherry pick’ it!

- That is, to “***keep*** *sound wisdom and discretion*” - meaning, to keep what you’ve learned in Wisdom & Justice ever before you—that everything your eyes ‘see’ - you see through the ‘eyes of your understanding’ of the Wisdom & the Justice doctrines you’ve just been given.

- And the BIG THING in all this Post-Doctrinal Exhortation to Justice is that issue of making **FULL USE** of the Wisdom and the Justice in your Sonship Decision Making.

- And the temptation is going to be to only do **part** of it—i.e., the parts that you’re most comfortable with.

- And with both Wisdom & Justice **combined** (giving you some real *discretion*)—you’re to carefully weigh the facts of every situation and circumstance of your functional life—and avoid the danger of reacting according to the dictates of your flesh (i.e., not thinking *soberly*)—but with *discretion*, to therefore regulate your Conduct & Behavior according to the Godly Thinking you’ve received and then actually DO the work of the Godly Labor with your Heavenly Father—**and do it FULLY!**

- And especially in those Justice type situations—they’re going to present some *challenges* to you—because they may ‘hit a nerve’ or touch upon some things that are so ingrained in you by the natural sense of Justice (and sense of fairness) that you received from the course of this world—and since you haven’t really had a lot of *experience* with putting those Major Features of Godly Love and Charity into practice (especially the Meekness) — the temptation is going to be to HOLD BACK the actual DOING of the Godly Labor!

- And the Father knows that’s going to be the tendency of His son at this point (due to his lack of experience) - and so He wisely admonishes His son accordingly.

- (:22-26) goes on to outline the benefits of keeping all that you’ve learned always and ever before you (as your heart is ever increasing and being ‘enlarged’ with more and more pages of the book of your soul being written—and ever increasing in becoming the living ‘epistle of Christ’ [II Cor. 3:3], and again, making full use of the Sonship Curriculum.

- As (:22) says—the *wisdom and discretion* shall be *life* (functional life) *to your soul, and grace to your neck* (i.e., you’re more and more being *conformed to the image of Christ*)! [that’s how He T,L, Labors]

- And it's in those Justice situations—where, more often than not, you're going to be in a situation where real **frustration** can occur—because you're going to be on the receiving end of some injustices that kind of 'eat' at you—and gripe you—and burn you up (so to speak) — and that's where you are going to be naturally tempted to come along and easily decide: “All right, I won't *recompense evil for evil*—**but I sure don't feel like doing the “good”!**” (Rom.12:21)

- And the truth of the matter is—and the thing we've got to honestly face up to is—that, by nature, and by our natural sense of our lower order of Justice we've acquired from the course of this world: WE'RE JUST NOT VERY GOOD AT NOT GETTING “EVEN” WHEN SOMEBODY DOES “EVIL” TO US! (We're just not very good at naturally **not** avenging ourselves!) — [We're just not very good at being Meek!]

- And, folks, what all this boils down to is: In Justice-type situations, (more often than not), you're going to have the tendency to be **RELUCTANT** to put the Godly Thinking, Living, & Labor of Godly Justice into practice, FULLY!

- And that's what the bulk of this Exhortation of Prov. 3:21-35 is all about! (It's about the son's natural **RELUCTANCE** to make FULL USE of the Wisdom and the Justice he's just been taught!)

- Example of Reluctance: see Matt. 11:28-30 (following on the heels of comparing the Gentiles w/the VRS of Isr.—note the Meek issue) — then see Matt. 15:21-28 (the Gentile woman).

- When it comes to making sound, *discretionary*, Just decisions—there is a natural **Reluctance** component that's very likely to develop.

- And that's primarily because you're going to find yourself dealing with people in a potentially 'hostile' situation.

- For example—Romans 12:17 (1st Component)
“*Recompense to no man evil for evil.*”

- Someone has done *evil* to you—and the natural tendency is to Pay them Back in kind—but the Godly Thinking effectually works in you — and the Godly Love & Charity effectually works in you as well—and so that all makes it so you 'put the brakes' on paying them back.

- **But that's only one half of what's going on in that instruction of Godly Justice** with respect to common, every-day Justice situations with men.

- Because the other half of it is to take that Godly Meekness—and it wants to pursue a different course—rather than pursuing a course of retaliation, getting even, paying back, etc., — it wants to pursue a course of **honesty** (as Paul says) - “*Provide things **honest** in the sight of all men.*”

- And just to put it this way—that takes some GUTS to do that—in a situation in which a person in whose eyes you’re going to provide that **honesty** is NOT going to receive it well! (or at least not right away)

- (and what you’re trying to do is to disarm the situation and not make it any worse) - and you don’t really have any way of knowing if that’s going to take place—that’s why the Godly Labor is: ***If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.*** — but sometimes it’s NOT going to be possible—but the issue is, if it’s not going to be possible, it’s not to be your fault!

- But because you’re in a situation in which the ability for the situation to become one that is actually PROFITABLE to the one who’s done you *evil*—since the matter entirely rests upon THEIR volition—and therefore the moment you get past the Godly Thinking and endeavor to put into effect the Godly Conduct & Behavior and Labor together with God in pursuing that course that makes for peace — the situation is really out of your hands.

- And because that’s the kind of situation you’re in—there can easily be a bit of **reluctance** or apprehension for fully following through on providing for the individual you’re dealing with to end up living *peaceably* with you.

- And remember that when it says to *Recompense to no man evil for evil* — that word “*evil*” is being used in a very generic and broad way—and it covers the whole gamut of things that can fall under that category of things that are *evil*.

- Some of which are going to be rather mild—and aren’t really all that hurtful or offensive—but they’re still *evil*—and they still produce a measure of irritation; a measure of annoyance; a measure of bothersome-ness; or a measure of hurt to you, but it just might not be all that bad.

- But then you could have something *evil* on the other end of the scale—and it could be intensely hurtful; intensely bothersome and troublesome—it could be mentally painful; maybe even physically painful.

- But my point is—that when we realize what’s potentially involved in that “*evil*” concept there—you can find yourself, therefore, in a situation in which you may have no trouble at all ‘*not recompensing evil for evil*’ - **but when it comes to ‘*providing things honest*’ in the sight of that guy—and doing everything within your power (as much as lieth in you) to live peaceably with that guy—that’s when you might become RELUCTANT (not as enthusiastic) to follow through on that in all the potential you have at your disposal to follow through on it!**

- And that’s what’s behind those Exhortations that correspond with the instruction of Godly Justice.

- That Rom. 12:17 issue matches up perfectly with Proverbs 3:27ff. (*Withhold not good from them to whom it is due, when it is in the power of thine hand to do it.*)

- And without really having any experience of going through what it’s like to be on the receiving end of the *evil* or the ‘dirt’ that men can do to you (with this *instruction of Justice*)—even when it’s in that ‘mild’ form—at first glance, you would tend to think: Why would my Father say that to me? Why would I “*withhold*” the “*good*”?

- And even though there’s going to be an increase of resistance from sin in your members—more often than not, at this point in which you’re strictly dealing with JUSTICE type situations—and with you being on the receiving end of something from someone that **isn’t “good”** - that hasn’t been profitable to you; that has been bothersome and troublesome to you — and on top of that, it wasn’t done to you as some kind of a practical joke, but it was done to you **with evil intent**—and the person who did it isn’t smiling at you—in fact he may sneer at you; snarl at you and things along those lines....

- And therefore when it comes to the issue of doing that “*good*” — when it comes to the issue of taking that Godly Love & Charity (with the Meekness now being developed) and then putting that into practice in a Justice-type situation—(where you’re now containing any desire to recompense back to him the evil he did to you ... and

... you're in a situation where you're NOT going to retaliate because there's something GREATER at stake—and the greater issue at stake is the issue of now **manifesting the Attitude of God Himself towards that individual**—[which is one of NOT retaliating and getting even with him and making him pay the penalty for his *evil*, right now— but to now extend *peace* to him] ...

... in view of that kind of a situation, there can be some resistance—not that you don't WANT to do it—but there could be some timidity in connection with it—a measure of apprehension in connection with it—and also your imagination can easily get in the way here—(i.e., “I just can't imagine that this is going to work”) - producing some doubt and some hesitation.

- And on top of that—you have the burden (in a good sense) of the work involved in Romans 12:18 where the onus of responsibility is placed upon us! — “*If it be possible*” (i.e., we're to take every action we can think of to take to live *peaceably*) — and we're Laboring together with God to provide for *peace* to exist—and not for any more *evil* to be done.

- Well, the truth is—you can very easily end up with either a bit, or a great deal of **RELUCTANCE** !

- And that Reluctance could largely be due to either the lack of **experience** with these Justice-type situations—or the fact that the *evil* that's done to you could have a measure of strong intimidation to it.

- But this is what that TONE to these Exhortations is all about (especially in Proverbs 3:27-29) - that's an Exhortation with an Admonition TONE to it that describes a Reluctance that the son is likely to have at this point—(that is, to '*withhold the good*')!

- And when you *withhold* something, it's not that you're denying it to the person—nor is it that your thinking is such that you've never entertained the thought of doing them *good* (because the Godly Thinking makes it so you have) - and more than that, it's actually '*in the power of thine hand to do it*'!

- So it really comes down to the issue of allowing a Sonship Grace Opportunity to pass you by!

- And then (:28) comes along and says—*Say not to they neighbour, Go, and come again, and to morrow I will give; when thou hast it by thee.* — and that’s **procrastination!** - and it’s like you come up with the excuse that you’ll do it, **but not now**—I’ll do it **tomorrow!**

- Notice that it’s not the issue of being repulsed with your neighbour—or saying to him, ‘Get out of here! I don’t want you around me any more!’ ... it’s not that you **won’t** do it, it’s just that you **PUT IT OFF FOR ANOTHER TIME!**

- And “**time**” is going to be a big deal coming up!

- But the “root” that’s behind anything of a procrastinating nature is because of **RELUCTANCE** for some reason.

- And **reluctance** is a ‘resort’ that your thoughts come to, when, for some reason you find what you are intending to do **uncomfortable to you!** (or unpleasant to you)

- (**Not** that you find it **wrong**—in fact, the thing is, you know it’s **RIGHT!**)

- But something is making you uncomfortable—and reluctance is based upon the issue of something making you uncomfortable.

- And therefore, the issue is that you’ve done everything necessary for you to do the “*good*” you know you should do— but when it actually comes down to doing it — **you don’t make that final step and actually DO IT!**

- And the truth is—that’s an **easy** thing to take place—and that’s a **natural** thing to occur in these Justice-type situations.

- And it’s not like it’s some kind of sinful disobedience (because the nature of the Exhortations would be different) — but it’s dealing with a natural reluctance to make **FULL USE** of the doctrine you’ve been taught!

- The Father comes along and says, Look son, I know something about this—I know what’s going to happen to you—I know that the nature of Godly Justice-type situations are ones in which the person that you are dealing with has not been treating you right or well ...

... and it's one thing to come along, and on the basis of your Meekness, *not recompense evil for evil*—**but that's NOT all that Godly Justice does!**

- Godly Justice comes along and says, Instead of pursuing the course of 'getting even' with you—I'm going to pursue the course of making PEACE with you! (and *providing things honest* in your sight!)

- And folks—this is some real 'rubber-meets-the-road' type Sonship Decision-Making that has you experiencing (and that gives you the experiential training) to choose a path—and take it to its FULLNESS!

- And in a sense—this has you taking a Risk—you're going to take the risk of *providing some things honest* in the *sight* of this individual who may just laugh in your face—or who might be even more infuriated—**but there's the potential that it's going to pacify him!** (that is, 'pacify' him in the sense of being able to live *peaceably* with him—**because there's other things to get done with him!**)

- If he's an unjustified man—then the issue is to provide the avenue for presenting the Gospel of Christ to him!

- But the point here is to make you aware of a natural reluctance that is very likely to take place—but what's great about that is, that there's information contained in the *instruction of Justice* that provides for OVERCOMING that natural reluctance!

- And that's the issue of always perceiving the **"GOOD"**! and the *good* is the course of action you take that *provides things honest* (the truth and the reality of who you really are as a son "in Christ"); and whatever Labor you undertake to work with God to make it so that you *live peaceably* with that individual.

- And that's what dominates your thinking! And that's what overcomes the reluctance!

- And that same type of thing also applies to the 2nd Component of our *instruction of Justice* there in Romans 12:19-21 (read).

- And if you have trouble with reluctance in the 1st Component, then you'll really have trouble with it in the 2nd!

- Any Questions? Comments? so far?

Well, when you fail to do the *good* - that's all fine and well with the world — because there are those in the world that are *despisers of those that are good* (see II Tim. 3:3) - and therefore the easy course of action is to (**at best**) just come along and put the brakes on the Godly Labor! - and it's easy for us to be satisfied with LESS THAN MAKING FULL USE of what we've been instructed to do!

- And being tempted to do less than the fullness of what the doctrine provided for to take place - that becomes an even bigger issue under the instruction of Godly *Judgment* - and it becomes a bigger issue under the instruction of Godly *Equity* (which is why the instruction of *Equity* is the most extensive of them all) - because the situations that demand *Equity* are going to be ones where we are **tempted to the greatest degree to only do the minimum!**

- (And that's one of the reasons why in *the instruction of Equity* are built in to it almost all of the Exhortations & Expectations that are sitting back in Proverbs that correspond to it)!

- And that's because the temptation is going to be so strong there to not follow through **completely!**

- And the Exhortations of Proverbs 3:21-35 are to put that Meekness to its **full use** - because by **not** making full use of the Meekness, you're **holding back** what you *could* legally do - but you've chosen to NOT hold back that Meekness because something else is of greater importance - and based upon your **selflessness** and based upon the fact that you value & esteem the individual that's done you *the evil* (and what **he** needs rather than what you need) as more important: then you're Meek - and based upon that Meekness, therefore, you are to **follow through** on doing that thing that is of greater importance.

- And so, if it's *in the power of thine hand to do it*: then DO IT! DON'T PROCRASTINATE!

- And what that does (and why this is such a big deal with the Father) is - by doing it, you gain the EXPERIENCE - and with that experience of putting Meekness into practice (and following through with it) come all of the **skills** of Meekness - and without those skills, you're not going to have the necessary skills that are required for your *instruction of Godly Judgment* - because those skill require **all** of the skills that come from the Godly *Wisdom* and the Godly *Justice*.

- In fact, all of the Judgments that you're going to make in Godly *Judgment* are NOT 'arm chair' type judgments! -- They are judgments that have you out there DOING SOMETHING!

- So therefore—one of the last things that you have to do at the point of this Post-Doctrinal Exhortation to *receiving the instruction of Justice* is to carefully consider and honestly evaluate (not only the effectual working of the doctrine you've been taught) - but also (and just as importantly) consider & evaluate **the growth of the Godly Love and Charity** that has begun to develop in your inner man.

- In other words—make sure that the Selflessness, the Lovingkindness, the Tenderheartedness, and the Meekness are **really** there and running well.

- (That those things aren't just 'theory' to you—but they are a **real, genuine, living reality!!!**)

- And perhaps the most critical thing of all—(when it comes to you being able to successfully pass this Sonship Checkpoint) - is that the Godly Love & Charity has **grown** to the point where, by means of those 4 Major Features & Characteristics of Godly Love—you can begin to make some Wise and Just and Discretionary Sonship decisions based upon valuing and esteeming things just exactly like your Father does (and like His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ does)!

- And this is so critical because by the time you get to the end of Justice—you now have at least 9 areas of Godly Thinking and 9 areas of Godly Conduct & Behavior under your belt—(6 Components of Wisdom and 3 Components of Justice) - and more than that, you've got 9 areas where you are going to be Laboring and working together with God in His business—and that means that you are DOING some things—you're putting your functional, sanctified, sonship life into practice!

- But your Father puts a premium upon not just the **doing** or the labor aspect of your sanctified, functional, sonship life—but He puts a premium upon **doing it HIS WAY**—which means with His reasons for doing it; and with His Godly Attitude for doing it—which boils down to the issue of putting your sanctified sonship life into practice (with all of its Wisdom & Justice) by means of (and based upon) making full use of **Godly Love and Charity**!

- You have to ‘check’ to see that that Godly Love & Charity is SOUND and that your Godly Thinking in connection with Godly Love is always SOBER (without any influence of the course and wisdom of this world, but solely under the influence of how your Father thinks and how He generated it in your inner man)!

- And that’s such a critical matter because it’s quite possible to carry out the Godly Conduct & Behavior and the Godly Labor aspects of those 9 areas you’ve just learned about—and without the proper function of the Godly Love, **it counts for NOTHING! (it’s “good for nothing” - pointless and worthless in the eyes of God!)**

- And therefore it’s quite possible to have the old principle or axiom apply in that kind of a situation where: A RIGHT THING, DONE IN A WRONG WAY, STILL MAKES IT WRONG!

- It comes down to the difference between academic learning (or simply a mental acknowledging) of the issue [i.e., you could give the ‘right’ answer on a test]—and actually being “*led by the Spirit of God*”!

- Because of all the ministries of the Holy Spirit—the most excellent ministry of the Holy Spirit of all, is His ministry of Godly Love and Charity!

- (see I Corinthians 13 [whole chapter])

- In chapter 13—Paul begins to amplify upon that and show to the Corinthians what the *more excellent way* is that he just talked about at the end of chapter 12.

- Chapter 13 is broken down into 2 main Parts:

- Part 1 = (:1-7)

- Part 2—(:8-13)

- Paul is first of all going to talk about—and really, bring back into the minds of the Corinthian saints—the fundamental and foundational (and really, the most important of all) doctrines they’ve ever learned in their sonship education—**godly love and charity!**

- And it's critical to always appreciate the fact that, while your Father has taken you under His wing (so to speak) - and while He has now begun to personally instruct you as His son—it's still His **Spirit** that is *leading* you through the curriculum!

- And you need to appreciate the fact that the Holy Spirit has an important and integral roll to play in godly, sonship edification as well—and it is a roll that **goes on all the time that the education takes place!**

- Therefore, all the while sonship education is going on—God the Holy Spirit has several **ministries** to perform.

- And when it comes to the Holy Spirit's ministry to produce Godly Love & Charity—that all has to do with the kind of **POWER** you gain for getting your Father's norms and standards for what He values and for what He esteems.

- And when you've got the doctrine from the instruction of Wisdom & Justice ALONG WITH the proper growth of Godly Love & Charity—that gives you some incredibly powerful skill-sets for making proper Sonship decisions to the 'pleasure' of your Heavenly Father.

- In fact, godly love is so important and so critical and so powerful & necessary to a son's ability to make critical sonship decisions—that the issue of godly love & charity is brought into the picture here in I Cor. 13 in order to provide the Corinthians the ability to '**right themselves**' and to appreciate the permanent provision of *the more excellent way* of having in their hand the completed word of God that will replace the less excellent way of those temporary sp. gifts.

- Now I say all that just to say that when you think about being taught godly love from the very beginning of your sonship education—and you think about how the Holy Spirit has a roll to play in that—then you should recognize that producing godly love in you is one of the first **ministries** (education-wise) that the Holy Spirit performs in your inner man.

- In fact—just to underscore the importance of the proper growth & development of Godly Love as the most excellent ministry that the Holy Spirit has as He *leads* you through the curriculum and then *writes it upon the fleshy tables of your heart*—as you take Godly Love along with the doctrine you’re taught, and you begin to express it by your behavior and by laboring with that godly love **with** your Father in His business—what is your labor? what does your labor consist of? what does your labor produce? what other terminology can you say to express that?

*(Rom. 6:22) But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your **fruit unto holiness**, and the end everlasting life.*

- The use of godly love in the Labor aspect of your sonship life—can truly be said to be **fruit unto holiness**.

- And the Holy Spirit has a roll or ministry in producing that *fruit* of godly love.

- Now with those kind of connections being made—it should come as no surprise to you that when Paul (later on) lists the “*fruit of the Spirit*” - what is in the #1 ranking position?

*(Gal. 5:22) But the fruit of the Spirit is **love**, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: ...*

- So therefore what you’ve got here in I Corinthians 13:1-7 — you’ve got the apostle Paul talking about **the most excellent ministry** that the Holy Spirit has.

- Actually, the Corinthians were looking at the sp. gifts as the most excellent ministry that the Holy Spirit had to them—and the most excellent ‘point of contact’ (so to speak) with the Holy Ghost. (of us, it would be those “*offices*”)

- But Paul will show in the first 7 verses that that’s NOT right! — but that there’s a whole other ministry that the Holy Spirit has that they’ve seem to have forgotten—(or at least they’re ignoring it) - and it’s the most excellent ministry of all, that the Holy Spirit has: and it is **charity** (godly love & charity)!

- And then beginning at (:8) - once Paul says what he does in (:1-7), he comes along and says, This most excellent ministry that the Holy Spirit has **will NEVER be done away with!**

- And it will **never** be replaced by some other ministry!

- But that's NOT true about the spiritual gifts—they **are** going to be done away—and they **are** going to be replaced with a more *excellent way* for accomplishing the *operations of God* that they're designed to accomplish.

- And that's the flow or sense & sequence to ch. 13—and you need to appreciate that.

- Let's look now at (:1-7) - and that most excellent ministry that the Holy Spirit has that will never fail or be done away with.

- (read :1-3)

- You see that Paul is talking about those sp. gifts (just as he has been since ch. 12) — but now he's going to have the Corinthians look at them, not only in connection with the *operations of God* and ranking them in order of importance as far as the local assembly is concerned — but now Paul is going to have them look at these sp. gifts with a view to recognize that they're not the **only** ministry of the Holy Spirit.

- And there's a ministry that the Holy Spirit has—that when you put it up against these sp. gifts—that if you had **all** these sp. gifts, but didn't have the benefit of this ministry, then you're **nothing** but a whole bunch of noise (*sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal*) - and on top of that it profits you **nothing!**

- Now there's an 'eye-opener'! — there's a ministry of the Holy Spirit that **exceeds** the possession of ANY sp. gift! — and if you don't have this ministry of the Holy Spirit then you're just spinning your wheels and **wasting** your time—and even if you have ALL the sp. gifts (or Laboring with God in those offices) **without** this ministry, then you're not even getting to first base with what God wants to do with you!!!

- So what in the world is this more excellent ministry of the Holy Spirit? — well, what's Paul comparing all these sp. gifts to? — **CHARITY!!!** (Godly Love & Charity)

- **charity** = (ἀγάπη) - love—and today we almost always think of *charity* as giving to the poor/needy — (which is a legitimate expression of *charity* [:3]) — but *charity* is a mental attitude of godly love in which you value and esteem someone or something to such a high degree that you value and esteem it (or him/her) **MORE THAN YOURSELF**—so that you are willing to give up of yourself for their benefit.
- And that's God's attitude—that's the fundamental and comprehensive concept for godliness and **sonship!**
- That's why it's the **first thing** you're taught as a son when you receive the *instruction of wisdom* from your Father—which is to think, behave, and labor like your Father does Himself—with godly love!
- And that's why the most excellent ministry of the Holy Spirit to you as your Father's son—is to first and foremost generate in you, and install in your heart godly love and charity! (to teach you to think and act and walk *charitably*—like God does, Himself)!
- And folks this is why you are confronted with the issue of God's **love** the way you are in the book of Romans! (progressive development)
 - Romans 5:5—*And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.* (and then Paul amplifies upon that in [:6-10])
 - And you get that information at the **end** of the Doc. of your Justification and its results—because you can't go anywhere in your edification until you learn to love like God does—and how much He first of all values and esteems YOU by justifying you unto eternal life!
 - And that's going to be the basis upon which you're going to value and esteem other members of the church the body of Christ — and ALL men!
- And this is why you get (as the very first component to your sonship education in the *instruction of wisdom* the issue of God's love in Romans 12:3-16! (**Selflessness**))

- Again, in connection with *godly love & charity*—there’s a progressive development going on to it all —

- Once the foundation is laid of how much God values and esteems (*loves*) YOU in connection with providing you full assurance of your justified status (and the permanency of it) — and the first thing you are able to value and esteem like God does it to value & esteem the cross-work of the Lord Jesus Christ and its benefits to you **like God does!**

- Then you learn to value & esteem your sanctified position “in Christ” - which is to say, you learn to value & esteem your **sonship status** so that you come to possess “*the love of Christ*” — and you come to love your sonship life and the aims, goals, and objectives of it just like Christ Himself does and **just like your Father does!** (which is what happens from Romans 8:14-39)!

- And then as you begin your sonship education—you come to value & esteem other members of the church the body of Christ that are members of the local assembly with you—**just like God does!** (Selflessness: in Romans 12:3-8)!

- And that’s followed by coming to value & esteem other members of the church, the body of Christ with Godly Lovingkindness (in Romans 12:9-10)—and then valuing & esteeming both saints and lost people with Tenderheartedness (in Romans 12:13-15) - and then the 4th Major Feature of Godly Love gets generated in our *instruction of Justice*—which is the Godly Meekness (in Romans 12:17-13:7).

- But my point here is simply to point out that this *charity* issue in I Cor. 13 doesn’t just happen ‘out of the blue’ - but all along our Father has been setting before us this most excellent ministry of the His Spirit that has to do with us receiving godly love & charity—and by valuing & esteeming the way God does, we gain the comprehension of what godliness is all about!

- And hopefully by the little that we’ve covered—you should, to some degree, have some appreciation for the **huge impact** that the statement you come to in I Corinthians 13:8 should have upon you:

Charity never faileth: ...

- And so important is this issue of this most excellent ministry of the Holy Ghost—that if you're not allowing your Father to teach you to value & esteem as He does—it doesn't make one bit of difference whether you were to have ALL the sp. gifts that there are—because if that's the case, you're nothing but a **noise-maker** and you're doing nothing to help anyone else out—and it's not profiting you one bit to have those things!

- And folks, that means that even when the sp. gifts *were* in operation: even then, they were **NOT** the BIG issue!!!

- And this is what Paul is after in those first 7 verses of I Cor. 13.

- (read :4-7) - Here Paul gives the Corinthians a synopsis description of the *charity* of God—and the effectual working of the education of the *charity* of God in their lives (and the *fruit* it's designed to bear and the displays of that *charity* of God) - and those displays are all displays of **godliness**.

- And the reason why Paul cites *those* things as the display of godly love & charity is that it puts on display to the Corinthians that they've been 'missing the boat' on this most excellent ministry of the Holy Spirit.

- Because if you go through I & II Cor., you see all kinds of examples of them being **NOT** being *longsuffering* with one another; not being *kind* to one another; *envying*, yes; *vaunting* themselves, yes; *puffed up*, yes—and so on down the list!

- Paul manifests to them that they're not benefitting from this most excellent ministry of the Holy Spirit.

- And more than that—every single *operation of God* that He wanted to get accomplished in that assembly **was at a standstill!!!** (Nothing beneficial was taking place)!

- They were so **spiritually screwed up** because of their ignorance and the effects of the Satanic PoE amongst them—that the **best** thing the Holy Spirit could ever do for them: **they weren't benefitting from!!!**

- And they needed to see that—and they also needed to see that this most excellent ministry of the Holy Spirit (teaching godly love & charity) **will never cease to be the Spirit's most excellent ministry!**

- (read :8-13)

- (:8) - *Charity never faileth*: — **faileth** = *fail* is used here in a way that we often don't use it (although it still is used this way today, but rarely) — and when Paul says *but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail*—that doesn't mean that they will fail to come to pass —

- But the word *fail* here is used in the sense of when we would talk about an oil well *failing* or a well of water *failing*—the well **failed**—that doesn't mean that the well “didn't come to pass” - no—it means that the well ran out of water or ran out of oil—**it dried up**—and it's *failing* to give what it originally had to give—it doesn't have anything more *to* give.

- And the issue here is that *charity never faileth*—i.e., this most excellent ministry of the Holy Spirit (to teach you godly love & charity) - that's NEVER going to “run out” — there never will come a time when that's not going to have something to give.

- And there will never come a time when *charity* will cease being a service and ministry of the Holy Spirit.

- And that's never going to **not** be something that the Holy Spirit is in the process of doing with you and me as members of the church, the body of Christ!

- **BUT** ... that is NOT true when it comes to those sp. gifts!!!

- ALL of the spiritual gifts will be done away! — some of them will *fail*—some of them will *cease*—some of them will *vanish away*— but ALL of them are going to be replaced with something **more excellent**.

- There was a *more excellent way* (designed by God) that would be the means to accomplish what God once accomplished by means of those sp. gifts —

- Instead of sp. gifts, the **more excellent way** would be the **means** to accomplish the *differences of administrations* to the Lord—and ultimately the *more excellent way* would be the **means** to accomplish the *diversities of the operations* of God!

- And folks—that makes *the more excellent way* the most vital thing there is in existence in either the physical world or the spiritual world for godly sonship edification to take place!

- In fact, (just as “vital” implies) - it’s a matter of LIFE OR DEATH (functional life or functional death)!

- And that’s just what Paul sets forth in the remainder of (:8) and down through (:13).

- (:8) *Charity never faileth: **but** (adversative conj.) whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away.*

- This is the declaration by the apostle Paul that this method of sp. gifts are going to *fail*—and run out—and have nothing more to give—they are going to become unnecessary & useless—and the Holy Spirit is no longer going to be operating with them.

- Now notice in (:8) that you have 3 gifts mentions as going to be done away with—(*prophecies, tongues, and knowledge*) - Why these 3? and does this mean that only these 3 will be done away with, but all the others will still be in operation?

- My understanding is that Paul mentions these 3 to represent the entire list of sp. gifts that were mentioned back in 12:8-10.

- And again, this is **my understanding**—that the sp. gifts listed in 12:8-10 are grouped together into 3 groups— (#1 *wisdom & knowledge*—#2 *faith, healings, miracles, prophecy, & discerning of spirits*—#3 *tongues & the interpretation of tongues*) — and Paul takes one gift out of the 3 groups (i.e., *prophecies, tongues, & knowledge*) to represent all 3 groups or **all** the spiritual gifts.

- And there are going to be 3 shades of meaning to the “*done away*” concept that applies to those 3 groups—

- The group that has to do with *prophecies* (*faith, healings, miracles, prophecy, discerning of spirits*) — *they shall **fail***—they’re going to run out; and have nothing more to give; and become unnecessary.

- The group that is represented by the gift of *tongues* (*tongues & the interpretation of tongues*)— *they shall cease*—they're tied to a particular event, that when it occurs, they're going to just come to an abrupt stop!

- And the gifts that are represented by the gift of *knowledge* (*wisdom & knowledge*) — they're going to *vanish away* — they just disappear—you're going to look for them someday, and they're just not going to be there any more.

- And there's some fascinating things to study out about how these things historically occurred.

- And we'll see some more (and perhaps even greater) evidence that not just a *few* sp. gifts (or *part* of the sp. gifts) were *done away*—but **ALL** the sp. gifts were *done away* when the *more excellent way* was come in—but we'll see that as we go on through the remaining verses of ch. 13.

- But the issue here is that **ALL** the sp. gifts are going to be *done away* — (the process of doing away with them will be different as each group was *done away*—due to the impact that was being made as God replaced the *diversity of gifts* with the *more excellent way*).

- But the point is to contrast the temporary, less excellent way (of sp. gifts) with the permanent, most excellent ministry of the Holy Spirit: the teaching of godly love and *charity* (which ***never faileth!***)!

- And that most excellent ministry of the Holy Spirit will continue on throughout the duration of this disp. of grace!

- Now—**why** is that going to take place? - why are the *prophecies* going to *fail*? — why are the *tongues* going to *cease*? — why will the *knowledge* *vanish away*? ...

A: (:9) - *For we know in part, and we prophesy in part.*

- At the time in which the sp. gifts were in operation—this was the situation—and that situation was that they had only a **PARTIAL** understanding—and they possessed only a **PARTIAL** knowledge that God wanted them to possess as members of the church, the body of Christ.

- And in accordance with that, they could only *prophecy in part*—(and really all of the gifts were functioning in view of that and in accordance with that).

- And those sp. gifts were working to bring about a time in which their *knowledge* and understanding would no longer be '*partial*'!

- And folks, that means that any or all of the spiritual gifts (and their functions) is a tell-tale indicator of the fact **that they didn't have all of the information** (or knowledge or understanding) **that God wanted them to have!**

- And that means that if you're attempting to function in any or all of these sp. gifts today—by default, that's an **admission** on your part (if you're going to be honest about it) - that's an admission on your part that you only "*known in part*" - and you're admitting that **you don't have all God wants you to have knowledge-wise** — and that's an admission that **you don't have the complete word of God!!!**
(*which is an INSULT to God!*)

- And folks—that's how, by Satan counterfeiting the spiritual gifts today is an outright **attack** upon the word of God—an attack upon the completed word of God!

- But in Paul's day—as more & more of the *knowledge* comes, eventually their '*partial*' knowledge will no longer be '*partial*'! (eventually, it's going to be *complete*!!!)

- Eventually God is going to communicate all He wants to communicate to us, as the members of the church the body of Christ: **and when THAT time comes, there's not going to be any need for those spiritual gifts!**

- And when that time comes—you'll be possessors of something *more excellent* than any or all of those sp. gifts!

- You'll be possessors of a far superior way for God to accomplish the *diversity* of His *operations*!

- Now that's the **why**—but now **when** will that happen?

A: (:10) *But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.*

- **“that which is perfect”** - What ever the “that” is here in (:10) - that is described as “perfect” —when you can identify it and define it— that IS *the more excellent way!*

- And “that which is perfect” is the antithesis (or exact opposite) of the ‘*knowing-in-part*’ (or partial knowledge) situation in (:9)!

- Now most critics of the Bible—and the position of those who would argue that sp. gifts are still in operation today— will say that what Paul is talking about in the phrase “*that which is perfect*” is the Lord Jesus Christ Himself.

- And so their reasoning is that—all the sp. gifts have to be still in operation today—because Paul says they’ll be in operation until “*that which is perfect*” (or the Lord Jesus Christ) “*is come*” - that is, the sp. gifts will be in operation until the Lord Jesus Christ comes back at His second coming to set up and establish His kingdom on this earth!

- And so there is a raging debate going on—especially between Charismatics/Pentecostals/Apostolic types and those who believe that some or all of the sp. gifts were only temporary and have now been *done away*.

- And a great deal of the controversy and the confusion and the debate—centers upon this very issue: Just what is “*that which is perfect*”???

- Some (including myself, at one time) will try to make their case from the “original Greek” — but the problem there is that you end up being inconsistent with how you handle other passages of God’s word—so the best thing to do is to jettison that way to make your case, and stick with a far better method of doing it than by going to the Greek.

- A far better way for understanding and appreciating who or what “*that which is perfect*” is—is to pay attention to the CONTEXT and allow the context to tell you the identity of “*that which is perfect.*”

- Context rules every other way of interpretation!!!

- And if you're honest with the context here—Paul is NOT talking about a Person here at all—Paul is NOT talking about the return of the Lord Jesus Christ—Paul is NOT talking about the establishment of the kingdom (because some will say, Ok, I see that Paul's not talking about a person—but that's ok because he doesn't have to if what he's talking about is when the kingdom of heaven comes then sp. gifts are still in operation) ... no, the establishment of the kingdom is in God's program with Israel and not in this disp. of grace—and the truth is, the Corinthians were supposed look for it and to be anticipating the coming in of “*that which is perfect*” - they were to be expecting to see that thing come in and be beneficiaries of it!

- And my point in all that is this—if this is talking about the kingdom of heaven coming in and being set up upon the earth—then there's absolutely no reason for the apostle Paul to be talking about it and showing the Corinthians this *more excellent way* **if they were NOT going to be participants in it!!!**

- In fact, in the very last verse of the chapter—Paul will tell them what now *abides*—and that's what they're to stick with!

- But the context **IS** talking about knowledge and the speaking forth of that *knowledge* (or prophecy)!!! [Which is THE WORD OF GOD]

- The identity of “*that which is perfect*” - by the power of the context telling you what it is—can be nothing (nor any One else) other than the OPPOSITE of that which is ‘*partial*’!

- And that which is ‘*partial*’ in (:9) is **KNOWLEDGE** and the revelation from God (or **PROPHECY**) that provided the *knowledge!*

(:10) - And so—*But when that which is perfect* (when the perfect, perfected, that is to say, **complete** knowledge comes by means of the final revelation from God for us in this dispensation of grace) *is come, then that which is in part* (both the partial knowledge and the gifts that service it) *shall be done away.*

- “*that which is perfect*” therefore can be nothing other than the completed revelation from God in written form:
THE BIBLE!

- But the reason why spiritual gifts were in operation for a limited time at the beginning of this disp. of grace was because the full revelation of the knowledge from God for us in this disp. of grace (the complete written word of God) was NOT possessed yet!

- And God was accomplishing His *operations* that He wanted to get accomplished through those ‘less excellent’ sp. gifts—awaiting the time when the complete knowledge would be written down and was something they could hold in their hands—and His *more excellent*, superior written word of God (that’s always been superior to anything; and always been the most excellent means for Him to do things) is there—and when it’s there, the sp. gifts are *done away*—and His WORD now accomplishes those things (especially as it operates in God’s “sons” and their sonship education and sonship lives)! — His word now effectually works to accomplish those *operations of God*.

- And this was a natural thing those Corinthians should have expected to have happen—and (:11-13) are going to set that forth and set forth the grandeur of *the more excellent way* when it comes compared to the ‘less excellent’ and inferior sp. gift system that existed temporarily.

- And not only that—but Paul will set forth the permanent abiding status of the most excellent ministry the Holy Ghost has—which is the greatest of all.

- And as we will see—in the very lifetime of the apostle Paul, and in the very lifetime of these Corinthians saints—*that which is perfect* actually arrived—the *more excellent way* came in—and we operate upon that today!

- And in the lifetime of the apostle Paul and those Corinthian saints—God withdrew all the sp. gifts—and the only sp. gifts that have been in operation since that day have been either counterfeits or fakery and frauds!

- Now in (:11) Paul sets forth an illustrative analogy that underscores both the **naturalness** of the ‘less excellent way’ of the sp. gifts being replaced by the *more excellent way* of the completed written word of God—and the **zeal** and **enthusiasm** and **delight** of those sp. gifts being *done away* and replaced by *the more excellent way*.

- And then (:12) describes the **glory** and the **grandeur** that the Corinthians will have (and that we now have) when they come to possess the *more excellent way* (the complete written word of God) - and the tremendous **advantage** that gives you over that 'less excellent way.'

- And then (:13) comes along and, on the basis of *the more excellent way* having come in—it states the **lasting situation** that will exist throughout the duration of this dispensation of grace—and with the sp. gifts being *done away*, what now *abides* once that *more excellent way* has come in.

- For now—let's just focus upon what Paul says at the end of the chapter in verse 13 —

- Now the apostle Paul will come along in (:13) and in view of when the perfect, complete written word of God does come in—and the temporary (less-excellent) sp. gifts are *done away*—he sets forth what **will** permanently remain —

13 And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three;

- Notice again—when it comes to setting forth what **will** remain throughout the duration of this disp. of grace—**not one single spiritual gift is mentioned or listed** (because they are ALL going to be *done away*)!

- Of *faith, hope, and charity*—none of those are spiritual gifts!

- But these are 3 things that the Holy Ghost is concerned with doing throughout the duration of this disp. of grace **after** *the more excellent way* has come in.

- *And now abideth faith* — remember that *faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God*—you can't have that without the word of God.

- **hope**—you're going to learn that *hope* is another one of those massive (and massively powerful) doctrines that you began learning about back in Rom. 5 when you learned about *the hope of the glory of God*—and another powerful aspect of your *hope* in sonship establishment: the *hope* of what your sonship life with your Father is all about—(which is a *hope* that *saved* you from being victimized by the *sufferings of this present time*—and that *hope* is going to **grow** and **abound** (just like godly love and charity) - and it does so by

believing what God tells you so that you have absolute confidence in it!

- **charity**—godly love and charity—which provides all of your Father’s norms & standards for what He values and esteems—so that you can conduct yourself like He does (godly: like Father, like son!)

13 And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.

- Any Questions???

- So now we stand at this Sonship Checkpoint having received the fundamental *instruction of Wisdom* and the fundamental *instruction of Justice*.

- The importance of this Checkpoint is for the Father to insure that you haven’t merely learned the doctrine academically or temporarily (so as to pass a test and then quickly forget what you’ve learned) — but to probe your heart and make sure that what you have learned **has materially changed your heart permanently and forever!**

- That is—that you now not only know and understand the doctrine you’ve learned—but that those things you’ve learned and those ‘living words of the Living God’ really, truly, and genuinely **LIVE IN YOU!** (in all the details of your life!)

- Much like you did back in Romans 6—when you “reckoned” yourself to be *dead to sin, and alive unto God*—and that became the reality of who you really are “in Christ” — now, when it comes to the 6 Components of Wisdom and the 3 Components of Justice—that’s now the living reality of who you really are “in Christ” as well!

- And so you sit down with your Father and you and Him review, assess, and evaluate your heart (your inner man) and make sure that all of the Components of Wisdom and Justice operate and function **EVERY SINGLE DAY OF YOUR LIFE!**

- (Review again the 6 Components of Wisdom; and the 3 Components of Justice).

- And then your Father Exhorts you to **make full use** of that Wisdom & Justice—and especially where Justice is concerned, to not give in

... to the temptation to only do the minimum—but to follow through with it—to **not procrastinate**—to make **full use** of it!

- Because the Father knows that if you don't follow through in *Just* decisions, you'll never be able to fully make the kind of *Judgments* and *Equitable* decisions that are going to be of a much harder variety—and which will require much more work and much more energy to follow through with those Sonship Decisions when you have to face them!

- (And that's critical—because if you fail to follow through completely in the work and the Labor aspects of Judgment & Equity, you'll end up **failing** to carry out the Operations of God that He desires to get accomplished in all those areas!)

- [You'll end up as a FOOLISH son in your Father's sight!]

- And that's what the Fatherly Exhortations and Expectations of Proverbs 3:21-35 are all about!

- But then—since our Father's design and purpose of instructing us in *Wisdom & Justice* the way He does is designed to get **Godly Love and Charity** to be generated—and for that Godly Love & Charity to have the proper amount of GROWTH to it (in preparation for the rigors of *receiving the instruction of Judgment & Equity*) - you and your Father are to sit down together and examine, assess, and evaluate that the Godly Love & Charity is **real** and **genuine** (it's not just theory to you) - and that it has grown to the point that you can, with absolute confidence, be fully persuaded that the Selflessness, the Lovingkindness, the Tenderheartedness, and the Meekness are genuinely there and operational and functioning in your heart according to Godliness!

- That is, that those Major Features of Godly Love aren't just warmed-over leftovers of love as you were taught by the wisdom of the men and the course of this world—but that has all been uprooted, dismissed, and replaced by selfless, kind, tenderhearted, and meek Love as God your Heavenly Father has taught you—and by the Spirit of God with the words of God, they've been properly generated in your inner man!

(which is the most excellent ministry of the Holy Spirit within you!)

- (Which is why we took the time to review I Corinthians 13 and see some of the corrective doctrine that Paul gave to the Corinthians who had failed in this very area! and caused a great deal of problems for them—to the point where when they ‘came together’ [or assembled together] it was *not for the better, but for the worse!* [*I Corinthians 11:17*]!)

- And (once again) - just to use that 1st Component of our *instruction of Justice* (in Romans 12:17-18) & the corresponding Exhortation (in Proverbs 3:27-29) as an example of not giving in to the temptation to be **RELUCTANT** to **follow through** and make **full use** of the instruction—and to put that together with the proper growth of the Godly Love —

— based upon the Godly Thinking (as the Thinking of your Father during this present dispensation of grace in which we live—which is one of: when ‘evil’ is done to Him, rather than judging that person by pouring out His wrath; or rather than *recompensing evil for evil*—He, instead, is treating that person with *goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering* in order that His *goodness* will perhaps *lead* that person to *repentance*) —

— based upon that Godly Thinking of your Father—then you, in turn, are going to think that same way too—and you’re going to *recompense to no man evil for evil*. (**for that very same reason**)

- But the temptation to be RELUCTANT is going to show up in the Godly Living and the Godly Labor. (where you’re going to have to ‘follow through’ and make full use of the doctrine)

- And so when it then comes to *providing things honest* in the sight of that man that’s done you *evil*—there HAS to be occupation with what that *honest* thing is, and doing that “*good*” (as Pro. 3:27 says).

- And where the Meekness shows up is that—*providing things honest*, and doing that *good*—**that’s got to mean more to you than anything else!** (that course of action means more to you, and is more important to you than any of the worldly satisfaction you would get by paying that guy back and getting even with him—or getting your ‘pound of flesh’!!!)

- And folks, that's the way the Godly Love is supposed to work—that's the way in which the Godly Love is supposed to grow and to develop—in the very order in which God generated it within you!!!

- In other words—God didn't just come along and generate Selflessness as one separate & distinct Feature all by itself—and then the Kindness as another separate & distinct Feature all by itself—and then the Tenderheartedness as a separate & distinct Feature that stands alone by itself—and then the Meekness as a separate, distinct Feature that stands alone by itself — NO!

(may not be the best way to say it, but for now ...)

- ALL OF THE FEATURES OF GODLY LOVE ARE DEVELOPED FROM THE PREVIOUS FEATURES OF GODLY LOVE!!! (except the 1st one, of course)

- Therefore, if the Selflessness and the Kindness and the Tenderheartedness ISN'T THERE—then the Meekness might be there only in the sense of '*not recompensing the evil*' - but the Tenderheartedness is NOT going to be **strong enough** to overcome your natural RELUCTANCE to do something *good* in the sight of that guy (to *provide some things honest in his sight*), to try to make it so that he'll live *peaceable* with you!

- (You'll back down—you'll withhold the good—you'll put it off and say, I'll try doing that tomorrow—maybe I can work up the courage tomorrow ...)

- And I'm going over all this (painstakingly) to show you how you can "Check" yourself—or measure yourself—to see if Godly Love has developed to the degree and into the strength that it needs to be for you to go on and get the rest of Level I Sonship Education.

- And if you are reluctant—and if you only go so far, but don't make full use of the doctrine—then that should tell you that one, or some, or all of the previous 3 Major Features of Godly Love isn't as strong within you as it needs to be.

- For instance, if in Meekness, you don't go on and do the *good* and *provide things honest* in that person's sight—then that ought to tell you that, as a 'son' **you don't have the Tenderheartedness that you think you have!!!**

- In fact—and to be more precise—as we have talked about before—it’s really that very first Major Feature of Godly Love (the **Selflessness**) which is the one that’s ALWAYS in existence and ALWAYS in operation, ALWAYS functioning.

- And the Kindness, the Tenderheartedness, the Meekness, (and even the last 3 Features of Godly Love) - those are all really **situational expressions** of that Selflessness getting **stronger** and **stronger** and **stronger!**)

- And that’s why in Level II Sonship Education—you’re always esteeming others BETTER than yourself!

- That Godly **Selfless** Love is so strong—that you view others better than you do yourself—and you **don’t doubt** that at all!

- And that’s not merely some phony, forced, pretended humility—no, THAT’S **GENUINE GODLY HUMILITY!!!**

- That’s genuine ‘*lowliness of mind*’ - that’s genuine **abasing** of yourself!!! — because you **genuinely** value & esteem those others MORE than you do yourself!

*** (see Ephesians 4:1-3 [:2]) ***

*** (see Philippians 2:1-4 [:3]) ***

- And you are able to do all that because that fundamental Godly Love & Charity has had all 7 Characteristics & Features developed within you—**and each one of them is that Selflessness getting stronger and stronger and stronger!**

- And when all 7 are there—the issue is: that other person is MORE IMPORTANT than you are!

- And eventually, you’ll come to the point where: ***Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.*** (*John 15:13*) - [which is what the apostle Paul goes on to illustrate in Philippians 2:5-8 (read)!]

- That’s how much “**better**” they are than you—you’re **willing to DIE for them!!**

- And the reason why any natural RELUCTANCE would be there—is because the Godly Selfless Love (with it's Kindness and Tenderheartedness) might not be as mature and as strong as it ought to be—to make it so that you can focus upon the *good* thing that you're doing—and THAT means MORE to you than the potential consequences of the one you're trying to pacify, not being pacified!

- And in the end—it all comes down to the issue that: we should be far more concerned with the effectual working of the Curriculum doing its job within us (*conforming us to the image of God's Son*, and enabling us to Labor together with God in what He's doing—and to get the Training and the Experience and the Skill acquisition for what our Vocation demands) - that ought to mean **more** to us than any consequence that would ever happen to us along the way!

- Well—we've spent a lot of time dealing with the Fatherly Exhortations & Expectations that you receive at the end of the *instruction of Justice*—(much more than we did [I think] than at the end of receiving the *instruction of Wisdom*).

- And that's because both, the 9 Components that make up our instruction of Wisdom & Justice, as well as the generation and growth of the Godly Love & Charity (as it's being learned, and as it's progressively taking place) HAS GOT TO BE THERE, effectually working in your inner man!

- It can't be there just 'theoretically' - it can't just be there as an "Ok, I know this information—I can regurgitate it for a test" — no, it's ACTUALLY got to be there and ACTUALLY be **built** upon each previous issue!

- And hopefully, that should make it so that you are deeply impressed with the "juncture" that we're coming to in Romans 13:8.

- Because that's where we really are—we're at a 'juncture' in the balance of our Level I Sonship Education.

- The 4 Areas of Sonship Decision-Making are really broken down into 2 Camps (so to speak) - the Wisdom & Justice go together—and once they're accomplished, they provide for a special capacity—and that special capacity is for Godly Love

... to be able to function as the sole ‘arbiter’ (so to speak) when it comes to making a decision!

- And now you’re going to get the instruction from the Father in **that kind** of Decision-Making!

END: INSTRUCTION OF WISDOM AND JUSTICE.

Receiving the instruction of ...

- JUDGMENT (or godly judgmental decision-making skills.)

- (see Table of Contents—Proverbs 1:2-3)

- **Definition**: the determination of the right, correct, and/or proper course of action to take absent an objective standard or authority in which to make an appeal.

- And when it comes now to you **as a son** *receiving the instruction of judgment* from your Father—that discriminating difference that we’ve noted that keeps us from confusing the two issues of *justice* and *judgment*—is that where *Justice* is concerned, you have either someone or some thing that has the absolute authority to declare what is right and what is wrong (an objective standard to appeal to) — but the issue in *Judgment* is one of **NOT** having an objective standard or authority in which to make an appeal—that therefore means that you’re going to be instructed in a body of information that is designed to impart the skills of how to make decisions all on your own—and to make decisions when there is no clear right or wrong!

- **Summary Statement**: To *receive the instruction of judgment* involves receiving instruction so as to have the fundamental capacity for making evaluations and judgments on issues about which the proper path to walk is not immediately clear.

- And we know that this is the proper context or way to view *judgment*—and narrow it down to just this issue—because we know that the word that was used just previous to it (*justice*) has already taken into account decision-making when you have an objective standard to appeal to that tells you: this is right, this is wrong in this type of situation.

- *Justice* is as if a judge is presented with a particular case where there is no doubt whatsoever about what has occurred—and it’s an obvious breach of the law—and the judge can just come along and say, “There’s no reason to even adjourn, I don’t have to deliberate on this at all” and he just opens up the book of statutes and laws—the law is already on the books (so to speak) - and the judge renders an immediate, clear-cut verdict without further debate.

- *Justice* is as if there’s no debate or deliberation needed; because the law’s already on the books, and all you have to do is appeal to the written code.

- And when you get *justice* and *judgment* utilized in the same context—*justice* has an objective standard to it, and *judgment* does not.

- And *judgment* is the issue of that judge making his decision based upon the best evaluation, and most consistent evaluation he can make based upon precedence, the special facts or circumstances of the case, intent, and things along those lines.

- Hopefully at this point you’re thinking about how things are given to you, not only in the book of Romans, but even on throughout Paul’s epistles—because Paul will not only give us the **basic & fundamental instruction of judgment** — (as he did with the *Wisdom*, the *Justice*, and then as he will do with the *Equity*) — but he will bring them back up later on in order to give us **advanced instruction** on each of them—(to ‘flesh out’ our appreciation and **skillful use** of each of them; and to confront problems that arise because of either misuse or abuse or misunderstanding concerning each one of them. (ex., I Cor. 8:9; 10:23-33)

- And really, this is the very point at which most Christians either get into **legalism**—(see Galatians 2:4; 5:1, 13) — or else they just get **frustrated** in their Christian lives — because in the vast majority of cases, they have no information given to them to do the normal thing a son is supposed to do.

- Or else most Christians think that what they’re supposed to achieve in their spiritual maturity is really the level of *justice*—that everything’s going to be a white or black issue—or a clear-cut right and wrong issue—and the frustration is that when you actually go out

... and live your life, (or by the time you drive off the parking lot), you realize that life just isn't like that—and in fact, the majority of issues you're going to be dealing with aren't issue of *justice*, but are issues of *judgment*!

- And that stands to reason, because the majority of your life **isn't** lived as a child—most of your life is lived as an **adult**.

- And a child always wants a *just* decision—that's why they always appeal to mommy and daddy—because they want Mom and Dad to make their decisions for them!

- (By the way, this is what I talk about when I say that it's in *Judgment* where your Sonship life begins to **shine**—and even though you've always been dealt with by your Father as an adult son—it's really in *Judgment* where real ADULTHOOD gets underway!)

- *Judgmental* decisions means that there are **options**—in fact it could be there are **multiple options that could be decided for**.

- And it's right here that that keen and skillful ability or capacity to make godly sonship decisions really gets some **muscle**—because this is where you as a son are going to have several options available to you—and of the many decisions you *could* make, you're going to have to have the skill from being *instructed* in making *judgmental* decisions to choose the **one thing** to do out of many possible things that will be the one that your Heavenly Father will be most pleased with.

- And this really is where most Christians get bogged down and discouraged and desperate—because the questions that are most often on their mind are along the lines of: “Who should I date? Who should I marry? Which job should I take? What crowd should I hang around with? What should I drink? What should I eat? What should I wear? What music should I listen to...” — all those questions are asked because that sonship decision-making skill of *judgment* is **NOT** properly developed ... (if at all).

- And so—because of failing to be properly educated and properly edified as a “son” — this is where the vast majority of Christians today simply become Calvinistic in their thinking and in their Christian lives!!!

- And because they are frustrated with not being able to make *judgmental* decisions all on their own—they simply resort to the old “if it be God’s will” dodge—or “whatever God’s will is” - or “everything happens for a reason” - or a whole number of clever slogans that they express so that they have something to say—and so that they at least won’t look foolish in the eyes of their Christian friends & family!

- And the truth is—they can find some verses in the Bible, that, if taken out of their context, seems to back them up!

- And this is also where a whole lot of what most Christians call “prayer” is going to center upon—that is, when these hard *Judgment* type situations come up, that’s usually when they pray the most themselves—(or that’s usually when they request prayer) - and for the most part it’s praying to know what God’s **will** is in a particular *judgment* type situation!

- Most prayer is an attempt to **force** God to be their “*tutor and governor*” - and **force** God to by-pass their Sonship education and Sonship status—and **force** God to make all their *judgment* decisions **FOR** them!!!

- This is why most Christians lives are really just a big ‘roller coaster’ of ups & downs; highs & lows — because they don’t have anything in their spirit (their thinking) to calm their raging soul!

- And even though they would never admit it—and though they’ve totally convinced themselves otherwise—the reason why their life is a ‘roller coaster’ of ups & downs is because they’ve given themselves over to sheer LUCK!

- When they’re lucky and things work out: then God really blessed them—and when they’re unlucky and things don’t work out: then God is punishing them!

- **AND THAT’S NOT ONLY FRUSTRATING,
... THAT’S MADDENING!!!**

- That's totally inconsistent with being an Adult, Adopted Son—because it's **YOU** [as a properly educated and intelligent son] (not God) who, by the *renewing of your mind* are to *prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God!*

- And the truth of the matter is, that as soon as sonship is really comprehended by a Christian as it ought to be comprehended—the last thing he wants is for someone to take his own decision-making skills away from him and make decisions *for* him!

- This issue of sonship *judgmental* decision-making is really what's at the core of the issue that standing behind Paul's rebuke to the Corinthians over there in I Cor. 6—because the fact that they wanted unbelievers to **judge** them is so contrary, not only to sonship edification—but it's contrary to the very attitude that a son's supposed have about making decisions at all — truth of the matter is, they should have been coming along and saying, “Hey—you're not going to rob me of the privilege of making decisions as a son!”

- But a **child** would shy away from that—they would rather someone else make the decision for them! (childish/foolish)!

- So now let's describe more fully (from our summary statement of receiving the instruction of *judgment*) what this means specifically for us, the members of the new creature of the church the body of Christ in this dispensation of grace—or when it comes to us applying it as sons in this dispensation of grace:

- ***Receiving the instruction of judgment* involves receiving the instruction so as for us to have the fundamental capacity for making sound, sonship and godly evaluations and judgments on issues about which the proper path for us to walk is not immediately clear on issues upon which we must ponder, weigh the various options and evaluating them in godliness. This involves the capacity to evaluate and judge between various options confronting us; various opportunities given to us; various reactions we could give; and/or various courses of action we can take in any given situation—and to thereby determine what is good, or what is better, or what is best, and/or determine what is honorable or valuable or virtuous or what is excellent.**

- Now that's really a scope of the entire sonship curriculum that deals with this issue of godly *judgmental* decision-making — because it really takes into account more than just what Romans will give you as the fundamental issue of sonship *judgmental* decision-making, and it goes on to look at all that will be developed in this skill throughout the sonship curriculum contained in all of Paul's epistles.

- In other words, that statement takes you from the **milk** of the capacity that Romans gives, to the **meat** of the capacity that II Thessalonians gives.

- But when you think about it—those terms that I used there: good, better, best — honorable, valuable, virtuous, excellent — really, those are Paul's terms right from Romans through II Thessalonians.

- And they describe a **progress** to the *judgmental* decision-making skills of a son as he is edified by the curriculum—and you go from honorable to valuable to the virtuous to what is excellent!

- **see for example: Philippians 1:6-11 (:9-10)**

- And when you get the body of doctrine in Philippians that further instructs you in *judgment*—it's now instructing you in the *judgment* of what is **excellent** — you know the good and the better by then—and now you're dealing with the best and the excellent!

- So the overriding issue with making *judgmental* decisions has to do with there being the capacity for making evaluations and judgments on issues about which the proper path to walk or the proper thing to do is not immediately or abundantly clear.

- And so (obviously) when you've got several options set before you, and none of them seem to be a definite or absolute right or wrong choice — in fact, this is where you really begin to get skill and keen insight into making decisions when faced with what might be called a **right vs. a right** path or option or choice—and therefore we obviously **need** our Father's instruction in this decision-making skill of *judgment*!

- If I'm going to make these kind of decisions to the emulation of and to the **pleasure** of my Father—there's no way I'm going to do that by "chance" — or by "guessing" at it! (Or by just being 'lucky')!

- And usually, these types of decisions are all but ignored — and are most often overlooked by Christians as being real opportunities to **please** and **honor** God—even among many believers who **do** have some understanding of sonship.

- The Corinthians being a classic example—until Paul corrected them.
- But most of us—even if we’re not as bad as the Corinthians who all-out abuse our liberty—we usually don’t appreciate that, when you’re not faced with a right or wrong decision—and you’re not faced with a wise or foolish decision—but you’re faced with various options and opportunities, and you’re going to have to make a decision about what would be good, better, or best or what would be honorable or valuable or virtuous or excellent — all of that, more often than not, is usually discussed as just sonship liberties that I have open to me, **as if God really doesn’t care what the decision is that I make.**

- Like, well, God gives you the responsibility now as an adult son to make your own decisions, so just go right at it, and whatever decision you make is ok.

- And in the past this is about how it’s been handled by those who attempted to do something more with being adopted as God’s son than just recognizing that you’re now God’s heir via regeneration.

- And at the time, even the idea that you are this adopted son of God with this adult status of liberty and freedom— to be able to make decisions on your own — (which is a marked departure from the way most Christians are ever taught about this pre-determined, pre-set will that you are supposed to struggle and grope and cry and strain and wrestle to try to find) — and I recognize that even that much was revolutionary compared to that struggle most saints go through to find and hunt and go through some sort of sadistic type **spiritual safari** to find the will of God in so many areas of their life!

- And again, this is where there is so much discouragement and frustration in the Christian world—because when this issue of “God’s will” comes up—most Christians don’t know they’re sons—adopted, adult sons of God—and they have never been taught properly about the curriculum for their sonship life—and therefore they are always butting heads with God, doing all sorts of things, and taking all sorts of **desperate measures** to try to **divine** His will—or at least

... to get Him to tell them plainly what His will is in a given situation—(such as fasting, tithing, long, all-night prayers, pleading, crying, deprivation of all sorts, ... etc.) — and all the while God’s sitting up there saying, “Look, I’ve already made this as plain as day in my word—and if you’d just pay attention to what I say, you’d never be in this position!”

- So you’ve either got a vast majority of the body of Christ (believers, Christians) who are completely ignorant of the significance of what it means to be a son of God—and they are doing all these desperate things, (sincere as they may be), attempting to find the will of God for various issues in their life, — all the while not knowing that their sincere, desperate measures are NOT impressing God, and could never move God to do what they really want Him to do {i.e., to audibly tell them, or give them a sign, or by some kind of spiritual telepathy beam in the answer, or at least give them some sort of inner feeling [usually passed off as ‘I just got peace about it’]} — or — you’ve got Christians who have some understanding at least that they are adopted, adult sons of God, but when it comes to these ‘fuzzy’ areas where *judgmental* decisions are called for, they just act as if they’re trivial decisions because they’re not right or wrong, or wise vs. foolish decisions.

- But we’re to understand and appreciate that instead of attempting to move God by desperate measures in order to get Him to indicate to us in some audio/visual, or multimedia-type way what His will **is** in any given situation—we’re to understand that all these types of issues of determining what the will of God is, are really almost all dealt with by these sonship decision-making skills—especially the keen skills of sonship *judgmental* decision-making, and sonship *equitable* decision-making.

- And also, far from being trivial or unimportant—these *judgmental* decisions you make—even in very minor areas—aren’t ever to be viewed as small or minimal or unimportant—because with each *judgmental* decision you make, and as you gain skill to be able to **clearly** (not ‘give it your best guess’) but to clearly know which choice is good, better and best, or honorable, virtuous, and excellent; these are all opportunities given to us as sons to be able to **prove** our qualifications to be rewarded with positions of governmental/ruling authority — that they are opportunities for us to emulate and please our Father—to do the very thing Paul said of the Philippians: to “*approve things that are excellent*”!

- And when you see that—when you see the **progression** from what we're given as we first of all *receive the instruction of judgment* in Romans, and then see that that gets **added to** throughout the curriculum for sonship education to hone that skill to a very fine edge (so to speak) - you should never look at decisions where there's really no right or wrong decision as if God doesn't care which one you make—or that to God, it really doesn't matter which one you make—because that is flat-out wrong! that's not true—that a **false** understanding of *judgment*!!!

- If there's no clear right or wrong—and there's no clear wise path or foolish path we aren't to say, “Well, it really doesn't matter, either decision is fine.”

- **Because that's really not so**—God lists *receiving the instruction of judgment* right up there with *receiving the instruction of wisdom and justice*, and we're supposed to make even these **judgment calls** in our lives to the pleasure and to the emulation of our Father, and put on display our aptitude to be used by Him to govern in the heavenly places.

- And even in these *judgment calls* in my life, I can still make them **without guessing**, and make them **exactly** like my Father would make them Himself because He has *instructed* me in that very thing!

— Any Questions concerning the **Introduction** of *receiving the instruction of Judgment*?

- Do you have a basic (very basic) & fundamental understanding and appreciation for what the *instruction of Judgment* is for? (what it's goal & designed purpose is for?)

- NOTE: At this point we did an extensive review of both the instruction of Wisdom and the instruction of Justice.

- NOTE: Then we did a review of Prayer, Sonship Prayer, and the Searching of the Heart in Psalm 139.

(as per the following pages)

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- PRE-DOCTRINAL EXHORTATION TO RECEIVING THE INSTRUCTION OF JUDGMENT.

- Let's now turn our attention to the Exhortation that a son receives before the *instruction of judgment* gets underway.

- **Proverbs 4:1-9** (read)

- At this point in your education as a “son” - you really need to be deeply and suitably impressed (just as your Father is impressed) with the fact that, having received the *instruction of Wisdom & Justice*—**you have now reached a MAJOR “Point of Attainment” or “Level of Attainment”**.

- By this point in your Sonship Education, you've now reached a point where a good amount of Level I God-Like-Ness has taken place—a fair measure of being *conformed to the image of God's Son* has taken place at the end of receiving the instruction of Wisdom & Justice.

- And by the effectual working of God's word in your inner man—and by the effectual and **full use** of the 6 Components of Wisdom and the 3 Components of Justice; as well as the growth and development of Godly Love & Charity—you are now well underway in emulating your Heavenly Father in all of the details of your life! (becoming “like Father, like son”)

- You now have ‘attained’ or ‘reached’ a point or a level of Godly Sonship **competence** (i.e., you're sufficiently capable and qualified to make sound, Godly, Sonship decisions in the areas of basic Wisdom and Justice) — and just as important, you can make those Wise & Just decisions based upon a very real and competent and genuine attainment of Godly Love!

- You're now half-way through receiving the 4 major Sonship Decision-Making Skills—and that's an achievement! ... that's an **attainment!** ... and that's something to acknowledge with some real Godly happiness, satisfaction, confidence and contentment!!!

- And there should be a GREAT amount of Godly ambition, enthusiasm, and ZEAL to not only put that *Wisdom & Justice* into practice—but to also **desire** to **get** the *Judgment* and the *Equity*!!! (and this is a MAJOR Sonship issue!!!)

- And so—at this ‘Point of Attainment’ things are now no longer being talked about just in ‘theory’ (so to speak) - but the real ‘rubber-meets-the-road’ type changes (or *transformation*) in your Thinking, and in your Conduct & Behavior are now taking place—as well as the actual work & Labor (that is, the actual DOING of the doctrine) is now taking place.

- (Does that describe YOU? ... or doesn't it???)

- Well—when you read the Pre-Doctrinal Exhortation here in Proverbs 4:1-9—even before you ever get to dealing with the details of it—there should be a couple of things that strike you and grab your attention —

— for one thing, it should strike you as kind of odd that your Father would say these kinds of things to you—(because it should occur to you that, “Haven’t I been doing this all along?” - “Why would my Father say this to me when I’ve already been doing these kinds of things?”)

— and the other thing that should grab your attention here is (once again) the **TONE** of this Exhortation! — (because by just the **tone** of the way in which this is worded, it’s apparent that our Father is really ‘amped-up’ [so to speak] - He’s not just ‘almost’ ... He’s really pleading with us here—He’s making a very strong and earnest appeal to us for some reason—(and even though the word isn’t used here ... He’s beseeking us! [He’s be-seeking us! - He’s intensely seeking something in us!])

- And He’s not only exhorting us—but He’s also admonishing us; cautioning us; warning us—(as in :2, :4, and :6).

- And one of the major things that should kind of ‘dawn’ on you — (just by what the Father says here; and by the Tone He takes) - is that with the Wisdom & Justice you’ve just received—when you **add** to that the *Judgment* that you’re about to get—even though you may think you’ve already been doing what your Father says here (and you’re right to think that) — **it must, therefore, be true that you’re now going to face real temptation and real opposition when it comes to receiving the instruction of Judgment that goes beyond anything you’ve experienced so far!**

- In other words—the challenges that lie ahead of you in *Judgment* are going to be **far greater** than you ever faced in Wisdom & Justice! (and that *IS* the truth of the matter!)
 - Real, and more intensified temptation & opposition is now going to be coming your way that would make it so you might FAIL to do the things you're being exhorted here to do!
 - So one of the obvious things about the **tone** of these Exhortations is that the Father makes it clear to His son that REAL TEMPATION and REAL OPPOSITION is going to come his way! (such as has not been experienced before)
 - And because of the nature of these temptations & opposition—the Father has reason to come along and deal with some things that you would almost think would be rather uncharacteristic of a son, once he's got the Wisdom & Justice—**but the Father says it to him anyway!**
 - And one of the things that we took note of back when we were in Sonship Establishment back in Romans 8 is that—once real, genuine *godliness* begins to get put on display (and an impact is being made by it) ***in the world***—then there's going to be a negative response on the part of the world to it!
- (see Romans 8:28-39)
- And the *world* (and by that, I mean, the wisdom of this world, the men of this world, and the ungodly course of this world that Satan has charted) - **THE WORLD** itself is going to be One of Three areas of opposition you're going to face—especially when you put on display in it your *instruction of Judgment!!!*
 - This “world” is NOT ‘conformed’ to Godliness—this “world” is conformed to Satanliness!!!
 - It has it's own counterfeit form of godliness—and it's own accepted form of religion and even Christianity that it can get along with very well—but **genuine Godliness is it's ENEMY**—and it's NOT compatible to genuine Godliness; and it won't tolerate it; and, more than that, it will seek to DESTROY IT! (don't doubt it!) [especially zeal/enthusiasm]
 - As we noted before—there are men in this world that are *despisers of those that are good*—(see II Tim. 3:1-7 [:3]).

- Here you're told that one of the characteristic features of the evolution of man's ungodliness is the issue of becoming ***despisers*** of those that are ***good***, — and as man's ungodliness evolves, there's not only going to be the natural negative response of the world 'at large' to Godliness in its midst - but there's going to be certain men who are going to be ***despisers*** of saints who are "*good*"! (and as a son, YOU are going to be on the receiving end of that 'despising'!)

- Now along with the issue of the way in which the world is going to negatively respond to your Sonship life being put on display in the world 'at large' — there is going to be another, (or Second) **added danger:** which is **the way in which YOUR FLESH** [or sin in your members] **is going to respond!**

- And this gets into an area of 'heart-type' issues—and areas of your "*flesh*" that have never been touched upon, ever before in your life!!! — (there are a whole bunch of 'nerves' that have never been "hit" [so to speak] until you begin to put genuine Godliness into practice in this world!) [and you simply just have no experience with them yet].

- By the way—interestingly enough, as the instruction of Godly Judgment & Equity is given—and then on into Level II & III Sonship Education—the Father says some things from time to time that are specifically designed to "awaken" the son's perception—and to make it so that he is "sensitive" to how sin in his own members is responding to what he's just learned.

- ex. Galatians 5:11-18 (:17)

- And so the son has the issue of **sin in his members** on the **inside** - and **the world** that you're walking in on the **outside**, — and that world, (with all of the unrighteous and the unjust men of the world), is going to be **unconsciously** responding in a negative way to YOUR *Godliness*.

- And as you get to the final 2 areas of instruction in Level I Sonship Education - the Father's exhortations and expectations begin to work on that kind of perception! -- and some of the expectations He points out there is that He now expects His son to be aware of what's going on within him - and He expects His son to be aware of how the world is going to act with him & his Godliness in it!

- And the point is—that after the Father gives his son the instruction of Wisdom and Justice—He’s aware of what’s going on in His son’s heart—He’s aware of how sin in His son’s members is operating—(not just that it’s there; but how it reacts to the doctrine once it gets written down on the *fleshy tables* of His son’s heart as His son becomes the living “*epistle of Christ*”!)

- And these 2 areas of Opposition and Temptation are primarily involved in the 1st Component of the instruction of Judgment—but a 3rd area will be met & added to those in the 2nd Component!

- And this 3rd area of temptation & opposition gets addressed in the Exhortations on down in those first 6 verses of Proverbs chapter 5!

- And the 3rd area of Opposition & Temptation is going to come from (for the very first time) the Satanic Policy of Evil!

- And that's why the "*strange woman*" gets brought up (in Pro. 5:3-6) and how she plays the harlot and how she acts - because that's how you end up being **taught** how to recognize the seductions that are out there in the world - and how the world is going to work in order to get it so that it can entrap you and ensnare you.

- And the Father knows how the world is reacting to the Godliness that's beginning to be manifested by you as His son *in* the world - and He knows how the Policy of Evil is getting ready - (it still doesn't have the opportunity yet to respond ... **but that's coming!**) - and the Father knows the preparations it's making.

- And so it's in view of all that, that the Father is going to come along and make all His Exhortations and Expectations to His son based upon THAT!

- And just in the TONE of these Exhortations alone—you get the feeling that the Father knows that His son is going to be SORELY TEMPTED!

- And that’s why it looks as though the son would say to his Father’s Exhortations: “Didn’t I just learn that? ... Isn’t it just a “given” that I’d do that?” — but the Father knows that every form of doctrine that you receive ‘ups the ante’ (so to speak) - and that every form of

... doctrine that's learned produces it's increased negative response from 1) the *world* 'at large'; 2) from sin in your members; and from 3) the Policy of Evil that's just waiting in the wings!

- And that's why things are worded the way they are—and that's why you've got some admonishing being given to you (and some "beseeching") - and you've got some exhortations to you that are to immediately to go into action without delay!

- It's those kind of things that we need to appreciate and be deeply and suitably impressed with from these exhortations as sons in this dispensation of grace in which we live.

- Because while a lot of what's said in Proverbs 4:1-5:6 (detail-wise) has a lot to do with the Remnant Sons in God's program with Israel — the truth is, that for us as sons & members of the church the body of Christ - we, too, need to be aware of the issue of the world's negative response increasing; be aware of the issue of sin in our members 'doubling its efforts' (so to speak); and the Policy of Evil waiting in the wings (discerning how we're responding to the doctrine—looking for areas that can be exploited, and so forth) — but we've got our own particular Curriculum & instruction of Judgment in Romans 13:8-14 that's designed specifically for us in this dispensation of grace—and therefore, the same kind of need exists for us to be ON GUARD!

- And along with the Positive & Proper response to the doctrine you'll receive in Judgment (and Equity) - and once that doctrine gets written on your heart—you, therefore, need to make the determined choice (realizing that the 'ante' has just been 'up'ed' - and realizing the capacity you have with the instruction of Wisdom, Justice, and now Judgment) ...
to put it into practice!

- And if you're reluctant in any way at all—that's going to immediately be seized upon & exploited by these areas of Temptation and Opposition!!!

- And your entire Sonship life can easily be intimidated, and become useless, powerless, unprofitable, and unfruitful—and be relegated to being under the control of the Adversary's Policy of Evil along with the vast majority of Christianity today!

- And so—as you read down through the Fatherly Exhortations and Expectations of Proverbs chapter 4—it’s very apparent that the Father is taking a tone of fervency and intensity because the son now has the capacity to enter into godly judgments—(and the mark of maturity that these things are—being able to make independent type judgments) - all of which means that when that type of godliness gets put into action and gets worked out in the details of your life ...

... the world knows what’s going on;
 ... sin in your members knows what’s going on;
 ... and the policy of evil knows what’s going on ...

... and they’re going to respond to that and tempt that and oppose that increased maturity and increased godliness that there now is to your sonship life!

- Which makes the tone of the Father and the things the Father says here (exhortation-wise) a perfectly VALID, PROPER, AND PERFECTLY FITTING exhortation to the circumstances of sonship judgment!

- Now the kind of work that’s going to be required of you (which, by the way, this Exhortation makes you aware of) - is to take a relatively brief amount of information that’s designed to be the ‘guideline’ (so to speak) for which judgmental decisions are going to be made—and with that ‘guideline’ type information, you are then going to have to meet those circumstances and situations that arise in the details of your life that require a **judgment** to be made—and then you’re going to have to do such things as what Proverbs 4:25-27 talks about —

- (read Pro. 4:25-27)

- And because of what it is (judgment) - the way in which the instruction of judgment is going to be given is **different** than the way in which the instruction of wisdom and justice was given.

- Not that this is going to be a vastly different category of decision-making (because we’ve been making some judgments already—it’s just that they’ve been either wise or just judgments) - but now we’re going to receive some information that’s going to allow us to take the wisdom and the justice that we’ve already got and apply it to decision-making in which the options in the decision is NOT one that could be based simply upon wisdom or justice alone.

- And that's not to be a "scary" thing—because for one thing, you have the instruction of wisdom & justice; and you have the proper development & growth of godly love; and you have the development of the "*s*" *pirit which is of God* operating within you to the degree that it is; plus you will have the *instruction of judgment* itself (brief as it is); and you have sonship prayer — and all of that, **combined** is going to give you the capacity for making these kind of judgment type of decisions according to godliness (according to the way in which your Father makes them, Himself)!

- And you're going to have to take all that you've been given so far — and then when situations & circumstances arise that call for a judgment type decision—you're going to have to take what you've been given as a son; and then you're going to have to THINK, PONDER, MUSE about it ... **and you COME TO the decision!**

- It's a decision that, based upon some skill that's been developed within you (on the basis of applying wisdom and applying justice) - to look at the situation, and with a frame of reference you've got already, be able to sit down (so to speak) - and **think** the thing over; **weigh** out the ramifications of deciding this way or that way (or whatever) - and finally come to a decision that, "This is the best option in this given situation."

- And it may very well be just as simple as: This is a right decision, and this is a wrong decision—but the vast majority of the time (for the remainder of your sonship life once the instruction of judgment has been given) - the majority of the decisions you're going to make in the details of your life that are in keeping with your ongoing sonship education, are NOT decisions that are "right vs. wrong" — but are decisions of "foolishness vs. wisdom"!

- And because of that—that's the reason why you find both *wisdom* and *justice* being spoken about in this Exhortation to receiving the instruction of Judgment—because they both have a roll now to play—because making a wise judgmental decision takes both the wisdom and the justice that you've acquired and puts them to use (along with the instruction of judgment) - and allows for you to do just what it says in Proverbs 4:25-27.

- **“Ponder”** - (that’s a word you haven’t had yet) - and that’s why it comes up now— because you haven’t been in a situation where that process of your mind can work! - but now it can!!

- **Ponder** = to weigh in the mind; to compare the circumstances or consequences of an event—or the importance of the reasons for or against a decision. To consider carefully; to think over; to meditate upon.

- “Pondering” demands more than one issue being brought to bear upon the decision-making process. (You’re bringing wisdom AND justice [as well as all of the other things you’ve acquired] to bear upon where your *feet* are going to go!)

- And so you’re going to *ponder the path of your feet* — and you’re going to come along now, and because your Father isn’t going to outright tell you what to do—you’re kind of blazing a new trail—you’re moving into new territory (so to speak) - but the issue is: before you decide which path your feet are going to take, you first are going to PONDER IT!

- And you’re going to make a decision based upon *pondering!*

- And note that (not that it’s exactly the same concept) - but we have in our English Language a word that has as its radical root this word “ponder” - which is the word **preponderance** = a legal term that’s used in connection with the amassing of evidence— (the “preponderance of the evidence”) — which is a means of swaying a jury to believe in the truth of what has taken place.

- And what the prosecuting/defense attorney does is to amass all this evidence to support his case—and by the preponderance of it (which is the issue of the weight of it all) the jury is supposed to arrive at or COME TO a decision!

- And that’s what goes on in your thinking—something has **more weight** in your thinking when it comes to making a decision—and the wisdom, the justice, and the godly love (along with the instruction of judgment) - that “weight” is now going to be brought to bear upon the path of your feet! (and on the basis of that—*all your ways will be established!*) — you’ve got some heavy decision-making to do!

- Because the kind of skill you gain in the decision-making of godly judgment isn't *just* going to be the skill to perceive the 'right' or 'wrong' path (or course of action) - but to take the instruction of Wisdom, Justice, & Judgment; plus the Godly Love; plus the '*s'pirit which is of God* [Pro. 1:23] — and YOU are going to *ponder* a path for your *feet*—and the bottom line is that YOU are going to *let ALL your ways be established* — notice that it doesn't say, 'let God establish all your ways'!

- YOU define the path of your feet—and YOU then let all your ways be ESTABLISHED. (without looking at your Father to try to get some kind of 'indicator' from Him that your doing the right thing or not!)

- And again—this isn't to be a 'scary' thing—or something that is just fraught with doubt & uncertainty—no—because the truth of the matter is, what you've been given by your Father (the Wisdom, Justice, Judgment—the Godly Love—His 'spirit') has the capacity, the ability, and the power to accomplish all of this exactly as He would do it Himself—(because that IS how He does it, Himself!)

- And what is now beginning to happen (not in 'theory' but in a real, genuine, rubber-meets-the-road type way) - is that you are beginning to make decisions INDEPENDENT of your Father!

- Not that He ever strictly leaves you—(because He doesn't) — but one of the greatest aspects of adulthood type adoption of sons, is the issue of INDEPENDENT DECISION-MAKING!

- It's what you've longed for as a son—and it's what your Father has longed for as your Father—because it is what is going to make it so that you are qualified to work together with Him in all His business!

- And really, this isn't out of the realm of what happens with a natural father and his natural son—in fact, I can make decisions (judgments) based upon the wisdom, love, and spirit of my earthly father—and even though he's in God's heaven right now, I know he would be pleased with my decision!

- But the point is—YOU are going to determine and define *the path of your feet*—and it's going to take some heavy thinking (some *pondering*) at times for you to COME TO the decision you make!

- And that means that YOU, now, have to do some **planning** and some **purposing** in your sonship life!

- And in view of that, you'll be able to come along (on the basis of that planning) and say, "These are going to be my *ways*" — and then YOU'LL have to *establish* them!

- (That is, you'll have to do some preparation, some 'setting things up' [so to speak], make some provisions for what you planned for, etc.)

- So therefore, this really is getting into the arena of real, adulthood type decision-making—where you are going to determine a path to take in a given situation—and without wavering whatsoever, (based upon all that your Father has taught you and generated in your inner man) - you can confidently make a decision to take a particular path ... and you KNOW it's pleasing to your Father without Him ever coming along and telling you that it's well-pleasing in advance!

- And in your communion & fellowship in sonship prayer, you can come along and tell your Father that you've determined to do this ... or that.

- And the point is—that by the time you've been instructed in godly *judgment* as a son—by that time, you now know what your Father expects you to do—(you've got the capacity to discern what is well-pleasing to Him ... what His *good pleasure* is!) - [see Phil. 2:12-13]

- And notice that because of the capacity that your edification as a sons gives you—notice that you're supposed to make these kind of decisions with CONFIDENCE —

Pro. 4:27— Turn not to the right hand nor to the left— you're not going to waiver or be uncertain or any of that kind of business!

- And that's why you have the **determination** that (:25) talks about—your "*eyes are looking right on*".

- This is a son actually beginning to give manifest demonstration that he's emulating his Father!

- (Because that's how his Father acts—that's how his Father makes **confident** decisions—that's how his Father operates with **determination** and **without distraction**—without losing “**sight**” of the goal!)

- And to borrow the apostle Paul's expression over in Ephesians 1 — God *worketh all things after the counsel of his own will*: — and NOTHING deters Him from it!

- (and now that's what you're going to do, too!)

(MINI REVIEW)

- Now up to this point, what we've really been doing with the Fatherly Exhortation that corresponds to receiving *the instruction of Judgment*—is to kind of familiarize ourselves with the kind of TONE the Father takes with His sons—and just by that alone, it gives us a particular frame of reference (or sets our minds) just prior to getting the instruction of Judgment—(which is essential due to the demands & rigors of judgmental decision-making).

- And by both what the Father says, and the serious & urgent Tone in which He says it—we have come to appreciate the fact that:

- A level of attainment has been reached by the son (having received the instruction of Wisdom & Justice);

- The son is going to face stiff temptation & opposition from
1) The World; 2) his Flesh (sin in his members);
3) The Satanic Policy of Evil;

- The demands & rigors (the work) of Judgmental decision-making is going to be intensified more than ever before— (therefore we looked at the issue of *pondering* that your mind now *can* do, and *must* do in arriving at a *judgment*);

- And that judgmental decisions are going to be ... (far more than any decision up to this point), the issue of **Independent Decision-making** — using only what you have been taught by your Father in Wisdom & Justice; plus the growth of the godly love; and that *spirit which is of God*—and bringing all that to bear upon what judgment you make.

- Basic & Simple Breakdown of Proverbs chapter 4:

(:1-9) — An Evaluation of whether or not the son is ready to go on.
(and we'll talk more about this in a moment)

- Notice that you have a "*Hear, ye children,*" (in :1).

- And then in (:10), you go back to a "*Hear, O my son,*"

- And if you pay attention to what the Father says—you'll notice that after the evaluation issue in (:1-9) is finished—you have 2 times in chapter 4 in which the Father personally addresses His *son* (singular). [once in :10, and again in :20]

- Therefore what you have in the remainder of chapter 4—and which alerts you to what to expect in the *instruction of judgment*) is that you have **2 MAIN COMPONENTS** that makes up the *instruction of judgment*. (And, by the way, we have 2 Main Components to our *instruction of judgment* in Romans 13:8-14).

(:10-13) — Pre-Doctrinal Exhortation to Component #1

(:14-19) — Post-Doctrinal Exhortation to Component #1

(:20-22) — Pre-Doctrinal Exhortation to Component #2

(:23-27) — Post-Doctrinal Exhortation to Component #2

- And then, in Proverbs chapter 5 and vss. 1-6— you get a Post-Doctrinal Exhortation to the entire *instruction of judgment* (with another "*My son,*") before you once again go back to a "... *O ye children,*" in (:7).

- (Proverbs 4:1-9)

- These first 9 verses are UNIQUE! you haven't encountered anything like those first 9 verses yet! — there hasn't been a "*Hear, ye children,*" yet in the Exhortation & Expectation aspect of things. [there'll be more of them, but this is the first one]

- And in a sense—the first 9 verses are all **Evaluative**.

- They come along and, by what the Father says, He evaluates; and He provides for **the son to evaluate** whether he really is ready to go on.

- By what those first 9 verses say—the son is able to look back on his instruction of Wisdom & Justice—and he’s able to come along and say, either, Yes, it’s effectually worked within me to the point that I’m ready to go on; I can begin to handle the increased responsibility and the increased work-load that’s coming up under the *instruction of judgment*... or he’s going to have to come along and say, No, I don’t think I’m ready just yet!

- And this is essential—because you have to have the information contained in Wisdom & Justice (as well as the growth/development of the godly love) all up and running well & effectually working in your inner man—or else, you just won’t know what to do with the information you get in the *instruction of judgment*!

- It’s like in mathematics—you first have to have addition, subtraction, multiplication, & division, and up and running well before you ever get to doing algebra & quadratic equations! — (You just won’t have any capacity to handle 4 variables at once!)

- And receiving the *instruction of judgment* allows for you to handle a MULTIPLE of variables!

- And due to the nature of what’s up & coming in his education—(i.e., all of the rigors and demands that *judgment & equity* are going to take) — the son needs to make an honest self-evaluation—and the Father needs to make it along with him—to make sure that he’s ready for it!

- And that’s what the first 9 verses in Proverbs 4 are doing.

- And when it comes to: What is it that HAS to be there, in order for the son to go on? ...

- (note :4-7) — this is the ‘core issue’ ...

- Notice the verbal concept that gets repeated: (the “*get*” concept).

- And these “*get*” concepts are to underscore the son’s ATTITUDE towards his education at this point—and by kind of ‘harping’ on this (so to speak), the son is supposed to assess within himself whether he has fully profited by what he’s been taught so far.

- And by the Father saying it the way He does—with all this *get & getting* concept — it makes it so that son can come along and say: Did I “get it” or didn’t I???

- And by what (:6) says especially—the son can come along and assess: Do I love her, or don’t I??? (value & esteem her)

- And what this is, is a **marker of maturity** that’s being expected within the son at this particular time.

- And because of that, the Father doesn’t have to come along and tell the son what to think—but all He has to do is to exhort him; beseech him; and urge him—and the expectation is that (by doing that) the son can discern what is to be expected of him and what he’s supposed to be doing.

- (And that’s part of maturity and adulthood mind capacity).

- And it all boils down to the Father making the son aware of the fact that there’s something he’s supposed to be in possession of before we go on.

- And the Father is making sure that all of the sons He’s dealing with (i.e., His *children*) all [collectively] have got it before moving on.

- And the nature of this is—that you’re to be aware that NOTHING your Father has taught you is supposed to be compartmentalized — that is, none of what you’ve been taught is supposed to have been only learned to ‘pass a test’ - and then set aside! NO! You learned all that only so you could learn this next thing—and everything you’ve learned will be NEEDED in order to learn and do this next thing! (And without all that you’ve learned you WON’T learn this next thing!)

- And then the Father drives it all home (so to speak) especially in (:7) — for because of how critical this issue is, the Father comes along and cites an issue as “*the principal thing*” — and therefore, you’ve got to GET IT ... and furthermore, *with all your getting* get this other thing also—(which is the very thing He says back in :5).

- And it’s this issue of what He calls *wisdom*, and this issue of what He calls *understanding*.

- And all that’s being said here is said within a particular context!

- In the context—you've been given *the instruction of wisdom* (with all it's corresponding exhortations & expectations) — and the expectation is that, based upon the positive & proper response to all that—that you have been acquiring Wisdom; you've been making Wise decisions in the details of your life on the basis of that — and furthermore, that wisdom has produced within you this thing called *understanding*—and you can now operate confidently based upon that *understanding*.

- And by exhorting you as (:7) does, (with *wisdom* being *the principal thing*—i.e., what you MUST have before going on), you are then supposed to be able to determine if you're satisfied and convinced and confident that you've GOT IT.

- And then in (:8 & 9) there's the expectation that, based upon that, there should now be a properly increased godly zeal and enthusiasm for what's coming up, and for moving on—and you're expected to *exalt wisdom* and to *embrace her* (which are the natural fruits of that godly *love* for her as per :5) — and when that's properly done, that *wisdom & understanding* will give you a ***promotion*** and ***honour*** in connection with your sonship status. (based upon your demonstrated capacity/ability)

- And then (:9) tells you that by that proper and godly response, and by continuing to make full use of what you've learned, your benefit will be to have that wisdom give to your *head* an *ornament of grace*, and she'll *deliver* to you a *crown of glory!* (decoration)

- And that's really the end of the assessment.

- And there's supposed to be some real delight and joy and zeal for going on — and my understanding is that you're supposed to communicate that zeal and delight for getting it and for being ready to go on to your Father in your sonship prayer.

- And when that assessment has been made—then the Father begins once again addressing His son personally in (:10) as He and you actually move on to getting *the instruction of judgment*.

- So at this point—the question is, How does the son evaluate whether he's GOT IT or NOT? — How do you come along and confidently say, Father, I do have *wisdom* as the *principal thing*? I've got it, and I've gotten the *understanding* along with it. ???

- (there's something that the Father expects His son to utilize as the **CRITERION** for determining whether or not he's got the *wisdom* and got the *understanding*)
- And notice that the Father doesn't give the son any objective criterion for assessing these matters anywhere here in these 9 verses—so the most logical reason for why He doesn't do that would be because He's already given Him that criterion somewhere before you ever got to this point.
- In fact, He gave the son that criterion before the education ever began!
- And it should come as no surprise that the CRITERION is found back there in Proverbs chapter 2.
- The Father gave the son this criterion when He gave the son the ability to *perceive the words of understanding*!
 - Because He not only gave the son the ability to perceive what His words were designed to do—but He gave His son the ability to perceive **whether the words are DOING what they are designed to do!**
 - So the Father gave the son the capacity to determine whether he's actually getting the *wisdom* out of the *instruction of wisdom*—and whether he's getting the *justice* out of the *instruction of justice*.
 - And built into the curriculum is not only the teaching that gives you the information—but there's also built into it **the objective criterion for determining whether it's effectually working within you, or not!**
- (Pro. 2:1-4) - If all 3 of those commitments to getting your sonship education are met—then (:5) says, *Then shalt thou understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God.* — and then it goes on — 6 *For the LORD giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding.* 7 *He layeth up sound wisdom for the righteous: he is a buckler to them that walk uprightly.* 8 *He keepeth the paths of judgment, and preserveth the way of his saints.* 9 ***Then shalt thou understand righteousness, and judgment, and equity; yea, every good path.***

- And it's that last part (especially :9) - that not only tells the son what he'll acquire knowledge-wise and sonship decision-making-wise by the education that has the wisdom and everything to it—but it also tells you that you're going to **UNDERSTAND IT!!**

- And if you “understand” something, therefore, then you understand **how it works!** ... you understand **that it DOES work!** ... and you understand **that it IS working!**

- So the truth of the matter is—if you can go back and objectively look at every Component of Wisdom to your initial instruction of godly wisdom—and every Component of Justice to your initial instruction of godly justice—and you can honestly say, I understand not only **WHAT** these things teach, but **HOW** they are effectually designed to work within me—and I understand how to make sonship decisions based upon them (based upon what [and only what] your Father taught you), **and I am doing so**—and you therefore **DO** understand *every good path* these things teach you in connection with the details of your life right now—and you're **walking** in them — **then you've got the wisdom and you've got the understanding you need!**

- And what this boils down to is—that you are honestly determining, based upon the objective criterion of knowing what the effectual working of the initial instruction of Wisdom & Justice is designed to do—you are evaluating whether it **IS** effectually working within you!

- In other words—if you are going into your business or job every day, and Romans 12:11 is **NOT** your reason for going to work for that day—then it's **NOT** effectually working within you! (3rd Component of Wisdom)

- And if you look at other members of the church the body of Christ—and you **DON'T** think of them as *members one of another* with you — then Wisdom is **NOT** effectually working within you!

- (and so forth and so on—through all 6 Components of Wisdom and all 3 Components of Justice).

- Now at this point—if you've been taking this preemptive type of Exhortation in Proverbs 4:1-9 seriously—and you've been evaluating if all of the components of wisdom & justice are effectually working

within you sufficiently enough for you to confidently say, Yes, I'm ready to go on to the *instruction of judgment*—I want to point out that it may very well be (even in the amount of time it's been since you've received that instruction up to now) - it may very well be that you can look at one or more of these Components and say, "Well, I really haven't encountered the particular situation that this Component or that Component talks about."

- And that may make it so you might come along and doubt yourself and think that you really aren't ready to go on.

- But I want you to understand that that's a NORMAL thing—because the truth is, not all of these issues come up on a daily basis; or on a weekly basis; or even on a yearly basis!

- And so in that case, the issue for you is to make an evaluation whereby you can come along and honestly say, "Ok, I clearly have the effectual working of 1, or 2, or 3, or 4 (or whatever many) of these Components to the degree that I DO have the "*understanding*" that I'm supposed to "*GET*" (as Prov. 4:5 & 7 and as Prov. 2 talks about)." — and so if that's the case, and if the issue is simply that one or more of the other Components to your Wisdom or your Justice just hasn't had a situation or circumstance present itself to you in order for you to operate upon it — then what you have to do in that case is to ask yourself, If that situation arises, DO YOU CONFIDENTLY KNOW WHAT TO DO???

- And since you've gained the EXPERIENCE of making full use of (actually DOING) what one or more (or several) of the Components set forth—(in other words, you've got the actual experience of the full effectual working of those components) — then you should be confident that you've got the effectual working of the rest, but you simply haven't had the opportunity yet to put them into practice.

- And that's a normal thing and that's a natural thing. And that shouldn't make it so you would say that you're not ready to go on.

- And so the serious, earnest evaluation of Prov. 4:1-9—(especially in :7 ... "*and with all thy getting get understanding.*") - is for you to honestly determine that you not only know what the Wisdom says; but also that you have actually made a sonship decision BY that wisdom—and then you have actually chosen or determined a course

of action—which means that you’ve ended up choosing a PATH to walk in, in connection with that Wisdom effectually working within you.

- And all that matches up perfectly with what it says back in Prov. 2:6 *the LORD giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding* - as well as (:9) *Then shalt thou understand righteousness, and judgment, and equity; yea, every good path.*

- And therefore, in order to have a ‘passing grade’ for this checkpoint is to not only **know** what your Father has taught you—but that you have actually made decisions based upon what he taught you in connection with the details of your life—and you’ve actually DONE the godly Thinking, the godly Conduct & Behavior, and the godly Labor ... you’ve actually DONE THE WORK ... the doctrine has actually worked~! and **worked itself out** in the details of your life!

- The evaluation you’ve got to have (and to engage in) is that you can honestly come along and say that the effectual working that’s designed to be produced in you from your instruction of wisdom & your instruction of justice **is doing its job** — and you ARE making wise sonship decisions (based upon the components of wisdom you’ve been given); you ARE making just sonship decisions (based upon the components of justice you’ve been given) - you’re comfortable making those decisions; you’re confident making those decisions—your Sonship Prayer with your Father (as you review your day with Him, and acquaint Him with all your ways) doesn’t have you hemming & hawing & halting in your communion with Him (wondering if you’ve really made a decision that’s wise), and all that kind of thing — but rather, based upon what He’s taught you, you KNOW you’ve made a wise decision, you KNOW you’ve made a just decision!

- And this is critical here—because the truth of the matter is, these decisions are easy & comfortable by far and by comparison to Judgmental & Equitable decisions—and if you can’t confidently make decisions when it’s easy & comfortable, you’re never going to be able to make decisions to the pleasure of your Father when you’re in an environment that’s NOT easy or comfortable to make decisions!

- And when that evaluation/assessment is over—and when you can honestly say that the doctrine is working—then that should give you (and it’s designed to produce within you) a **DESIRE** to **go on**—it should produce within you the confidence and the joy and the zeal for the wisdom you’ve got working within you so that you can come along and LOVE her; and EMBRACE her (& gain the benefits described in :8&9)— and you’re then in a position to “take it to another level” (so to speak) - [i.e., go on and get the *instruction of judgment & equity*.]

- So—we’ve reached the point where we’re finished with all the Wisdom & Justice—we’ve reached the end of the review—we’ve reached the end of the Sonship Checkpoint—we’ve reached the end of the assessment & the evaluation—and we’re at the point in which you should now be able to confidently say that you’re ready to go on. ... so are you?

- Well then, that takes us to looking briefly at the Pre-Doctrinal Exhortation to receiving the instruction of Judgment in Proverbs 4:10-13.

- (read Pro. 4:10-13)

- Now I want to return to something that we’ve mentioned before—and that is the issue of the URGENCY that there is to the Father’s exhortations here in Proverbs chapter 4.

- And we noted that sense of urgency in the TONE that the Father takes up in (:1-9) - but this issue gets focused upon here in (:10-13) as well.

- (note it especially there in :12—*When thou goest, thy steps shall not be straitened* [or bound; or narrowed; or cramped; or distressed, confined, perplexed—which points up the issue that a *straitening* can, indeed, occur—such as becoming “*straitened in your bowels*” as per II Cor. 6:12] **and when thou RUNNEST, thou shalt not stumble.** (you’re going to “run” now!)

- And even in (:13) you have *Take FAST hold of instruction*; (you’ve got that word “*fast*” used there as well)

- And really, this “running” issue is at the core of the Exhortation—and a sense of urgency has now entered into the picture.

- And there’s a natural aspect of that, especially in connection with the fact that this is being set forth in connection with God’s program with Israel.

- (And for the Members of the Remnant of Israel—**urgency** IS a big thing!) — [because the ‘Time Schedule’ is going to be clicking in] — and they do have ‘time constraints’ that are of a constraining nature in that 5th & final Installment — and therefore ‘urgency’ becomes a natural thing).

- But there’s also an ‘urgency’ factor (although, not of the exact same type) - but still an ‘urgency’ factor in connection with **us** in this dispensation of grace.

- And because of it, this is just a natural part of sonship education ... even in natural sonship education.

- Because there is a point at which the father, as he begins dealing with his son — and the education is well underway — that there’s so much that the father has that he needs to get his son involved in—and there’s aspects of his business that are coming up that he needs to be able to have his son prepared for & fully ready to be able to engage in — that he PRESSES his son to make sure that his son realizes that he CAN’T DAWDLE—he CAN’T WASTE TIME!

- And the son needs to realize and recognize that “**time is of the essence**” !

- And this TIME/TIMING issue **is** a factor now—and it’s all a part of the increased capacity that you now have as a son/daughter.

- And in this Pre-Doctrinal Exhortation—our Heavenly Father wants us to know/perceive that the ‘ante has been upped’ (so to speak) - meaning that with this increased capacity comes increased responsibility—and when the Father increases your responsibility, that means that your work-load is going to be increased—and with an increase in work-load comes the necessity to have to spend far more time (and spend it wisely) ... upon the aims, goals, and objectives of the Father’s business!

- And the Father’s expectation is that the son is going to ‘quicken his pace’ (so to speak) — and that the son now has the capacity to get more involved in the Father’s business operations!

- Again, (:12) says, *When thou goest, thy steps shall not be straitened; and when thou RUNNEST, thou shalt not stumble.* (Well, the son hasn’t “run” yet—but the expectation is that he’s going to now “run”)

- (this is the 1st time the issue of “running” comes up in the Fatherly Exhortations & Expectations!)

- And the son is now expected to “**run**” because he’s got the capacity to “run” now — he’s always been going (or walking) - but now he’s got the capacity to ‘quicken his pace’ - he’s got the capacity to actually “run”!

- And in our epistles of the apostle Paul, you have examples of that—especially when you contrast the way in which the Corinthians were moving along (badly—their sonship education had actually been brought to a halt) - [or the Galatians (*Ye did **run well**; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth? Gal. 5:7*)] — vs. — the way in which the Thessalonians were moving along.

- The Thessalonians were ones who “ran” — everything seemed to go well with them — and they RAPIDLY moved through material & RAPIDLY moved through the curriculum.

- And when you’ve got saints that respond like that, then that kind of speed occurs.

- But the truth of the matter is—THAT’S A DECISION THAT THE SON MAKES!!!

- He gets Exhorted to it by the Father—but he RESPONDS to it by his sonship decisions!

- And when a son responds to it well—and when he (at the exact same time) takes to heart all of the alerts and admonitions and warnings that the Father gives him concerning the Oppositions from the world; from sin in the son’s members; and from the Policy of Evil that are going to do everything they can to **slow down** that “running” (if not bring it to a **halt**) — if a son takes all those things to heart & responds Positively & Properly to them all—then he’s able to keep on running!

- And he’s able to go right through the rest of Level I Sonship Education (not that he does it in just a few weeks) - but he’s able to make rapid progress—and to ultimately get himself where he’s capable & ready to move into Level II.

- But this ‘urgency factor’ comes into play now—with taking on increased capacity & increased responsibility!

- And by having reached a level of attainment with the first 2 Major Sonship Decision-Making Skills (the Wisdom and the Justice) - you should now have a godly-generated **desire** and **zeal** and **enthusiasm** for now taking on even more capacity; and more responsibility; and more WORK— (especially of this **independent** variety that's even more indicative of adulthood sonship [functional, sanctified living]!

- And the *instruction of judgment* (and the *instruction of equity* that follows it) - both have an increased amount of responsibility to them; an increased amount of involvement in connection with thinking and discerning and perceiving and making discretionary judgments.

- Everything about sonship living has now been 'up'ed' or increased at this point.

- And the need for this Pre-Doctrinal Exhortation is that the son has to be made aware of the demands and the rigors that the remaining of his Level I Sonship Education is going to make on him—and he has to be made aware of the need for him to have all things running well at this point in order for the remainder of his Level I Sonship Education to WORK! (again, otherwise, you just won't know what to do with what you're told in the *instruction of judgment* and the *instruction of equity*—it's effectual working in your inner man will simply be **impossible!**)

- Now along with this **godly** 'urgency factor' that has now come into play— (that is, that TIME is going to be of the essence; and to make good use of your time—to spend your time wisely and in wise pursuits) — one other thing needs to be brought into the picture by way of an Exhortation just prior to receiving the instruction of judgment — and that is the issue of your **CONFIDENCE** ... confidence in the adult sonship decisions you're going to make as you begin to function independently from your Father just outright telling you what to do.

- One of the major aspects of the Fatherly Exhortations and Expectations made to the son before the instruction of judgment gets underway—is to make you aware of the nature of (or the kind of) decision-making that you're now going to have to do—and because the issue is now one of ***judgment***—where there are no specific things that identify a path for you to walk; where there are no specific things that identify a way for you to be able to come along and say

... “THIS is going to further my objectives when it comes to making progress in my Sonship Education and Laboring together with my Father in His business!”

- Well, all that has a way of breeding a LACK of confidence — especially BEFORE the education gets underway—when all you’re doing is coming to the realization that the nature of the kind of decision-making you’re now called upon to do is of an INDEPENDENT variety—of having to figure out a whole bunch of things all on your own (without your Father telling you what to do or what path to take) — well, all of that can make you downright fearful—where, at first you might feel as though you DON’T have the CONFIDENCE to do what judgment-type decisions demand!

- But the Father knows that—and so He provides for a ‘quelling’ (so to speak) of any anxiety that might be rising up in you when you first think about independent decision-making.

- And one of the ways the Father ‘quells’ that anxiety is to do the kind of review we’ve done—and to ensure that all that the Father has taught you is up and effectually working and running well within your inner man!

- And basically, the Father comes along and says, Ok, son, do you have all that I’ve taught you so far up & running well? ... (and you say, Yes, Father, I do) ... then the Father says, Alright, that’s all you need—you may not think it is, but trust Me, with all that I’ve taught you, there will be no doubt that you’ll make these judgmental decisions exactly like I would!

- And one of the things you have to recognize about your own ability and capacity now that you’ve received initial wisdom, justice ... and a 3rd capacity that came out of that: (wisdom & justice work together to produce *discretion*) ...is that now *judgment* is going to be added to that—and it’s much like a chemical reaction takes place in which all those ‘elements’ (when put together) are going to produce another capacity—which is the capacity for making *judgmental* decisions!

- Example: in chemistry, you dealt with something called a “**catalyst**” = a substance that gets added to a reaction—and it entered into the reaction—and works to increase the rate of the chemical reaction.

- (Now, there are a lot of other issues about a catalyst—some of which don't really apply, and where the illustration kind of breaks down—but in general, it is a good illustration.)

- The “catalyst” concept is a good one to think about—because when the *judgment* gets added to the *wisdom* and the *justice* (with the *discretion* that they've produced) — in a sense, the *judgment* is going to act like a ‘catalyst’ - and just like a chemical catalyst does, it's going to facilitate and provide for the previous chemicals or compounds to do something that they could not do before—(even though they were in a reaction already; and even though they were mixed together; and even though certain things **were** going on).

- But as soon as the ‘catalyst’ is added—then all those elements can do **far more** than they could do without that ‘catalyst’!

- And just to carry out the illustration a little further—oftentimes the catalyst is inert (unable to act) in and of itself unless it's added to a mixture to produce a furtherance in the reaction that's going on (or to produce a further capacity in the reaction that's going on).

- Point is—the catalyst (by itself) doesn't have much of anything that you can do with it.

- And in a sense—that's what we have going on here as you get the *instruction of judgment* underway in Romans 13:8ff.

8 *Owe no man any thing, but to love one another:*

- Well, before you can have any hope of that effectually working within you to ANY degree (1% or 5% or whatever) — you **obviously** have to have LOVE **already** in effect!

- Because you're not being told there to “start loving” - no - you're being told to do something in connection with “love” that ALREADY exists!

- And the issue here is—godly love has already been brought into existence by the effectual working of Romans 12:3ff—and now that the core Major Features of godly love have been brought into existence—the issue now is that some information ABOUT it; and a CHARGE in connection with it is going to be added to the mix!

- And by the effectual working of the nature *about* “love” - and the CHARGE that goes along with it—it’s going to enable the godly love & charity that’s already generated within us and is already working within us and is already being expressed by us and is already governing our Conduct & Behavior & our Laboring together with God in all the ways it’s been working all along — the CHARGE and the information contained in *judgment* is going to function like a ‘catalyst’ - and it’s going to do 2 Things!

- It’s going to ‘kick’ everything now into a higher gear (which is where the *running* come into play) - [and the ‘urgency factor’ come into play & where a heightening of everything now begins to happen].

- But it’s also going to give a greater *judgmental capacity* in connection with godly love & charity—which, **without** what is said in Romans 13:8-14, then our godly love & charity would be stalled & stuck where it is right now (at the end of Romans 13:7)!

- And therefore you couldn’t go on in to Romans chapter 14 & 15 and get the final 2 features of godly love & charity effectually working within you!

- And my point in all this is—that if you properly understand and appreciate HOW the *instruction of judgment* is designed to work **with all that has preceded it**—then you should have all the fear or the anxiety or dread of having to make independent type judgmental decisions relieved, dissipated, and dismissed from your thinking!

- In other words—you should anticipate that you’re going to have some real and powerful CONFIDENCE in making judgmental sonship decisions!

- And in the Fatherly Exhortations & Expectations—the Father kind of ‘prompts’ your thinking in connection with the kind of **confident** decision-making you’re going to have the capacity to engage in ...

(Proverbs 4)

11 I **have** taught thee in the way of wisdom (that’s done);
I **have** led thee in right paths (there’s the Justice—how to choose ‘right’ or righteous paths) — and all that is said in the PAST TENSE!

- Then, in (:12), the Father shifts gears from talking in the Past Tense (and what *has* been accomplished) - to talking in the FUTURE TENSE (and what *will* be taking place when the *instruction of judgment* gets put into effect).

- (And note the confidence that the Father inspires in His son in verse 12)!

12 When thou goest, thy steps shall not be straitened; and when thou runnest, thou shalt not stumble.

- And that's the AWARENESS that you are given concerning the effectual working of the *judgment* that's going to be added to all that you've learned so far.

- And previous to this—(just as it says in :11), the Father has “*led*” you in *right paths*—(which, by the way corresponds to what David said in the 139th Psalm) — but when the Father shifts to what He says in (:12), He indicates that **He is NOT going to be ‘leading’ you any longer!** (and in a sense, you don't have that ‘leading’ of the Father concept from this point on)! [though you do, and always will have the “leading of the Spirit”!]

- But this is where that ‘independent’ decision making comes into play—(not that the Father goes away) — but you are expected to be able to CONFIDENTLY choose and discern your own ‘right paths.’

- And this gets reinforced down in (:25-26) — YOU are going to have to ‘establish all your ways’ - the Father isn't going to tell you where to go! (You're going to have to *ponder the path of your feet*).

- Now what all this alerts you to is—that the nature of the information that's contained in the *instruction of judgment* is NOT going to be of an ‘identifiable’ nature—it's not going to say, “In this situation, this is the path; in this other situation, that's the path.” (as He did in the *wisdom* and the *justice*).

- But at the exact same time, you're to be prompted to and alerted to the fact that you WILL have the capacity to do that—and you're to have the CONFIDENCE that you will have the capacity to do that!

- And the reason for that confidence is because for one, you've got what's needed prior to getting the *instruction of judgment*—and for another, you're going to receive some *sayings* from your Father that are going to make it so that you have the capacity to **KNOW** with all **assurance** and with all **confidence** “every good path” (Pro. 2:9)!

- And if everything effectually works well within you—then you will confidently be able to determine a “good” path (which is all you may need to do at times) - or even to determine a “good,” or “better” or “best” path.

- And though you already have some measure of *discretion* ... that *discretion* is going to get even more powerful as you go on—and that is going to allow for you to make some real discretionary type **JUDGMENTS**.

- And the truth is—to make some discretionary decisions **takes some BOLDNESS; and it takes some CONFIDENCE; and it takes some CONVICTION!**

- And those are things that you are going to actually express to your Father in your communion & fellowship with Him in some intelligent Sonship Prayer.

- By the way—this independent type sonship decision-making skill not only makes it so that the Father kind of stays behind and allows the son to walk & run ahead of Him—and not only will YOU do the job of ‘establishing all your ways’ — but just as it says in Prov. 4:18 ... *the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day* ... eventually, you're going to acquire the capacity to **enlighten your own path!**

- And with the instruction you've already got—and with the instruction you're going to be given—it's kind of like you've got a Miner's hat on (so to speak) that has that light that shines wherever you're looking!

- Well, hopefully, just by talking about the nature of *judgment* and what that instruction is going to be like—you get the sense of not only how you're going to be making *judgmental* sonship decisions—but you're **not daunted** by that or fearful of that—because you really do realize that you really do (and will) have the capacity to do just that! with some real, **godly boldness and confidence!**

- And if you understand and appreciate all that—(viz., how critical the instruction of judgment that you're about to receive is; and how it's designed to work together [as that 'catalyst'] with all the previous instruction of Wisdom & Justice)—to make it so you can (with confidence) make these independent type judgmental decisions—then that final statement to your Pre-Doctrinal Exhortation in Proverbs 4:13 makes a lot of sense ...

13 Take fast hold of instruction; let her not go: keep her; for she is thy life.

- And you should be deeply & suitably IMPRESSED with the GETTING of the *instruction of judgment*, just as you were with GETTING the *wisdom* and the *justice*!

- And so in your curriculum for sonship education—you're eventually supposed to come to a body of information that's described as *the instruction of judgment*.

- And what it's going to do is to function in a 'catalytic' type manner with the Wisdom and the Justice that has been learned—and it's going to amplify the capacity that already exists—and it's going to take the godly Love & Charity that has already been brought into existence—and it's going to bring it all to a new level—and then it's going to provide for you to realize that ...

... you've got all the information you need right now to be able to make every sonship decision that you'll be called upon to make for the rest of your Level I sonship life (and even on in to your Level II sonship life).

- And even though you're exhorted by the Father about these things even *before* the *instruction of judgment* gets underway (and rightly so) - and even though I can tell you that you will have the capacity to make judgmental, independent-type sonship decisions with full confidence (and boldness & conviction) by means of the acquired capacity you have attained right now—the truth is, your **awareness** of that **won't** take place until the *instruction of judgment* gets underway ... when you make that first "*step*" all on your own, and when you begin "*running*" all on your own.

- In other words—even though you fully BELIEVE what your Father tells you in the Exhortation (to counter any apprehension you may have)—your confidence level goes

up tremendously when you actually EXPEREINCE taking *steps* all on your own; and you experience your *steps* NOT being *straitened*—and when you EXPERIENCE *running*; and not *stumbling*!

- And Proverbs 4:12 is the Father telling His son (and making His son **aware**) that he's now got the **capacity** to go from Him and take his own *steps* and even *run*, and *run* well.

- But at first, the Father knows that you don't have any experience of that yet—and He knows that you're liable to think that when the path is NOT obvious before you (and the Father is not out in front leading you—the Father [more or less] says to you, "I've brought you to this point to start making decisions on your own—I'm going to stay here; you go on ahead.") — the Father knows that, at first, you're liable to think that you might just follow a path into a 'dead end' ... or follow a path that keeps on getting narrower & narrower until you can't go on any further.

- Or when you *run*—there's a natural apprehension that you may not be able to see everything on your path very well; and that you're going to *stumble* on something and fall down.

- But the son needs to (and you need to) realize that the ILLUMINATING CAPACITY—the LIGHT CAPACITY that this information is going to give is something that you just have to **experience** to really get the full-blown confidence and boldness you **want** to have and you **need** to have.

- And it's very similar to what we had when we came to Romans 8:16-39 ("to *perceive the words of understanding*" — when you had to come to the point where you had full confidence in the Father, and in the Curriculum He put in your hands [to do the job He told you it can do]) — well, the son now needs to perceive the full, effectual working of what this *instruction of judgment* is designed to do—and he needs to have the **confidence** that it will DO what it says it's designed to DO!

- It **will** provide the LIGHT—and it **will** provide the capacity to choose a path that DOESN'T have a 'dead end' to it! ... that DOESN'T have a *straitening* to it!

- Now let's come back to Romans 13:8-14 and notice one other issue.

- Now with all of the background type work we've done—and with a better appreciation for the **nature of the instruction** that goes on with the *instruction of judgment*—it should come as no surprise to find out that the nature of the information contained in our *instruction of judgment* is going to be a little bit different than the previous information—and you're expected to handle it a bit different than the previous information.

- And oftentimes the reason why the information contained in Romans 13:8-14 is NOT handled very well (and is often MIS-handled) is for one thing:

- not rightly dividing God's word and properly handling it in its dispensational setting—it's often taught that Paul is saying that we are to keep the 10 Commandments ...

- for another thing—the whole issue of sonship education (and the sense & sequence of Romans through Philemon being set forth as our Curriculum for godly edification today) isn't understood or appreciated ... and neither, therefore is there any appreciation for what Paul is doing with the information from Romans 12:3ff (i.e., giving us the instruction of wisdom, justice, judgment and equity—the 4 basic sonship decision-making skills)

- but the very fact that the *instruction of judgment* has a different **nature** to it, makes how this information is given and how it is handled to be a critical issue as to properly handling it or mishandling it.

- And what I'm after here is—the nature of the *instruction of judgment* (because it IS judgment) — has 'principle-izing' capacity to it!

- It has the capacity to produce within our minds "**principles**" — that, because they are "principles" — which, based upon the root element of that word (the word "Prince" = an upright, upstanding and outstanding Ruler to whom you look to for guidance) ...

... and the *instruction of judgment* is providing "principles" that we are to install in our understanding as '**Points for Guidance**' - and for evaluating potential paths —

... and for taking the previous instruction of *wisdom & justice* (and the *discretion* that it produces) - and it provides for us to incorporate all that information, and utilize it **in a more powerful way than we've ever utilized it before!**

- Because that's what's going on in the *instruction of judgment*—that's what the 'nature' of the *instruction of judgment* is all about!

- And that's the reason why these verses generally don't get taught properly and are so often mishandled.

- For example—you end up saying that (:8-10) is teaching us that if everything we do is done out of love, then it's well-pleasing to God — (and that's not a lie, that's true!) — but that's NOT all those verses say!!! (And all their details are not simply designed to come to THAT conclusion!)

- In fact, if that's the case, then God's using a awful lot of words that He really doesn't have to use, just to say that!

- And then when you get to the issue of Time in (:11-14) — there's more there than just the issue of “making good use of time” (which **is** there, and **is** true) — but you've got some information there ABOUT time, that allows you to make *judgments* as to what constitutes “good use of time”!

- But my point is that by understanding the nature of that information in Romans 13:8-14—it allows for you to approach it properly; handle it properly; and to perceive some things about it that you wouldn't perceive about it if you didn't know what it was designed to do.

- Romans 13:8-14—The Instruction of Judgment.

- Now, before we deal with the details of Romans 13:8-14 and the *instruction of judgment*—there is one final thing that we need to do—in connection with the growth & development of godly Love & Charity (which is going to be one of the biggest factors in making godly, wise, sonship *judgments* that are well-pleasing to God).

- As we have it developed within us at the present time—we have come to understand that there are at least 4 Major Features of godly love that have come into existence by the time you get to Rom. 13:8.

- Godly love first got generated within us in the 1st Component of *wisdom*—(in Romans 12:3, specifically) - and that was the issue of: Godly love is **SELFLESS**.

- And then, because if it's left there, the selflessness would constitute godly love being “**with** dissimulation” - and so we were exhorted in Romans 12:9 *Let love be without dissimulation*. — we quickly added to the 1st Major Feature of Godly Love, the characteristic that Godly love is **KIND**. (Which got produced by the rest of [:9], *Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.*) [**lovingkindness**]

- Then—by making use of Selfless Lovingkindness in the 3rd & 4th Components of *wisdom*, that generated all on its own a 3rd Major Feature of Godly Love that was to go into action in the 5th Component of *wisdom* in Romans 12:13-15 — which was the characteristic that Godly love is **TENDERHEARTED**.

- And then by means of the effectual working of the 1st & 2nd Components of the *instruction of justice*, a 4th Major Feature of Godly Love came into existence—which was the characteristic that Godly Love is **MEEK** (meekness).

- Now, my understanding is that there is another 5th Major Feature of Godly Love that has also been brought into existence—and it was brought into existence in the *instruction of justice* as well.

- And it may be fairly said that the godly Meekness was brought into existence by the 1st Component of justice in Romans 12:17-18; and by the 2nd Component of justice in Romans 12:19-21.

- But there is another Major Feature of Godly Love that begins to get generated within you by the time you get to the end of the 2nd Component of justice—and then gets fully generated by the time you get to the end of the 3rd & final Component of justice in Romans 13:1-7.

- And it's especially there in Rom. 13:1-7 that I want to go back to in order to make sure that we've got this 5th Major Feature of Godly Love understood and appreciated—and in then end, recognized as up and running well within you.

- THE 5TH MAJOR FEATURE OF GODLY LOVE & CHARITY:

- The *instruction of judgment*—Rom. 13:8-14 (7 verses).

- There are 2 Components to it: (:8-10) & (:11-14)

- We are prompted to understand & appreciate that there are not 4, but 5 Major Features to godly love — (Rom. 13:8-10 [:9]) — God has the apostle Paul list 5 of the 10 Commandments.

- Which 5 are they? — (Why 5? why not 3 or 4? or why not all 10? — and why are they in this order?)

- Note the order — see Exo. 20:13-17 vs. Rom. 13:9

The Holy Spirit reverses the order of the first 2—(or the 6th & 7th Commandment) — why? — because He wants to correspond these 5 commandments to the growth & development of godly love.

- And each one of these Commandments is actually the **diametric opposite** or **antithesis** of a feature of godly love (in the very order the Features of godly love have been generated within you as you have gone through your sonship education so far).

- Now when you read the last verse of Romans 12 (:21) and when you read about our 3rd Component of *justice* in Rom. 13:1-7 — and when you especially read (:3 & :4) of Rom. 13 — what do you think this 5th Major Feature of Godly Love is?

- It's the issue of GOODNESS — **God's love promotes goodness!**

- But since **goodness** is a broad term—we're going to have to define it or describe it or label it with a little more precision than that.

- And by a little closer examination of what is said about a government (or one of those "*powers that be*"), we will be able to understand and appreciate (as well as describe or put another term together with **goodness** that will set it in a proper context that better describes this 5th Major Feature of Godly Love).

- And as we shall see—that term that will go with the issue of **goodness**—that better describes it, and that gives it a particular context—(and that, even though it will still be very broad and general—will, nevertheless, give it more precision in our thinking) ... is the term **BENEVOLENT**.

BENEVOLENT GOODNESS.

- “**Benevolence**” = (from *bene* = well, + *volo* = to will or wish) = a disposition to do good; desire to promote the happiness of others; generosity; a general state or disposition towards mankind at large.

- Websters 1828— “The *benevolence* of God is one of his moral attributes; that attribute which delights in the happiness of intelligent beings. “God is love.” (I John 4:8)”

- Truth is, this issue of ‘sonship goodness’ has been brought up 2 times since we began our sonship education—

- 1) Wisdom-Component 2—Rom. 12:9;
- 2) Wisdom-Component 6—Rom. 12:21.

- Now when we look with a little more perception as to what roll human government has (and that God has made it to be, regardless of what kind it is, or even what quality it is) - we will be able to make some connections with this issue of Benevolent Goodness being a Major Feature of God’s own Love, and a Major Feature of Godly Love & Charity that we are supposed to have operating within us as sons in connection with our *instruction of judgment*.

- Notice Romans 13:3 — (read)

- The first time we went through this we noted some specific things about that term “*good*” that comes up twice in (:3).

... *For rulers are not a terror to **good** works, but to the evil.* — and we noted there that the *good works* is the issue of ... (what?)

- *good works* = works of **peace; quietness; orderliness!**
(In other words, they are the exact **opposite** of works of *violence!*)

- The Godly Conduct and the Godly Behavior that is to be the **mark** of a properly educated “son of God” in terms of **Justice** in connection with the *powers that be* (the gov. under which he/she lives) - he’s to Conduct & Behave himself in ORDERLINESS, and living a “*quiet and peaceable life!*”

- And that’s a needful thing here in this earth; and it’s a needful thing out in the *creature* as well! (That’s part of what it means when God said, *For the creature was made subject to VANITY, ...*)

- *Rulers* (of **any** government at **any time**) are **NOT** a *terror* to works of peace/quietness/orderliness — and that’s a **CONSTANT**—that’s the way it’s always been since the Flood; that’s the way it is now; and that’s the way it will always be!

- You won’t incur the WRATH of the government for living a quite & peaceable life! (That’s what the gov. wants—even the biggest Dictator or Tyrant desires the people he governs to be peaceful and quiet and orderly).

- Some do this better than others—some worse—but they all do this to a sufficient degree! (sufficient for God’s purposes)

- So then—your Godly Sonship Conduct & Behavior where Justice is concerned in regards to your relationship to your Governmental *Power* is to do those **good works** (to live a life of orderliness, quietness, and peace). That’s the mark of Godly Justice that characterizes a son’s Godly Living in connection with his government!

- Then we had that term *good* come up again in (:3) ... *do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same:* — and we noted that the “*good*” here is talking about living a quiet, orderly, & peaceable life, too.

- Finally, in (:4), we have 3rd & final time the word “*good*” comes up in the 3rd Component of Justice — “*For he is the minister of God to thee for good.*”

- And what did we say that this *minister of God* (the ruler of government) was doing? ... What is the “*good*” that this governmental ruler is “*ministering*”?

- The *good* is NOT talking about a ruler *ministering* for God so as to keep sin in check and promote God's righteousness in the land where he governs!

- The *good* = the core, seminal issue of what his office is there for in the first place—to keep the violence of man under control so that God can continue carrying out His business in the long-term!

- The *good* is the issue of 'keeping the peace' - of keeping an orderly, quiet, peaceable empire, nation, state, city, or community! (He keeps man's violence in check!)

- Now what we need to better perceive with a little more accuracy here—is that there really isn't just **one** ministry of 'good' that God has designed all governments to be engaged in—but there are **two** ministries that they are engaged with.

- And in better perceiving this second one, we're going to add to our understanding of government being 'not a terror to good works [living a quiet & peaceable life], but to the evil [keeping man's violence in check]' ... we're going to add to that the issue of BENEVOLENCE.

- And you have the 1st ministry being mentioned there in (:3) - but then in (:4), you not only have the issue of keeping man's violence in check, but more specifically, when Paul says, *For he is a minister of God **TO THEE** for good*—my understanding is that there is more to it than just the issue of keeping man's violence in check, but we receive a further benefit from government (any government).

- Because this is a ministry specifically TO YOU, (singular), individually (for *good*)!

- And to get this—you have to go back (once again) to what is said up in (:1) ... *For there is no power (sing.) but of God.*

- And if you go back to when God originally gave that power to man (to Adam) on this earth (before sin was ever an issue in man or in the earth) - God gave Adam governmental power to subdue the earth and to have dominion over it.

- And our understanding is that when God gave Adam governmental or ruling power (with sin **not** being an issue in either him or in the earth) - that power was consistent with the very reason God established governmental power in the first place—in the heavenly realm of His creation, even before sin ever entered the picture there—and why was that?

- It was that God designed and intended that the methodology by which He would accomplish all His business [in heaven and in earth] would be by a set of CONTROLS (or “power” - governmental power).

- And what we need to think about a little more precisely is, that governmental power can (and does have) a *ministry* to you, individually, for “*good*” - both when sin and violence is an issue—and even when sin and violence is NOT an issue!

- And what we need to understand and appreciate is that resident in government—even in human government today—is something that is reflective of and consistent with the characteristic of God’s own LOVE!

- Granted, (just as it is with the issue of justice and keeping the violence of man in check) - **it isn’t perfect, it isn’t fully developed; it isn’t completely and accurately displayed in all it’s glory—but it IS resident there!**

- And it not only can be said of any governmental ruler today—but it could also be just as truly said of Adam himself that: *he is (was) the minister of God to thee for good.*

- And in Adam’s case—he was a *minister for good* (for the brief time sin was not in existence in the earth) to the animals, and to the woman.

- When God gave Adam this “power” to subdue and to have dominion — there wasn’t any ‘rebellion’ among the animal world (no sin).

- There were no other men—but there wasn’t any discord among the animals at all.

- And so Adam sets out to begin accomplishing God’s first order of business—he names the animals) - and then, because God is going to increase Adam’s work-load, he therefore needed an *help meet*.

- Now you have to think a little bit more carefully about just what Adam was going to do in order to go out and subdue the earth and have dominion over it (especially when sin wasn't an issue in either him or in the earth).

- And if it helps—you can just think about what the Bible talks about (in the book of the Revelation and other places) when our dispensation of grace is over and when God's program with Israel is over—and when all things have been reconciled back to God—and when Satan, sin, the plan & policy of evil are no longer an issue—and think about how that government & power of God will pick up with what He was doing in Genesis chapters 1 & 2 — and that the way in which that power (governmental, controlling power) works in God's everlasting kingdom and, therefore, functions in the way in which He created & intended it to work back with Adam.

- And when we do that—we can see some things that transpire, that then we can come along and say, Well, this is the way He wanted His business with His creation to work ... so back when God was dealing with Adam (before sin entered the picture), this is how He envisioned it working—this is what He wanted Adam to do.

- And it basically comes down to this:

God gave Adam “power” (and there weren't other men yet, so it wasn't power over men) **to organize creation SO THAT IT COULD RECEIVE THE “GOODNESS” OF GOD.**

- And this very thing gets accomplished when God fulfills His program with Israel, and when He establishes His kingdom upon the earth—both Israel and all the nations of the earth are going to receive the “goodness” of God—and, in fact, the earth itself and the heavenly places will finally be in a position to begin receiving the “goodness” of God!

- So Adam was going to go out—and speak with the animals about the “goodness” of God and what God had in store for them—(which was the issue that God was going to come to this earth and dwell on the earth with them and live among them) ... and the animals could speak back to Adam about all that—and they could converse about getting the first order of God's business accomplished on the earth!

... what???? animals talk????

- Notice that in Genesis 3:1—*Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of the tree of the garden?*

2 And the woman passed out! NO! ... she wasn't surprised at all ... she, in fact, carried on a conversation with the serpent as though this kind of thing went on all the time!

- In fact, the issue of the serpent being more *subtil* — subtility is something that you're only going to know exists (by and large) because you hear it (or because it's communicated to you)!

- And at least some of the animals had the ability to communicate (to speak) - some were probably smarter than others—some were more crafty than others—but the fact that the serpent was talking didn't make the woman run screaming back to Adam!

- The point is—obviously the animals were not placed on earth as mere decorations or as pets—(and they certainly were not placed on the earth for food ... at least in the beginning) — and they weren't put on the earth to maintain a delicate eco-system (like we hear about today—because they didn't eat each other as a 'food chain' until sin entered the world).

- The animals were placed on the earth with the ability to be **useful** to God and to Adam—to be communicated with and to—and Adam was given “power” (controlling power), not just arbitrarily (or just because God had the right to govern, and therefore He gave it to Adam) —

— rather, man was given “power” to provide for creation to be organized to receive the goodness of God—and therefore for the Benevolent Goodness of God to be bestowed upon it!

- And though you can talk about God's singular 'power' as a set of controls over His creation (and that's good, proper & right to do so) — but ultimately, **GOD IS FULL OF GOODNESS**—and **the mechanism for Him bestowing that goodness on His creation, is through the establishment of His government!**

- And that will ultimately happen in the heavenly places, too — (His goodness will be bestowed upon His creatures there).

- So the original goal of God creating this singular controlling “power” of government—and doing so before there was any sin or any ungodliness or wickedness that had to be ‘checked’ with justice and a judicial system—was to give God’s “son” (so to speak), Adam, (the pinnacle of God’s creation—created with the capacity for god-like-ness “godliness”) that controlling, governing “power” to go out and organize creation so that it could then receive God’s benevolent goodness when He comes to dwell among it.

- By the way—that was supposed to happen in very short order!

- Adam had a week to accomplish that—and on that 2nd Sabbath after the 1st, God was to come down to the earth, and bring His City with Him, erect it on the “beams” He laid for it, and establish His kingdom (His government; His governing, controlling power) upon it—then earth and the creatures in it would receive His benevolent goodness there in Eden, and then it would spread out over the whole earth from there.

- And all of the preparations for that event was to be done by one man and one woman and the animals in one week’s time!

- In connection with the benevolent goodness of God, (especially in connection with the Remnant of Israel when the kingdom gets established and they [and the whole earth begin receiving the Blessings from the Blessing mandate of the Davidic Covenant) ... see Psalm 107 (the 1st Psalm of the 5th Book)

(read : 1-9) - (:1), (:8), (:9)

- then look at (:15), (:21), (:31)

- But before Adam and the woman and the animals could get God’s first order of business underway—that “*serpent*” (Satan, the Adversary himself) struck—sin then entered the world as well as man himself, and violence came into existence on the earth, so much so that the violence of man threatened his very existence on the earth—and as we noted before; at the Flood, God fractures the “power” into “powers” - and now that “power” is going to rest, not in a single man, but in governments on the earth—and now that “power” is going to have not one, but two major functions!

- The fractured “power” still remains as a set of Controls that God has put upon His creation—and it still retains its original major function —(to be the methodology by which God is going to carry out all His business).

- And its First Major Function as it was given to Adam on the earth was to organize creation so that it can receive the GOODNESS of God.

- But now it’s going to have a Second Major Function—which is to keep man’s violence in check in order for God to still be successful in carrying out His business over the long term of human history!

- And my understanding is that, even as that fractured “power” ... even in all those “*powers that be*” (all of the forms and kinds and qualities of human governments that exist all over the world today) ... for well over 4,000 years since the Flood ... up to and including right now ... every government (some to a greater degree, some to a lesser degree), but every government in existence still retains these 2 major functions:

... (and they do so because they contain that ***ordinance of God***) ... and we should now appreciate the fact that the *ordinance of God* is made up of these 2 very basic functions:

1) God established every governmental power as a means of maintaining order, and to ultimately keep man’s ability to be violent under control for the long-term success of God’s business.

- And now we can add to that—corresponding with that statement in Rom. 13:4 *For he is the minister of God to thee for good.* — we can add to that, this other basic function of *the powers that be* ...

2) God established every governmental power as a means of maintaining order (providing order to God’s creation), out of which BENEVEOLENT GOODNESS flows to those under it.

- Notice that, this “goodness” issue that was in existence *before* the Flood (all the way back with Adam) **wasn’t totally erased** *after* the Flood!

- And as we will see—God’s benevolent goodness flowing to all parts of this earth—and therefore God’s creation receiving the goodness of God—is going to ultimately get accomplished by **GOVERNMENT!**

- First, by the government of the Messiah of Israel (the Lord Jesus Christ in His kingdom on this earth) ... and then to the nations—where government by government, the nations provide for God’s **goodness** to spread over the whole earth!

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this. (Isaiah 9:6-7)

- And if you think about it—with this additional function of human government (being the means by which **goodness** flows to those under it) ... that should just make it all the more a JOY to pay your taxes and live a quiet & peaceable life! (and to REJECT the often-time Christian UNGODLINESS of refusing to pay taxes and to gripe, complain, and moan about how bad government is!)

- Human government has a function to dispense **goodness** to its citizenry! (Just as much as it has a function to check the violence of its citizenry!)

- And government, the world over, still functions as a central *power* that dispenses **goodness** to those who live under it!

- And we have terms and phrases that we use in connection with that—such as “the public good” or “the good of the community” or even “the commonwealth” — and those agendas are all pursued by government—why? because they are a *minister of God to thee for good*.

- Now I recognize that the truth of the matter is—that when you talk about “the public good” and even that term that makes a lot of people cringe—the word “welfare” — I recognize that most of the “good” that the government provides is often-times a screwed up mess.

- And it’s haggled over; fought over; and abused ... but nevertheless, **it’s still pursued!**

- And most often it’s policies in connection with “the public good” are screwed up as well—but at least its policies are intended to be the benefit (or benevolence) for those who live under them!

- An example of this kind of “benevolent goodness” that government provides for is what is commonly called ‘infrastructure’ — that is, roads; power/electricity; water supply; public transportation; courts; school/educational systems.

- These are all remnants (remains) of that “other” major function of the “power” and of the *ordinance of God* contained in human government.

- And I know that it’s the common position of “Conservative Christian Americans” that the only thing that government should ever be involved in—is the issue of protecting us from violence within (criminals) and violence without (foreign enemies) — and therefore the only thing government should provide for is a police force and a military.

- (but it’s not unusual to find “Conservative Christian Americans” at odds with God’s word!)

- And we struggle with the “liberal” mind-set (which gets into pure Socialism) - we struggle with where to draw the line in these matters ... (or even if these things should exist at all).

- But the truth of the matter is—even in the most conservative Republic—you still have a population that has folks in it that are, (sometimes for no fault of their own), POOR; folks that have mental defects (and can’t help it; and can’t hold down a job); folks that have physical defects (of no fault of their own), and have no one who is related to them, or no one who loves and cares for them.

- And we often struggle with the issue that—on the one hand, it's very **Un-Christian** to be totally unsympathetic about those folks and their plight—but on the other hand, it's often the position that many take, that it's **not** government's job to be involved in any of that kind of thing.

- But even the biggest libertarian often has to admit that even though they hold to the position that government shouldn't be involved in most of these things—they often have to admit that when it comes to some 'infrastructure' issues, that government should be involved in some of those things.

- But what I'm telling you here is — THAT ***IS*** THE JOB OF GOVERNMENT! (to care about those things—and to provide for those kinds of things!)

- **And God's word backs me up on this!!!**

- For example—if you look at God's program with Israel, a huge amount of issues concerning Israel had to do with them as a NATION ... as a "National" entity—as a nation with a **government!** right? (a theocracy, but an "ocracy" [power, rule, authority] nonetheless)

- And after what took place at Mount Sinai—Israel demanded to go under God's Law—granted, a dumb thing to do, but nevertheless, God's Law was and is PERFECT.

- Therefore, if you were to look to a government that was intended to be GODLY (and as a godly pattern for a government to follow), then you'd have to look at theirs.

- Well—if you pay attention to what God tells Israel (government-wise) - and if you pay attention to what God sets forth in His judgments and statutes of the Law —

... their statutes and judgments functioned just as the apostle Paul describes in Ephesians 2:12 (read) ... and notice that terminology: *the commonwealth of Israel* [only time used]

- Notice that this is said in a context of describing what you were as a Gentile in "*time past*" — and he gives a list of things here: NONE OF WHICH ARE GOOD THINGS TO BE WITHOUT as a Gentile in "*time past*"!!!

- We often read this passage and seem to identify with being *without Christ; strangers from the covenants of promise; having no hope; without God in the world* — but we often don't really identify much with being *aliens from the **commonwealth** of Israel* ... and often our “conservative” leanings tend to cause us to ‘lean away’ from that *commonwealth* issue—(Oh my! it has the word “common” in it ... that’s kind of like “common-ism” or “communism”!)

- But most of the reason why we don't readily identify with being *aliens from the commonwealth of Israel* is because we have only a shallow understanding of God's program with Israel, and almost no understanding of Israel's *commonwealth* issue.

- It's a HUGE thing—(it's listed among huge things!)

- Israel isn't just a nation—(notice that God didn't say, ‘aliens from the nation of Israel’) — but Israel is a *commonwealth*.

- What is a “commonwealth”???

= (just as its name says), ‘wealth’ shared in ‘common’ - and if you look it up in the OED, the very first and most common definition is: Public welfare; **general good** or advantage.

- Actually, this is a huge doctrine—but God established the nation Israel as this “commonwealth” - in other words, the government of Israel (as prescribed by the Law), was to be a dispenser of some “good” that would be shared in “common” by all!

- Now it was NOT a ‘Communist’ set-up at all! nor was it a Socialist set-up of redistributing wealth!

- But if you pay attention to the judgments and statutes of the Law—you will find that God established a “commonwealth” of general GOOD to the citizenry of the members of the nation of Israel.

- For example, you'll find where God makes it so that the government of Israel was to provide for the ‘public good’ or welfare of the nation—to provide for the POOR of the nation (to make sure they had food) [the corners of the fields]

- And there were provisions for the poor, to make sure that they were not abused when they would go to take out a loan.
- There were provisions for those who could not take care of themselves.
- And if Israel had followed the Law properly—they would have been exposed to this issue of God’s **Benevolent Goodness through their government!** (And they most certainly will be, when God resumes & fulfills His program with Israel!)
- And under God’s program with Israel—because (among other things), it was a nation with a viable government—its rulers were intended to be (and to some degree, were) actual *ministers of God* to its citizenry *for good*.
- And regardless of what kind or what quality our present government is—the rulers of it are *ministers of God to us for good!*
- And what I’m saying is—that the idea of government trying to do “good” by its citizens—and caring about the welfare of its citizenry IS NOT UNGODLY AT ALL!
- Now the means to do that—(the means by which the government carries it out) may be most Ungodly ... but the point is, that it’s NOT out of the realm of what God created the “*powers that be*” (government) to do!
- But just think about the criminally insane—what if those folks were just roaming around in society? (they’d harm or kill folks, & people would probably kill them)
- The point is—that there is **nothing wrong** (in fact, is RIGHT) for government to take our tax dollars and use some of that money for the public good and the public welfare.
- And again (just as I said before) - it’s not perfect; it’s not complete; it’s not fully developed ... but it IS resident in the “*powers that be*” — and that is that God’s Love promotes Benevolent Goodness—He does things in a benevolent manner for the welfare of others!

- So just to ‘recap’ - the *ordinance of God* contained in all human government (in the “*powers that be*”) has at least 2 Major functions:

Rom 13:3 1) The *rulers of it are not a terror to good works, but to the evil*—Government keeps the violence of men in check;

Rom. 13:4 2) The *ruler of government is the minister of God to thee for good*—Along with providing for a quiet & peaceable life, government also organizes and promotes Benevolent Goodness to its citizenry.

- Both are matters God Himself ordained and established as the methodology by which He will carry out His business in the long-term. (especially now that sin has entered the earthly realm and after God brought in His “New World Order” after the Flood when He fractured the *power* into *powers*).

- Any questions? comments?

- Now at this point I just want to point out that it’s very easy to think about Benevolent Goodness (or just Goodness) - and UNDER-THINK it! — that is, to “imagine” that our list of the Major Features of Godly Love is kind of “out of order” — and to think that Benevolent Goodness is really the **most** fundamental and elementary and basic feature of all of God’s love.

- However, my understanding is that in the progressive development of Godly Love, this 5th Major Feature actually develops **out of the first 4**.

- That is, you have to first of all have the godly:
 - Selflessness and Kindness (lovingkindness);
 - out of which develops the Tenderheartedness;
 - then out of those 3 develops the Meekness;
 - and out of those 4 develops the Benevolent Goodness. (it’s 5th for a reason!)

- And really, in order to get this Benevolent Goodness to be the “godly” variety (rather than the ‘human-good’ variety) - that is, to be ‘God-like’ - to be what it is **to God** our Heavenly Father (as a feature of love as it operates within Him [within His heart], and which He then imparts and installs in our heart as His “son”) - in order for it to be “godly” Benevolent Goodness, it has taken everything that has been effectually working in your inner man from Romans 12:3-13:7 to get that job done properly!

- And as we will see later on in the Curriculum for our Sonship Education - where this development of Godly Love & Charity is going to go—(and why all the progressive development in this Godly Love has had to undergo these first 4 progressive “steps” (so to speak) and get it so that Godly Love as it operates within you has finally arrived at this issue of Benevolent Goodness ... where all this is going (once it has developed to the state of Benevolent Goodness), is: **for you to seek the good of others *before* yourself!**

- And ultimately, (as the Curriculum goes on), to seek it even **to your own detriment!** - and penultimately, to even **lay your life down for another!** (you’d die for them)

- And while we have (previous to Romans 13:1-7) encountered the issue of *good* and *goodness* in the Curriculum for our Sonship Education—(viz., 12:9 *Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.* & 12:21 *Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.*) — by the time you get to the end of Rom. 13:7, it’s not merely the issue of godly *goodness*, but it’s the issue of godly **benevolent goodness.**

- And that **benevolent** aspect of goodness really is depicted in the *powers that be* (in government) - and God designed it to be that way—and that **benevolent** issue is the issue of being always **BENT** on goodness or always having a **bend** towards promoting the goodness of others in your thinking, living, and labor with God. (as reflected in government itself!)

- It’s not merely the issue of “God is good, and so we should be good, too” (true as that is) - but it’s the issue of: God’s not only “good” - but God’s Love is **benevolently** good—and that is no where better and more clearly put on display than in **government** (in the *ordinance of God* which all governments possess).

- And my understanding is that it’s when you get to that 3rd and final Component of Justice, that you have that issue of God’s Love being **benevolently** good set before you—and you, as a “son”, are supposed to perceive that—and by the effectual working of verses 1-7 of chapter 13, godly benevolent love gets generated within you!

- And now YOU (just like your Father) are strongly seeking the *good* of others—you're BENT on it!

- And my point is—that if you think about it—and if you realize that we're not just talking about goodness in general, but **benevolent** goodness—then it should make sense that it first takes Selflessness and Kindness; and then building on top of that, Tenderheartedness; and then building on top of that, Meekness—and then built on top of all of them, Benevolent Goodness.

- And that's the point of Rom. 13:4—*For he is the minister of God to thee for good.* — (that is, for YOU, as a saint/son) — because while the ungodly world (society at large) looks at its government and all that it does, and LEARNS NOTHING about God through it—but what we're taught (and let in on) in Rom. 13:4 is that we're supposed to see and learn about God's **benevolent** goodness **IN** the government! ... in *its* benevolent goodness! (because it was put there by God as an *ordinance*!) [and its *rulers minister* it!]

- As a “son” you see that benevolent goodness in government—and you **make the connection** as that being the very characteristic of your Father's Love! (He put it there as *the ordinance of God*—and given the unrighteousness and selfishness of sinful men, why would they ever do that? why does that element remain as an issue in all governments of the world? ... were it not for God putting it there?)

- It's kind of like that benevolent goodness, that's the 'fingerprints of God' left on it—that's how my Father is—that's a characteristic of my Father—and therefore that's going to be characteristic of **my** godly love & charity if I want to emulate Him!

- And since this is **godly** benevolent goodness—you're going to promote the good of others, not because they're good or because they deserve it—but by nature, (as a son of your Heavenly Father), that's what you're **BENT** upon! (because that's what He's **BENT** upon!) - whether they deserve it or not, whether they're saved or lost!

- And this is another one of those critical matters for you as a son in being trained up in your vocational training for your future work & labor in the creature—because the tables are going to be “reversed” —YOU are going to be the one in a rulership position in the *powers that be*—

... and you’re going to be trained to NOT abuse the power (as you make godly sonship judgments in it), but to always utilize that power for the promotion of goodness to others—and in that case, you’re going to do a lot like what Adam began doing before sin entered the picture—you’re going to labor with your Father, and you’re going to organize the heavenly creation so that it can receive the **goodness** of God in that realm!

- And with the Lord Jesus Christ being the “Head” and you being the “body” of that “new creature” — just as the Earth will have a Benevolent Ruler over it—so too, will the Heavenly Realm have a Benevolent Ruler over it — and more than that, the 2 realms of Heaven and Earth will be ruled with such compatible Benevolent precision, that BOTH realms can be brought together as ONE ... and just as Paul says at the end of Eph. 1 ... *and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.*

- Therefore what we’re supposed to have learned as sons in our 3rd Component of Justice—is that by looking at the *ordinance of God* contained in human government—that my Father is Benevolent—my Father wants to bestow His goodness to others—and therefore, if I’m going to Love like Him, I need to have His benevolence generated within me, and I now need to be benevolent.

- And if that gets generated and up and running well—along with Selflessness, Kindness, Tenderheartedness, and Meekness—then I’m prepared to take that core of godly Love & Charity and begin to make **judgmental** decisions that will perfectly and exactly emulate my Heavenly Father (because I’ve been taught to love just like He does ... with the same terminology I’m used to, but taught to me by Him, and not by the wisdom & course of this evil ungodly world)!

- In other words, you're prepared now to make a whole bunch of *judgments* in connection with '*working no ill to your neighbour*' ... and by doing that, you're going to get to "practice" here on earth what you will be laboring with God to do in the heavenly realm—which is the issue of putting things in order (or organizing things in such a way) so that the GOODNESS of God can be received by God's creation.

- And you get the further benefit of doing that with a body of corruption yourself—and with sin in your members—and in a very hostile environment and if you can do it here (and with these bodies of corruption) - just think how effective you will do it that in the creature!

- Now before we finish dealing with this issue of Benevolent Goodness—we need to run some verses and see that God's word not only makes it clear that one of the major features or characteristics of God Himself is one of Benevolent Goodness, but that God's Benevolent Goodness is tied directly to His love—it's a major feature or characteristic of His love—and then to see that God has determined to incorporate His Benevolent Goodness into human government (especially the government of Israel).

- My understanding is that while this may be the time and place where you as a "son" are supposed to PERCEIVE Benevolent Goodness as being the 5th major feature of godly love—and the mechanism by which you perceive that is this other ministry of governmental power—my understanding is that this is NOT the first time you have ever been confronted with the fact that God and God's love **has** this issue of benevolent goodness as one of its major features.

- (see Isaiah 63:1-7 [:7])

- God has permanently left on this earth, a witness or testimony (so to speak) as to His love being Benevolent Goodness—and He's left Himself a testimony to that **in government**—(which is why, in Rom. 13, you had to go back to that original *power*, and then the *powers*, and then the *ordinance of God*) — and His Benevolent Goodness (in the context of government) is ministered by the rulers of a government—and the "*good*" in a context of government (and in the context of Romans 13:4) is that which is for the '**public welfare**' - it's **that which promotes the benefit of the citizenry.**

- And what we're after, in all this—is to make the connection with the “link” (so to speak) between the issue of **benevolent goodness** that's contained in the government (contained in the *ordinance of God*) - [which is the issue of promoting good for the public welfare] — (we're after the “link” between that) and the issue that **benevolent goodness** really is a particular aspect or feature of God's own Love (which, likewise, is the issue of **promoting good for other's welfare**).

- And God does so regardless of how others respond or treat Him—it is completely ‘without respect to persons’ - it's totally non-discriminating.

- That's why it's “Benevolent” goodness—because when a person or a government is **benevolent**, they are promoting the **good** of others, irrespective of anything about the one they're doing it to.

- And that's something that is *seen* in government—that's something that is *witnessed* by others when they look at government!

- So therefore in connection with God establishing human gov. to be the ‘*ordained ordinance*’ that it is—and doing it for the reason why He did it—(and in connection with “The New World Order” and in connection with the continuance of His design of the *power*; which allows Him to fulfill His plan & purpose) — **it also allowed Him to express an aspect of Himself that would be recognizable and identifiable and usable** by His own people in the New World Order.

- And until the dispensation of grace came in—the main way in which that was seen and acknowledged and used by anybody, was by Israel (specifically, in their government), where God put the fundamental *ordained ordinance* principle.

- (see Deuteronomy 4:5-8)

- And the issue was—that Israel's statutes & judgments *were* far more “righteous” than those of other nations—their wisdom & understanding *was* far superior than any other nation's — and the thing that put that on display to the highest degree was the fact that the welfare of the citizens of the nation Israel were provided for and were exalted by Israel's righteous statutes & judgments! [i.e., **government!**]

- In fact, their citizenry was specifically told **not** to “*covet*” ... told NOT to do those things that were for the promotion of their own welfare—but to work for the ‘commonwealth’ - for the promotion of their own mutual good—and to be benevolent, one towards another.

- Well, when this dispensation of grace comes in—and you’ve got members of the new creature of the body of Christ with their sonship education getting underway—by the time their sonship education gets to the issue of them understanding human government from God’s perspective—you’re supposed to understand and appreciate that resident within that human government (just like Israel was to understand it in connection with human government); God, in connection with the *ordinance*, established (by the issue of a government providing for the promotion of the public good), God put on display (or gave **witness** to) His own characteristic & feature of Godly Love that is about promoting the welfare of, and dispensing benevolent goodness upon others, irrespective of whether they respond to Him or not.

- (Paul himself refers to this issue ... [Acts 14] as something that the “nations” had the ability to respond to as a part of God’s “**witness**” of Himself)

- (see :15-17)

- That’s being spoken about in the context of a **NATION!**

- And God did benevolent *goodness*—even though they were His **enemies!** ... even though they **hated** Him!

- By the way—this is something that’s supposed to be understood in Romans 1:19-20 — this is one more thing about God that all men (unjustified men) can see and can testify to the fact that there is a God ... and one thing about Him is that He’s a **loving** God that promotes **good**; is ‘bent’ upon the good and the welfare of others ... and one of the major places on this earth where God has left for Himself a witness to that fact... is in government!

- Well, hopefully, you’re beginning to understand & appreciate the ‘link’ or the connection between the benevolent goodness contained in gov., and it testifying that it is a very feature of God’s own love.

- With that understood—let’s just run some passages that point out this witness or testimony to God’s benevolent goodness as it exists in human government—especially in connection with Israel’s government.

- Psalm 72 (book #2)

- (by the way, the Lord BLASTED the governmental leadership of Israel over their abuse and coveting and failure of being benevolently good to the members of the “flock” of Israel! [Mat. 23:14])

- Psalm 145 (book #5)

- Jeremiah 31— look at this ‘goodness’ concept and the fact that when God establishes His kingdom on the earth (as per His original purpose & design with the earth) His loving, benevolent goodness is going to go out from that government (kingdom) **to all the earth.**

- Look what is said before the context turns to the issue of the New Covenant ...

- (:10-14)

- Now you need to appreciate this within its overall context—and not just the overall context of Jeremiah, but the overall context of everything that’s been going on since God began dealing with the nation Israel under those 5 courses of punishment.

- And as you go through all of the information contained in the Prophets (Major: Isa., Jer./Lam. Eze., & Dan.—and then as the Minor Prophets loop back over the Major Prophets and give further details about them: Hosea-Malachi) — as the information cycles through the 5 CoP, you get further details about what God is going to be doing and what is going to be in existence when God fulfills His program with Israel.

- (Not that you haven’t already by this time been given some information about the Blessings that accrue from God’s established Kingdom—but now you’re going to get some particular information about those blessings that has to do with the ‘scope’ of this Kingdom **for the whole world’s benefit!!!**)

- And this is just as the Lord Himself talked about over in Matthew 25:31-34 —

— as He describes the issue of His judgment when the first 3 Mandates of the Davidic Covenant have been fulfilled and He comes to Israel as the “King” - and He sits upon “the throne of His glory” - and the nations get brought to Him—and He, as the “King” has a judgment, and He operates upon the basis of that Abrahamic Covenant—and the goat nations get separated from the sheep nations—and the blessings come upon the sheep, and the cursing comes upon the goats — and the issue is: who is going to become partaker of the blessing with the King’s people as He blesses them as their Blesser?

- well, when He says to the sheep on His right hand, “*inherit the kingdom prepared for YOU from the foundation of the world ... THAT’S the issue going on in Jeremiah 31:10-14!*

- The “nations” are in view—and the issue is one of them being a partaker of the blessings that Israel gets in that Kingdom!

- And an awful lot has been said about the “goodness” of the Lord to Israel already (viz., the 5th book of the Psalms) - but you’re given to understand that God’s goodness isn’t just contained to Israel—but when God can get the business dealing with the “parenthesis” between Gen. 3 and Rev. 20 accomplished—God’s goodness is going to be ministered to the whole world by means of His government (Kingdom).

- And the issue of the Blesser and His Blessings—and the benevolence that He bestows upon His people—and the goodness that He showers upon them: all gets offered to the **world at large!**

- And it gets offered to the world-at-large because, the truth of the matter is—**the purpose behind the establishment of God’s kingdom on this earth, (when it comes to what He wants to do to the creatures of His creation; that gets administered to by Him through the instrument of the governmental power He has instituted and that gets vested in His kingdom on this earth) - the main thing He’s after is the administration of His goodness to His creatures!** (and that begins to be focused upon at this particular cycle point in Jeremiah 31!)

- (And from this point on—*goodness* becomes an issue that all of the Prophets talk about [i.e., **godly** *goodness*!]).

- Notice (:10) [Jer. 31] — *Hear the word of the LORD, O ye nations, and declare it in the isles afar off*— this message goes out to the nations—and it's to be declared to "*the isles afar off*" — and there's not going to be a single Gentile entity that is not going to hear about this!

- And they're to be told that: *He that scattered Israel will gather him, and keep him, as a shepherd doth his flock.*

- And then it's put into its historical perspective when it takes place (you go from the Future Tense in :10 to the Past Tense in :11) — meaning that (:10) historically takes place AFTER the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Mandates of the Davidic Covenant have been fulfilled ... *For the LORD hath redeemed Jacob (1st Mandate of the Dav. Cov.), and ransomed him from the hand of him that was stronger than he (2nd & 3rd Mandates of the Dav. Cov.).*

- 12 *Therefore they shall come and **sing** in the height of Zion* (the Lord is going to reign there as the King of kings & Lord of lords—there in the "height of Zion", in other words, there in Jerusalem as the Capital City (so to speak) for His government) — *and shall flow together **TO THE GOODNESS OF THE LORD***— the "*goodness*" of the LORD will already be there for His people, (for the nation Israel)—and it's there for them first—but then the 'door of opportunity' (so to speak) will be opened up to the nations as well ...

- [note that this was originally set forth in its basic information and scope-form back in Isa. 60, 61, & 62]

- see Isa. 60:1-3—God talks about the issue of Israel coming out of that 'darkness' of the Tribulation—a darkness that engulfs the whole earth—and the 'light' shines upon Israel there in Zion first, and then the Gentiles come to her 'light' — [which is where that issue of the "*outer darkness*" comes from that the Lord talks about in Matthew when He refers to the issue of being outside the Land is one of being in *outer darkness*—and the land of Israel being all 'light' - and the Gentiles come to her 'light' - which is when Israel fulfills the whole issue of being "*the light of the world*"] — sound familiar? (see Exodus 10:21-23—9th Plague)

- see also Isa. 61:9-11; & 62:1-4

- The point is that the Gentiles are going to be drawn to Israel by her 'light' - and a message goes out from Israel to the nations—and just as Ezekiel declares that message in more detail (in Eze. 36) when God describes the 'heart-change' that takes place in His people—and He describes the animosity that has always existed in connection with the Gentiles; and the old hatred that has always been there in the past (and has been fueled by the Satanic Policy of Evil against the nations) - and all that is now **gone**—and the 'heart' of His own people takes on God's own heart, and Israel becomes "benevolent" toward the Gentile nations — and as Israel becomes partakers of the 5th Mandate of the Davidic Covenant (the Blesser and His Blessings), God, through Israel, then offers those blessings to the Gentile nations!

- But the issue is—based upon what is set forth in Jeremiah 31—it's the issue of Israel fulfilling their roll in God's purpose for having His Kingdom on this Earth—and being the agency through which the administration of that Kingdom takes place—and to be the avenue for advancing the whole purpose God has in that Kingdom: **TO BE GOOD TO HIS CREATURES!**

- And Israel is going to take all the *goodness* that they've been beneficiaries of—and they are going to open the gates of their land (so to speak) - and they're going to offer the Gentiles to come in and to be partakers of that *goodness*!

- And then (just as Jer. 31:12 says), they'll get all the *goodness of the LORD, for their wheat, and for their wine, and for their oil, and for their young of the flock and of the herd ... and have their soul be as a watered garden; and they shall not sorrow any more at all.*

- Israel is going to get all that benefit at the first—and then that same thing is going to be offered to the Gentiles.

- And then ... *13 Then shall the virgin rejoice in the dance, both young men and old together: for I will turn their mourning into joy, and will comfort them, and make them rejoice from their sorrow.*

- Israel gets the benefits of that first—but then that's also offered to the Gentiles (which is how the Lord's kingdom spreads forth over all the earth) - that's how that 'light' goes out and dispels the 'darkness' ... and as it dispels the

‘darkness’, it dispels all the *sorrow* and all the *mourning*—
and it produces the *comfort* and the *joy*!

- And then in ... 14 *And I will satiate the soul of the priests with fatness, and my people shall be satisfied with my goodness, saith the LORD.*

- And just as the *soul* of Israel’s *priests* gets *satiated with fatness*, and their *people* get *satisfied with God’s goodness* — that also gets extended out to the nations as well!

- In fact, based upon what’s said here in Jeremiah 31—when Jeremiah, as the prophet that he is, functions out in the 5th Installment (which is why Israel looked for Jeremiah to come back to them [Mat. 16:14?])—this very part of Jeremiah functions as a preparatory message of the Remnant of Israel to the nations, so that when the full *redemption* of Jacob takes place, and the full *ransoming* takes place, and Israel becomes the full beneficiary of God’s *goodness*—those Gentile nations are going to be prepared for what’s coming their way, and for what’s going to be offered to them.

- And those Gentiles have the opportunity to recognize that when that ‘light’ begins to shine unto them—and they begin to hear that music of that *singing* (of :12) that’s coming out of the land of Israel and permeating the earth—and those songs of joy start to be heard—and you’ve got all the hills and the trees in the land of Israel ‘clapping’ - and the fountains of waters are bursting up and expressing their joy—and all that starts to filter through the environment of the earth—and the trees of the lands, and the mountains of the lands of the nations want to become participants in that joy as the Earth LIVES with God dwelling on the earth.

- Well, the issue is that there’s some preparatory work done for all that—and the Gentile nations are going to become the beneficiaries of God’s goodness through His kingdom that He sets up in and with the nation Israel!

- And actually, this issue goes right back to that issue with Moses and the ‘golden calf incident’ (and what we commonly call the “Reserve Clause” that God established in connection with the Law) - [Exodus 33:12-19] - and Moses said in :18, *I beseech thee, shew me thy glory.* And God said, *I will make all my goodness pass before thee, ...* (:19)

... and as God passes before Moses—and with every one of those things God proclaims in that Reserve Clause ... every one of those things is an expression of God's goodness!

- **GOODNESS**—that is the term that God uses to summarize everything about Himself in connection with everything He wants to be to the creatures He created in His creation!

... He wants to be GOOD to them—He wants to bestow GOODNESS (the sum & substance of His character & essence—the **totality of everything that He is!**)

... and He wants every creature to be a beneficiary of it!

- And the issue is that when He establishes His Kingdom (His own ruling & reigning **government**) ... that's what He does: He establishes the 'vehicle' (if you will) by which that *goodness* gets administered and bestowed **in an orderly manner** that provides for the benefits and the profits and the goals and the objectives of that *goodness*!

- In other words, **it's NOT bestowed for no reason at all**—rather, it's got goals and objectives for the ages to come!

- But the issue in the original *power* that establishes the *control* over creation in the form of a *government* that has *orderliness* to it—is designed to provide for the means for God's **goodness** to be **bestowed!** (ultimately)

- And all of the governments that exist today are mere faint copies of that original design—but “faint copies” nonetheless, they still retain (faint as it may be) God's original intended purpose!

- But that's what's going on here in Jeremiah 31—and as you go on, that gets repeated over in ch. 33 (with further detail/amplification) ...

- (see Jer. 33:9-16) ... ending with that 6th of the 7 Jehovah Compound Names: Jehovah-Zidkenu, fulfilling the Feast of the Day of Atonement (just prior to Jehovah-Shamma [described by Ezekiel (48:35)] and that fulfills the Feast of Tabernacles and that 2nd Sabbath after the 1st!)

- The truth of the matter is—that’s the very design and purpose God originally had when He said what He did in connection with Adam and in connection with the provision that was made for God’s kingdom to be established on this earth. (as we have noted before)

- Interestingly enough—when you open up your Bible to the very first chapter—of all the things you could get confronted with—and of all the things about God Himself that you could be told about ... you can’t get through the first 4 verses of your Bible before you’re confronted with God’s *goodness*!

- Because in the record of Genesis chapter 1—and the record of the six days of creation—God makes a declaration that what He has created and bestowed upon His creation is *goodness* ... “*God saw the light, that it was good*” (:4), and then again in (:10— 2X on Day 1); and then in (:12—Day 3); and then in (:18—Day 4); and then in (:21—Day 5); and finally in (:25 & :31—2X on Day 6)! **Total of 7 Times!!!**

- And then—from Genesis chapter 3 on throughout God’s word and on through time—with sin and evil and unrighteousness and ungodliness ever increasing & evolving—and with man ever devolving into greater and greater sin and ungodliness—this issue of what is “good” and what “goodness” is has been attacked, shaped, formed, molded and RE-DEFINED by the wisdom of men under the Satanic Policy of Evil!

- And what *good* and *goodness* is to God is almost totally lost in this present world—the issue that God’s *goodness* is Righteous and Holy—it’s just what the radical root of that word “good” means = that something or someone is perfectly fit and suited for God’s holy purpose and design—that something or someone is perfectly fit and suited for God’s PLEASURE!

- The truth is—most of what this world calls “good” is nothing more than **making it so that a wrong thing, if it’s done in a right way**, the world says, “That’s good”!
(Or flipping it around the other way—**doing a wrong thing in a right way!**)

- But the ‘bottom line’ is: God, by nature, is full of *goodness*—and the power of human government (when God originally established it), was to be the vehicle for the bestowing of His **benevolent goodness** in an orderly manner upon His creatures!

- And that's why you and I learn about the 5th Major Feature of Godly Love out of Romans 13:1-7!

- And that's why a government by nature, is a *praiser of good* — it will *praise* anything that is benevolently good to its citizenry! (Rom. 13:3)

- And just as we looked at God's design & purpose to bestow good upon His creatures through government (especially through His own government—i.e., His kingdom) - [there in Isaiah and in Jeremiah] — and just as we have seen how WE are to deal with human government as “sons” (in our sonship education) ... and how we are supposed to perceive God's loving, benevolent goodness as part of that *ordinance of God*—so, too, are the members of the Remnant of Israel (as sons, and in their own sonship education) supposed to perceive all that, and be *subject unto the higher powers* like we are — but with an entirely different Order of God's business in view—it's not at all surprising, therefore, to find information in the Remnant Epistles that is very similar to what we have here in Romans 13:1-7!

- see I Peter 2:12-17

- And because we looked at how God's benevolent goodness gets bestowed upon His creatures though the vehicle of governmental power in an orderly manner back in God's “Time Past” program with the nation Israel—we just can't leave this issue without at least noting that what He declared He would do, actually ends up getting done!

- see Revelation 21:1-7; 23-27;
 22:1-5

- And just as an ‘addendum’ type issue—don't confuse the issue of Benevolent Goodness (or Benevolence) with Kindness—although the 2 are related (benevolent goodness being a further development of kindness).

- Basically, the issue of kindness is the starting point or ‘genesis’ of something out of which other things will emerge.

- And Romans 12:9 got that Godly kindness generated—and the basic issue there was that you want to do something that is profitable and beneficial to someone, rather than something that is hurtful and harmful to them.

- But in the issue of godly edifying and the issue of the growth and development of Godly Love—what at first only gets ‘generated’, it then grows to be what, by nature, exists within God Himself.

- And while that kindness is designed to be quite strong, even from the ‘get-go’ — it’s not as strong or as powerful as it’s going to be.

- And by the time you have the other Features of Godly Love generated and up & running well within you—they all provide for something that at first was simply a matter in your mind (or something your mind focused upon from time to time) ... to become something that fully occupies your mind!

- Because the issue of Godly Benevolent Goodness is the issue of your **mind now being occupied with promoting good!** ... your mind is now BENT upon the outworking of Godly Benevolent Goodness—(bent upon promoting the welfare of the ones we value & esteem)—[both with those in the local assembly who are members of our body—but then even beyond that, to men in this world] ... [which, if everything is running well, your godly love and your godly benevolent goodness is ready for it to move on to all men, because Rom. 13:8 is going to say, *Owe NO MAN any thing but to love one another.*]

- So simply put—the difference between kindness and benevolent goodness is the issue of the increase and growth of Godly Love & Charity! (It’s now the occupation of your mind! Your mind is full of it!) And it took the Selflessness, the Kindness, the Tenderheartedness, and the Meekness to get it to the point of Benevolent Goodness.

- With Benevolent Goodness, it’s like you look at the ones you value & esteem, and you say to yourself, “What can I do to benefit them the way my Father would want to benefit them Himself?” ... (in fact, those whom you value & esteem actually provoke that in you by this point—because of how much you value & esteem them—and because of how selfless you are at this point).

- Any Question, Comments?

- Well, at this point you have received the instruction of Wisdom and the instruction of Justice—you have received all 5 of the Major Features of Godly Love & Charity that form the core of all that Godly Love is—you have passed the Sonship Checkpoint (being checked out & reminded of these things by reviewing them all and evaluating their effectual working within you) — and you have received the initial Pre-Doctrinal Exhortation for getting the 1st Component of the instruction of Judgment—so that means that the next thing to do is to receive the instruction of Judgment.

RECEIVING THE INSTRUCTION OF JUDGMENT

- For us, as members of the new creature of the church the body of Christ in this present dispensation of grace—in the Curriculum for our Sonship Education—the initial instruction of Judgment is found in Romans 13:8-14.

- And since its been a good while since we talked about it—let’s just remind ourselves of what the instruction of Judgment is all about.

- Without looking at your notes—and without looking at a chart ... What is the major or core issue with the instruction of Judgment?

- Is it: to be given the skill to decide/determine what is good, or better, or best? NO!!!

- Because if that’s all it is—then there’s nothing inherently ‘godly’ about that—and the truth is, that’s not something that takes any real skill, because all you’re doing there is making a decision based upon nothing more than your personal preference! ... right?

- The core issue with the instruction of Judgment is the issue of having to make a decision (a judgmental decision) when it is NOT clear and/or NOT obvious what decision to make!!!

- And that means that the issues in making judgmental decisions are going to be far more complex than anything you’ve encountered so far in Wisdom and Justice!

- The work of judgment is much harder—you’re going to have to “ponder” it!

- see Chart #40 (review)

- see Chart #45 (the reality that there are 2 Components to our instruction of Judgment)

- see Chart #46

The 2 Components of godly judgment are going to deal with major, fundamental, but also, ongoing issues in connection with our sonship life (the details of our life; the ISSUES OF LIFE [Pro. 4:23—the only time that phrase occurs in the Bible]) as it pertains to the issue of us making wise judgments in connection with everything we do.

- And because of the nature of making godly judgmental decisions, we need a kind of ‘catch-all’ or ‘clearing-house’ type of instruction that will enable us to know what God’s will is (and to be able to discern it and confidently know what it is) - and then to conduct ourselves in accordance with it in any situation and with anybody that we ever deal with in the details of our lives.

- What I mean by a ‘catch-all’ type of instruction is that it’s something that encompasses a wide variety of situations and circumstances.

- It’s going to function as that Catalyst, but it’s going to be very brief—(not a ‘case-book’ type body of information).

- What is a ‘clearing-house’?

It was used over 100 years ago as an expression of banking — where adjustments were made to claims and checks and bills, by exchanging them and settling the balances—it was also used in railroading, as the railway clearing-house where a whole bunch of freight was assembled and the claims on that freight by different railways were all settled out and sent out.

- So it can be a central agency for settling mutual claims & accounts in the banking sense—or it can be a central agency for the distribution of freight in the railroad sense—but for our purposes, **it is a central agency for the collection, classification, and distribution of INFORMATION**—information that’s designed to combine with other information in order to settle out a matter to be decided on when the path to take is not clear or obvious.

- So the 2 Components are going to act as a kind of ‘clearing-house’ or ‘catch-all’ for really, ALL of the “*issues of life*” that require you to make godly judgments when there is no clear or obvious path to take.

- And the 2 Components actually complement one another (as we shall see).

- The 1st Component of our instruction of judgment (:8, 9, & 10) pertains to our capacity to know what the will of God is, and how He wants us to respond whenever we’re dealing with one another as members of the church the body of Christ—AND whenever we’re dealing with ALL MEN when we don’t have anything specific that has already been set forth to us in our instruction of godly wisdom and justice up until this point.

- Simply put (see chart) the 1st Component of Judgment deals with **Godly judgments in our dealings with others.**

- We’re always going to be dealing with people—with other saints in our local assembly; with other saints we meet and come into contact with that are not a part of our local assembly; and with friends, family, co-workers, and in general OTHER PEOPLE (saved and lost) out in the world at large.

- And therefore we always need to know how to be able to respond to people—and to have the confidence that we’re responding to them in accordance to GODLINESS and what is WELL-PLEASING in God’s sight, in however we respond or react towards them.

- And (:8-10) acts as that ‘clearing-house’ or ‘catch-all’ issue with respect to our dealings with other people ... and it provides for us to have that fundamental, ongoing judgmental capacity.

- The 2nd Component: simply put, deals with **godly judgments in our use of Time and how we spend it.** (see chart)

... (see Chart #47)

... (see Chart #48—Thinking/Living/Labor)

RECEIVING THE INSTRUCTION OF JUDGMENT:

- **1st Component: Godly Judgment in our Dealings with Others.**
(Romans 13:8-10)

- Godly Thinking (:8)

8 Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.

- Now as we get ourselves underway with the Godly Thinking of our 1st Component of the instruction of judgment—I want to address a common misconception about this verse, and what is most commonly said in connection with it.

- More often than not, when most folks read that first part of (:8—*Owe no man any thing, but to love one another:*) - that statement is almost always thought of [and taught] as a verse in the Bible that pointedly tells a Christian that he is never supposed to be in financial debt to anyone (be it an individual person, or taking out a loan at a bank, or having student loans, or having a credit card [and using it], or anything along those lines).

- And the truth is, that's about all that's ever said about this verse. (and that's certainly good advice!)

- But my understanding is that this is NOT what this verse is saying or talking about.

- And one of the reasons why most folks who deal with this verse usually only get the one idea that what God is telling us here is that we're not to ever be in financial debt to anyone—is because (more often than not), they simply don't have any frame of reference for the sonship edification that's taking place here—or for the context in which this verse sits.

- The context (and the frame of reference) here is one of a saint who is being educated as a “son” in his godly edification, is now receiving his *instruction of judgment* (making wise, judgmental decisions in connection with his dealings with others) - and everything that has gone on from Romans 12:3 up to this point is all being brought to bear on this verse, and forms the frame of mind & contextual backdrop for what God has the apostle Paul say at this point.

- And if you're honest with this verse, and handling this verse honestly within the immediate context; (outside of money or finances being an issue in paying your taxes and customs) - the subject of 'Christian Indebtedness' **isn't part of this context at all**, and isn't anywhere near any of the surrounding verses!

- In other words—this verse does not occur in any kind of a dissertation or analysis or subject of how a Christian is supposed to deal with their finances and/or indebtedness!

- And even if all you do is take into account the immediate context of what (:7) set forth—you would recognize that the context in which the apostle Paul was dealing with in the preceding verses, was the issue of the proper response that God expects us to give to people (namely, to the rulers of government) to whom we DO find ourselves owing them something.

- And by what (:7) says, it tells you that there ARE situations where we NATURALLY owe people things (such as governmental rulers).

- And it doesn't matter if you're "free from financial debt" ... the truth is, you're **never** really totally free from financial debt! Because you still *owe* people the things mentioned up in (:7) - you naturally owe people things.

- They are "*due*" something - we owe them something—we owe them respect; we owe them honour; and in some ways we owe them money (tribute, custom, & taxes).

- And now in (:8), Paul is going to **extend** that issue as we begin receiving our instruction of godly Judgment to include **ALL MEN!**

- And we do *owe* "*all men*" something—we owe them an expression of godly love & charity—we owe treating them in the godly love that has been produced in us by the effectual working of Romans 12:3-13:7. (and that godly love is now in a state that it can be utilized in the judgments we make in our dealings with ALL MEN!)

- Because that's who we are now "in Christ" as "sons" of God who are being *conformed to the image of Christ* and emulating our Father. And His judgmental dealings with men today is based upon His godly love & charity—and as His adopted sons, that's how we're to deal with others as well.

- My point in all this is to simply say that you can't ignore the context in which this verse sits—and the context just isn't one of how Christians are supposed to deal with their finances.

- Now, with that said—(and knowing what you now know about your status as adult “sons” of God) - what does govern the way in which you spend your money; or get a loan; or use credit cards; or whatever??? (your LIBERTY as a son! and godly WISDOM in connection with that Liberty!)

- And therefore, it IS a wise thing to not be in financial debt—or to be in as little debt as possible! That's good common sense—that's good Christian common sense (due to your testimony in this world) - and that's a good area for you to either be 'wise' or 'foolish' with your sonship liberty!

- So you know from the context that what Paul is saying isn't 'Do not owe any man any thing at all in any way' — in fact, from the preceding context the idea is more along the lines of: 'Where all men are concerned, though you may owe them (at least some of them) one thing or another—the ONE thing you owe them ALL is godly love and charity!'

- Let's begin now looking at the details of the 1st Component of our instruction of godly judgment: Godly Judgments in our dealings with ALL MEN. (:8-10).

- And since we've identified that (:8) consists of the Godly Thinking, let's begin looking at the *renewing of our mind* in connection with the growth & development of Godly Love (with its 5 Major Features) and how that's going to be brought to bear upon all of the decisions we make as “sons” in connection with ALL MEN when the path to take with them is NOT obviously or immediately clear—and where real godly judgment is going to have to be utilized.

- THE GODLY THINKING (:8).

- Now just as we've acknowledged for every aspect of the Godly Thinking for every Component of our initial instruction of Wisdom and Justice—our sonship education consists of *conforming us to the image of God's Son* as we have our Father's heart properly installed in our heart (that we might emulate Him in all that we say and do).

- And as we've become accustomed to by now—we know that since we began our education in earnest, that each component of the Godly Thinking is going to do just what we were told (and what we acknowledged) would take place in our sonship education back in Romans 12:2 (*And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.*)

- And I point this out only to say that what Romans 13 and verse 8 is going to do—is to (because it is designed to **renew your mind**), it's going to challenge some ungodly thinking that already exists in your mind—and it's going to dismiss it; and then replace it with the Thinking of your Father.

- And I'm saying all this just to make sure that we don't do something with (:8) that is **very easy** to do—and that is to just rush right through it without allowing it to make the **necessary 'deep' impact** that it's designed to make!

- Now when you look at (:8) - what do you see about it that would indicate to you the number of 'steps' (so to speak) that make it up?

- (:8) is all one sentence—but it's divided up into two major clauses—(divided by that colon at the end of the word *another*).

- Therefore the Godly Thinking for the 1st Component of our instruction of Judgment has TWO PARTS to it.

- (Part 1) - *Owe no man any thing, but to love one another:*

- (Part 2) - *for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.*

- Now as I said, it's very easy to simply come along and think: Ok, it says, *Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.*—so all that means is that as long as I treat everybody in “love” (whatever that means), then I'm doing right in God's sight.

- But true as that may be, that's NOT all that's going on here ... and truth is, there's far more to it than that!

- And while what's said in (:8) is indeed simply stated—the truth is, there's a great deal going on here as it begins the process of setting up in our thinking that 'clearing-house' (or agency for the collection, classification, and distribution of Information) for us to have the capacity/ability to make keen judgments in connection with all men when the path to take with them is not immediately clear.

- And it takes 2 Critical Steps in order to get the Godly Thinking part of that accomplished!

- And neither of those 2 Steps are to be taken lightly or carelessly—but rather, there is a particular designed and deep impact that they are to make upon our inner man!

- Step 1 of the *renewing of our mind* (or the Godly Thinking).

8 Owe no man any thing, but to love one another:

- Setting aside that issue that we talked about—(which was how this passage is most commonly dealt with—as if all that's being said here is that a Christian is never supposed to take out a loan at the bank or own/use a credit card) ... what's the first thing that pops into your mind with you see that expression, "**Owe no man any thing, but ...**" — you have those words *Owe no man* [and that word] *but ...*

- What does the word "*Owe*" mean?

(= to be **indebted**; to be obliged or bound to pay)

- And by saying it the way God has the apostle Paul say it (*Owe no man any thing, but ...*) — it's a characteristic of the 'style' (if you will) of our English Language to say: No matter who you may or may not owe something to, **YOU DO OWE SOMETHING TO EVERY SINGLE PERSON!**

- And the very first thing that's supposed to 'grab your attention' here is: **YOU REALLY DO OWE A DEBT TO EVERY MAN/WOMAN—you are INDEBTED to every man** in some particular way!

- And folks, that needs to 'sink in' - that needs to make a deep impact upon the way you Think! ... and if you're honest with yourself, you'll recognize that that is NOT the way most people naturally think ... because most people think **SELFISHLY** ... and to some extent you're inclined to think, "Hey, I don't owe you a thing, buddy!"

- But the way (:8) is phrased—it tells you that you do “*owe*” a debt, and that you are ‘indebted’ to every man in a particular way.

- And the truth of the matter is—that by the time you get from Romans 1:1 to this point in Romans 13:8—all that has gone on in your mind — by the effectual working of:

- the doctrine of your Justification by Grace through Faith and all of its results; (1st Cornerstone) [1-5]

- and by the effectual working of the doctrine of your Sanctification by Grace through Faith and all its results; (2nd Cornerstone) [6-8]

- and then by the effectual working of being established in the Doctrine of the Dispensation of Gentile Grace now in effect; (3rd Cornerstone) [9-11]

- and finally, by the effectual working of the doctrine of Walking Worthy of who God has made you to be “in Christ” Justification-wise & Sanctification-wise; (4th Cornerstone) [12-16] ...

... in view of, and in light of all that God has made you to be in Christ—one of the things that all that doctrine has been building and building to is ... to put you in a proper, right and godly position of being **indebted** to ALL MEN in a particular way!

- The deep impact that’s supposed to be made upon your Thinking (and that challenges your natural thinking you acquired by the wisdom of this world) - is that **there is something you can never ‘pay-in-full’ - there is a debt that you will ever have no matter what! (You and I “owe” all men an expression of godly love!)**

- You and I have been given something that is designed to benefit **all men**:

- you’ve been given the gospel of Christ (eternal life);
- you’ve been given the Holy Ghost;
- you’ve been given sanctified, functional life (the means to be “dead to sin” and “alive unto God” - the means to live out a life that honours God and one that God is pleased with, a life that can produce “fruit unto holiness” that God will accept;

- you've been given the adoption of sons as the means to put all your sanctified functional life "in Christ" into practice by Grace through Faith;
- you've been given the doctrine of the "mystery" (an essential doctrine for rightly dividing the word of truth—for properly handling the word of truth—and for recognizing that the program or business that God is in today and dealing with you about today is NOT His program with Israel—but rather, His never-before-known-about program or dispensation for repossessing the heavenly places from Satan and his cohorts);
- and along with having been given the adoption of sons, you've been given God's own initial Wisdom and Justice for wise & just sonship decision-making!

- Quite an impressive list, wouldn't you say?

- Therefore, you and I have been given, not only eternal life (and how to get it, and how to escape the wrath of God that was naturally against us) - but you've been given sanctified, functional life that allows for you to live in righteousness and holiness in God's sight—(to live godly or God-like in this present world and in these present 'bodies of corruption' with sin in their members—so you can escape being "under sin" and the power of sin in your members**but that's not all** ...

... MORE THAN THAT, YOU AND I HAVE HAD
GENERATED WITHIN US GODLY LOVE & CHARITY!
(the 5 Major, Core Features of Godly love)
[you've been taught to love the way God Himself loves]

- And the 'particular way' (that I've alluded to) that you and I are in "debt" to all men, is found in that second phrase of (:8) - ***but to love one another***:

- Therefore—all that can be now summed up in one single word: **LOVE** (and not just any old human or fleshly love, but God's Love—godly love!)

- And that statement of the Lord Jesus Christ [even though it was made to the members of the remnant of Israel under God's program with Israel] ... it has a parallel aspect to it that goes along with what we're talking about here: *For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required!*

- You and I are now in a position of being indebted to ALL MEN ... you *owe* all men an expression of God's love, just as it was given to, and expressed to YOU!

- And that is a 'debt' THAT NEVER GETS DISCHARGED!

8 *Owe no man any thing, **but to love one another:***

- That second phrase to this first clause of the Godly Thinking (*but to love one another*) - this is one of those cases where, if all you did was to crack the Bible open to this passage—or as some do, simply use it to cite or cross-reference some point in some particular sermon—it can easily have the ungodly, wisdom-of-this-world-taught love superimposed upon it! (and again, taken rather lightly)

- But if you've been properly taught & educated—by the time you get to this passage, you know that the word “*love*” is NOT just any old love (and it's not being used in any old way)—rather, it's the godly love you've had generated within you **from Romans 12:3-13:7!**

- And it has at least 5 identifiable, and definable Features to it!

- And the progressive development of Godly love started off with what foundational major feature? (Selflessness) ... and it started off being utilized where? (in the local assembly—you're going to selflessly labor in the local assembly, identifying certain needs and meeting them; functioning as a member of the body) ...

- and then when godly Lovingkindness was added to the selfless love—where was the context for that to be ministered? (again, in the local church—*Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love*—it was how we relate to each other) ...

- but when we got to that issue of merciful Tenderheartedness there was a context and an application OUTSIDE of the local assembly ...

- and Meekness had an application OUTSIDE the local assembly ...

- and also Benevolent Goodness had an application OUTSIDE the local assembly.

- And therefore, by the time the 5 Major, Core Features of Godly love have been produced, and are up and running well within you—[by the time you get to :8 of ch. 13] - the WHOLE PACKAGE of our godly love is given an opportunity to deal with ANYBODY (or with ALL MEN!

- And our godly love is **expanding** beyond merely situational things to where we are going to now learn, the “**KEY**” to making *judgmental* decisions as a son of our Heavenly Father—the “key” to how God Himself makes all the *judgmental* decisions He makes!

- And that “key” is going to be found in the growth & development of Godly Love & Charity that God has developed with our inner man by the effectual working power of His living words, living in us!

- And what you’re now going to ‘let in’ on here—is that godly love & charity can be used (and has enormous power to be used) to do a whole bunch of things—to do a whole lot more than to merely have a ‘warm feeling’ about others; or to be ‘nice’ to others; or ‘get along well’ with others!

- For example, that “love” is now going to have the capacity and the power to **confidently define** what “*ill*” is—and for *never working ill to your neighbour* (to anybody else)!

- But as a ‘first-things-first’ issue—our instruction of godly love has taught us how to deal with saints; how to deal with lost people; and now we’re given instruction for a more ‘global’ application (so to speak) - that, You’re love is now going to EXPAND and EXTEND to ANYBODY at ANYTIME that you’re dealing with in ANY WAY!

- And the sonship decisions you’re going to make when it comes to a “*judgment*” **are going to be LOVE-BASED DECISIONS!** (love, in the sense of the 5 Core Major Features of godly love that have been generated within you).

- And to just address the colon at the end of the 1st Clause—you need to **pause** here long enough for that to make the deep impact it’s supposed to make before you go on — the impact of being always and happily in debt—in debt to ALL MEN—knowing full-well what was freely and graciously given to you, and is designed to be freely and graciously given away by you, to others—and that the debt you owe all men is an expression of godly love & charity!

- 8 *Owe no man any thing, but to **love one another***: — with any honesty of dealing with this text (and those last 3 words of the 1st Clause of [:8]), you HAVE to recognize that this “**love**” being spoken about here is NOT being brought into existence for the first time; nor is it the first time it’s being mentioned—but there is a context in which it sits; and a frame of reference for it that’s already been established; and a way to define it that’s already been provided for!

- Otherwise, all you’re ever going to do is to superimpose the natural, worldly, fleshly, and un-God-like descriptions, definitions, and parameters on it—and by doing that, totally MISS-apply and misunderstand what you’re supposed to be doing in making godly sonship *judgmental* decisions in connection with your dealings with all men in general.

- Simply put—the “*love*” in (:8) is NOT what love means to natural (lost) men; or even to improperly educated believers — it’s “*love*” in the sense of what it means to GOD! (And by now, you, as God’s adopted educated son should have that **exact same** understanding and appreciation!)

- Godly love is DESCRIBABLE: it has 5 Major Core Features to it (Selflessness; Kindness; Merciful Tenderheartedness; Meekness; and Benevolent Goodness) ... that’s what it **is** to GOD!

- Godly love is DEFINABLE—it’s defined by God Himself—there are WORDS that define it and words that bring it into existence:

- Selflessness: *to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.* (Romans 12:3)

- Kindness (Lovingkindness): *Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.* (Romans 12:9)

- Tenderheartedness: *Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality.* (Romans 12:13)

- Meekness: *Recompense to no man evil for evil ... avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath ... Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers ... Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God.* (Romans 12:17, 19; 13:1, 2)

- Benevolent Goodness: *For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil ... do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: ... For he is the minister of God to thee for good.* (Romans 13:3, 4)

- And definition-wise: That's what "*love*" **means** to GOD!!!
(at its fundamental core)

- Hence, the "*love*" being talked about in Romans 13:8 is described, defined, and **controlled** by the information sitting in Romans 12:3-13:7 — and that keeps it from being abused and misused and **confused!**

- And I might add ... (and the reason I'm harping on this) ... is that by keeping this issue of "*love*" within the bounds that God Himself has set—godly love (and what it is to God; and what it means to God) is also the thing that makes it a **threat** to this world of ungodliness; and to the Adversary—and what makes it oftentimes repulsive to the world at large.

- Because, while on the one hand (or on one side of the coin), you're going to treat your "*neighbor*" in godly love (and working no "*ill*" to him) - and the course of action you often take is going to be easily accepted in the eyes of all men in general—the truth is, the majority of the time, your godly love & charity has in view the **SPIRITUAL BENEFIT** and **SPIRITUAL WELFARE** of all men!

- Your interest is always in either the salvation/justification of the lost man; or the godly edification of the saint!
(not in a meddlesome type way or a rude and harmful type way [truth bombs] - but nonetheless, the motive/aim of godly love is to justify the lost man and edify the saved man!)

- And you can run into resistance, opposition, and even hatred with both types of men!

- Where the **lost** is concerned—how were you told about their response to God's love? (especially His **goodness**?)

3 And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God?

4 Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?

- Notice that God has done a whole bunch of really **good** things to all men—all of which are non-offensive, non-threatening type things: such as, He provided an entire creation; warmth from the sun; day and night; air; water; food; weather patterns; governments; a marvelous human body with a brain, a soul, and a spirit that allows us to add up the facts of all this creation ... which leads us to God, Himself! (the aim of His loving *goodness* was to lead those lost men to *repentance*!)

- And yet, in light of all that loving goodness to men, how do they respond to it most generally?

5 But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God;
(Romans 2:3-5)

- In light of all that God has revealed about Himself to the human heart (& His **loving goodness** to all men)—more often than not, men hold that revelation (that *truth*) in *unrighteousness* (Romans 1:18)! [men will shake a fist at God and deny even His existence! and reject His goodness and His love toward them!]

- Now where the **saved** are concerned—look at just one example of how they responded to the apostle Paul when he tried to provide corrective doctrine for their godly edification ...

16 Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth? (Galatians 4:16)

- Now are there any question about this “Part 1” to the Godly Thinking for our *instruction of judgment*?

- Notice again how ‘open-ended’ it is—or how it provides a wide range of **judgment type** decisions to be made on your part (where you’re going to have to do a lot of thinking and

pondering and figuring out in connection with that simple statement: *Owe no man any thing, but to love one another*).

- So does that first clause make sense? and most importantly, has it made the deep impact it needs to make so that it both challenges your previous Thinking—dismisses the ungodly Thinking—and replaces it with the godly Thinking?

- And really, (even though the way the godly Thinking works here *does* challenge your previous thinking, dismiss it, and replace it with the godly Thinking) - maybe that's not the best way (or the most precise way) to say it here—because since this is the *instruction of judgment* — it's not that there is some radical & new information—rather, it's going to take what you've already learned, and give you the CAPACITY to do a whole lot more with it!!!

- If so, then we've paused long enough at the colon, and are now ready to move on.

8 *Owe no man any thing, but to love one another*: (Part 1)

Now for (**Part 2**) ... *for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law*.

- Why does God **have** to say that? Why is this 2nd Part necessary? Why does He bring up the issue of the Law and the 'fulfilling of the law'? (and, by the way, that IS talking about the Law of Moses)

- The answer lies in where that final Clause of (:8) takes your thinking! and why God wants your thinking to go there!

- Granted, the last time the "Law" (the Law of Moses) was talked about was back in Romans 10:4,5 — and that's not a bad place to go, because an issue is mentioned in that passage that has to do with what we are being directed to in this passage ... (and that is the issue of "*righteousness*" !

- But my understanding is that this is pointing you back further than that—back to something that you're supposed to be able to come along now and make some connections with what is said here in Romans 13:8, with an issue that was put into your thinking long ago, and is **always an issue** all throughout your sanctified, functional, sonship life!

- Now before we go back to look at where “Part 2” to Rom. 13:8 is directing us to go— I do want to say that my understanding is that there are 2 major reasons why God has Paul say what he says in this 2nd Clause of (:8) [*for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.*]

- One reason is obviously that it allows us to have the issue of the Law brought up in our thinking—so that it naturally leads to the natural outlet for the Godly Thinking into the Godly Conduct & Behavior of (:9) - and there, God is going to have us relate the 5 Major Features of Godly Love to 5 particular Commandments of the 10 Commandments.

- But there is another reason for “Part 2” to (:8) — which has to do with something particular and something not as obvious—but something just as critical to our being able to make confident, godly judgmental decisions as God’s “son”.

- So, when you think of that phrase: *for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law* — and what I’m especially after here is that final expression: “*hath fulfilled the law*” — when you think about something God said to you about ‘fulfilling the law’ - where does that take your thinking to?

- It’s supposed to take your thinking back to what you were taught from the very beginning of your instruction in your SANCTIFIED Position “in Christ” - (really all the way back to Romans chapter 6) — but even more specifically, to **Romans 8:1-4!** (especially :4)

- And the reason for that is because you are to understand and appreciate that the “*love*” being spoken of in Rom. 13:8 (the *love* that you owe to all men; and the *love* by which you are to love another) is a **godly** “love” that’s been generated out from your **sanctified, functional life!**

- And you are to connect this issue of “*he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law*” to an issue that makes that kind of *love*, GODLY *love* — and by doing that, you’re to recognize and realize what it is that separates the *love* by which you love (as a properly educated son) from the ‘love’ of this world and the fleshly, ungodly and corrupt and distorted use of love that natural men (lost men) and carnal men (carnal, worldly believers) engage in.

... and that’s the issue that this *love* comes from your **sanctified** life!

... your sanctified, FUNCTIONAL life! (which should immediately bring back into your thinking what is the major difference between being ‘functionally alive’ unto God, verses being ‘functionally dead’ unto God!

- This “love” (and all of the Thinking, the Conduct & Behavior, and the Labor engaged in, in connection with it) ... is all a **GRACE function**—it’s all BY GRACE THROUGH FAITH! It is NOT in any way, shape or form the ‘energy of the flesh’ type works!

- And that’s why you have the remainder of the (:8)—that’s why you need to have that 2nd Clause (or Part 2) attached to the 1st Clause (or Part 1)!

... to ensure that we’re not suddenly ‘flying off the tracks’ into human energy of the flesh ... but this is all in perfect accord and perfect keeping with **godly sanctification!** (and functional LIFE!)

- And this goes to that issue that you were made aware of in the Pre-Doctrinal Exhortation in connection with your FLESH to ‘re-double’ it’s efforts (so to speak) and oppose your putting your Sonship life on display in the world ‘at large.’

- Because when you’re at the point where you’re going to be making *judgment* type decisions (where you’re going to have to ponder, and think, and figure out a path to take—and planning is going to go into it all—and in some cases, making provisions for the planning to get done is going to take place) - and when you’re at the point of making **independent** judgments all on your own (based upon the development of godly love & charity) — it becomes very easy to simply operate upon the “love” you learned from this world, and therefore for the working out of it all to be by means of your FLESH and not BY GRACE (i.e., all that God has made you to be “in Christ” sanctification-wise)!

- And so special care is taken here to make sure that you always recognize and always operate upon GRACE — (all that your Father has **done** for you [that you could not do yourself]; and all that your Father has **taught** you [the living words of the living God, living in you by FAITH]) — you operate upon **Grace through Faith**, as all of the doctrine that makes up your sanctified position in Christ works out in the details of your life as God’s son.

- Therefore, this godly *judgment* isn't just taking the Wisdom & the Justice of Romans 12:3-13:7 — but it's got in view ALL you've been taught about sanctification-wise, and giving it ALL the capacity to now make godly *judgments*!

- Sonship is NOT an isolated, category of doctrine that ends up being compartmentalized — rather, the whole of your sanctified position “in Christ” is INTERFACED and CONNECTED and has sense & sequence to it, and progressive development to it!!! (from Rom. 6:1 to here!)

- And when God has the apostle Paul say, *Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law* — that “Part 2” (or 2nd Clause) harkens us back to how our sanctified position “in Christ” was taught to us, and how we were taught to put that static position into living, walking practice in the details of our life.

- (see notes on Romans 8:1-4)

[the thing being driven at is that issue of +R righteousness! - the “*righteousness of the law*” = the righteousness of God Himself!] (Therefore, the thoughts we think; the words we say; the works of our members are all by grace through faith—they are all *righteous* and acceptable in God's sight!)

- This second Clause (Part 2) of the godly Thinking for making judgments has the phrase “*he that loveth another*” - and that is impossible to be properly understood and properly handled without keeping the issue of godly *love* in the context God put it in.

- (without describing it and defining it as the godly love that it is—from Romans 12:3-13:7)!!!

- And the point is—that if you will love like God loves, **then you will ALWAYS FULFILL HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS!!!** (you will always do what is acceptable & well-pleasing to Him!)

- And what you end up doing is that you take those 5 Major Features of Godly Love and use them as a ‘filter’ (so to speak) - that is, you are to take those 5 Features of Godly Love and allow them to be what we ‘filter’ all of our judgments through as they relate to other people in order to come to the proper, right, best judgment (or path to take).

- This is where we can bring forth (and have work out from within us) “*the righteousness of the law*” — in that your godly love has developed to the point that you can make judgments that are perfectly consistent with God’s righteousness—and are therefore perfectly acceptable & well-pleasing to Him.

- And that’s a huge issue when you think about how that when Israel was under that law contract—Israel was given the law and told, “Do this; Don’t do that” — but they had NO POWER to produce +R in their own flesh!

- BUT! as members of the new creature of the church the body of Christ in this dispensation of the grace of God — we’re given the power and the ability (through the effectual working of our curriculum for our sonship education) to look at the details of our lives; the situations that we face; the opportunities before us, and make godly judgments that are absolutely consistent with God’s righteousness ... in fact, we even bring forth the very “righteousness” that the Law demanded, but couldn’t be produced!

- And I point that out because the truth of the matter is—you learned some things back in Romans 6, 7, & 8 that are often talked about; taught on; & made a big deal of ... but the POWER to DO what Romans 6, 7, & 8 are telling you you’re going to be able to do is rarely understood!

- And what I mean by that is—just being able to say that you are “dead to sin” and “alive unto God” doesn’t mean that you’ll automatically stop sinning and automatically live pleasing in God’s sight! And just being all those things **positionally** “in Christ” doesn’t mean that you automatically bring forth fruit unto holiness—but rather, your sanctified position in Christ is designed to be put into practice and to functionally live unto God.

- And the power to do that is what those first 13 verses of Romans chapter 8 are all about!

- And in connection with our being able to make godly judgments—we’re taught that bringing forth fruit that God can accept (which is to say, bringing forth the *righteousness* of the law) does NOT come about just because you’re sanctified and you now have the capacity to do it—but that capacity finds its power and fruition (here in Romans 13:8) when you’ve got Godly Love established to this point.

- And at this point—with those 5 Major Features of Godly Love established within you, you can now look at the details of your life, and make *judgments* that are consistent with God’s righteousness— (that are what Israel couldn’t do) - and you can now do it, NOT because God commanded you to do it, but rather because you Think just like God does, and you’re *Walking after the Spirit* and being *led by the Spirit*—which means you are operating upon the power that God generates within you by means of the effectual working of His word as you BELIEVE it ... it’s all done **by grace through faith!**

- And then you’re Living like God; and then Laboring together with God ... and the end result of it all is that you are *fulfilling the righteousness of the law* (it’s all compatible with God’s own righteousness) when you “*love one another*” just as God Himself loves.

- And now—with the effectual working of how you are to put your sanctified position in Christ into practice—and with just those first 2 decision-making skills of Wisdom & Justice — is enough instruction as a son, for you to start making Judgments that are “righteous” in God’s sight (because they are godly [God-like] judgments)!

- And as you anticipate (:9) - which is where the apostle Paul elaborates upon the godly love whereby we are to “*love one another*” — it’s important to once again recognize that the “*love*” being spoken about in (:8) is specifically **God’s** love that has been generated within you from Romans 12:3-13:7 (with it’s Selflessness, Kindness, Tenderheartedness, Meekness, & Benevolent Goodness).

- And if you don't know that, then you really don’t have any idea what Paul’s talking about here in Rom. 13:8! And this whole passage is going to be useless to you!

- You can NOT ‘fulfill the law’ by *loving one another* if you don’t love like God loves.

- For instance—if you asked 100 Christians what it means to ‘*love one another*’, you’d get 100 different answers—some would try to remember I Cor. 13 (from different Bible versions) - and some would just give you the standard definitions of what love is to them (caring, affectionate, putting other’s needs ahead of your own, etc., etc.)

... and some of the things they'd come up with may be good, and may have some correlation with the truth—but it's very doubtful that you'd get even one who would say, Well, at least by the time you get to Romans 13:8, there's 5 Features to God's love: it's Selfless, Kind, Tenderhearted, Meek, and Benevolently Good.

- And if you can't say that, then you really can't '*love one another*' like you're supposed to, and therefore, you can't make the proper *judgments* that you're going to have to make as a "son" with any confidence that you're making the best one or the right one as God Himself would.

- Here, we're receiving the instruction of Judgment—therefore, when it comes to '*loving one another*' and '*he that loveth another hath fulfilled the [righteousness] of the law*' — what we're learning here is NOT "how" to love like God loves (because that's already been established) - what we're learning here is that those 5 Features of godly love provide you the capacity to bring forth the *righteousness* that the Law demanded.

- And that's how comprehensive your ability to make judgments is going to be, if that's working.

- And coming up in (:9), God's going to give us a "*saying*" that, when you're faced with making a *judgment*, that "*saying*" will allow for it to be brought to your mind; and think upon the proper information; then make the judgment, and confidently know that, even though it wasn't black ink on white paper that said, Mark, make that decision in this situation — nevertheless, it's just as real as if it was God telling you what to do - you just made the best decision! And you have then '*proved what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.*' (that's not only "righteous" - but that's also godly!)

- Now does the Godly Thinking makes sense? Questions?

- THE GODLY CONDUCT & BEHAVIOR (:9).

For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

- **“For this,”** — the “For” is a further explanation and further amplification—Paul is now going to expand upon what he just said in (:8).
 - And this points up the fact that when the Godly Thinking of (:8) has effectually worked—it should now generate a desire for it to be put into practice in your Conduct & Behavior as a son.
 - In other words—(:9) is going to be the natural ‘outlet’ for the Godly Thinking to transition from your mind to your living, functional life (your godly conduct & behavior).
- And then Paul is going to quote 5 of the 10 Commandments.
 - And these are specifically chosen—there’s a reason why these 5, and not all 10.
 - And then Paul adds to that, the further issue of: ***and if there be ANY other commandment, it is BRIEFLY comprehended in this saying, ...*** in other words, it doesn’t matter what the commandment was—the truth is, that the righteousness of God is consistent with the love of God—and if you respond to a situation properly with godly love, you will have made the right decision (the ‘righteous’ decision).
- So Paul lists 5 of the 10 Commandments for a purpose.
 - And the 5 Paul lists are #6, 7, 8, 9, and 10—if you go back and check them out as God gave them to Israel back in Exodus 20:13-17 you’ll see they are the last 5 of the 10.
 - However, as God gave them to Paul to put here in the book of Romans—God has Paul reverse the order of #6 & 7.
 - The original order: “Thou shalt not”
 - 6) kill
 - 7) commit adultery
 - 8) steal
 - 9) bear false witness
 - 10) covet
 - But God has Paul put “*commit adultery*” first, then “*kill*”. (And there is a purpose & a reason for that).

- And these are the portion of the 10 Commandments that deal with ‘all men’ - [or more specifically, an Israelite’s *neighbor*], (outside of his immediate family—or ‘honouring father and mother’).

- Some talk about these 5 as being the civil code that formed the conduct & behavior of how Israel was to deal with all men as their neighbor in society at large. (and rightly so)

- And what is going on here—and why God has Paul list these 5 of the 10 Commandments—and why He has Paul flip #6 & 7 around—is because each of these 5 Commandments (in the very order they are given here in [:9]) are designed to match up perfectly as the antithesis (or in direct contrast to; or the exact opposite of) of the 5 Major Features of Godly Love in the very order that those 5 Features were given to us in Romans 12:3-13:7.

- You have *Thou shalt not ... commit adultery, kill, steal, bear false witness, covet.*

- And so my understanding is that these match up with the 5 Features of Godly Love ...

commit adultery	(antithesis of)	Selflessness
kill	(antithesis of)	Kindness
steal	(antithesis of)	Tenderheartedness
bear false witness	(antithesis of)	Meekness
covet	(antithesis of)	Benevolent Goodness

- And because we have done the work to go back and refresh and remind ourselves of what is sitting back in Romans 8:1-4—we should be able to understand and appreciate that what is going on here is NOT just a listing of 5 commandments that are the direct opposite of the 5 Features of godly love—it’s not just teaching you “opposites” (so to speak) - but because of our review, we know that what is being driven at here is that you recognize a POSITIVE aspect to all this.

- Meaning, by laying the “Thou shalt not” of the Commandment over against the Feature of Godly love—you’re to understand and appreciate that the Feature of Godly Love positively fulfills that “Thou shalt not” **in perfect Righteousness!** (And done so all by Grace through Faith—without any energy of our natural flesh!)

RECAP:

- So we have a statement or a “charge” given to us in the 1st Part of (:8) - *Owe no man any thing, but to love one another.* (And while it isn’t directly said, it is acting as a “saying” [more on that, later]).

- And this is “Part 1” of your Godly Thinking in connection with making godly judgments in the details of your life in connection with all men in general.

- And this is designed to be an impressive charge—that is, it’s designed to make a deep impression by which we are to perceive that the real “key” to making judgmental decisions that are well-pleasing to God is to take what we’ve been taught in Wisdom & Justice—and more importantly, to take the Godly Love that has been developed in us all along the way in our education as sons—and come to realize that it’s going to be by means of that **Godly Love** that our judgmental decisions are going to be made and based upon.

- This ‘charge’ prompts your Thinking to say, I need to now gather up all the information I’ve been taught by my Father in regards to how He makes His decisions; and the **power** by which He makes His decisions—which is by those 5 Major Features of Godly Love that I learned about in Wisdom & Justice) - and now that information has the capacity for **me** to make use of it in all areas of judgmental type decisions!

- And if you think about it—everything you’ve learned in Wisdom, Justice, and the discretion they produced—can all be boiled down to just this one issue: LOVE (godly love)!

- And that’s why (:8a) doesn’t say, ‘Owe no man any thing, but wisdom and justice:’

- And so we’re at this point to recognize that the information we’ve been taught regarding godly love is designed to equip us to make sound judgments/decisions as to what we should do, especially when we are in situations where we have no direct instruction; or have no previous experience or frame of reference.

- But your heart may be a bit fearful or apprehensive that you’ll mess up (which is natural when you are just beginning to make these independent type decisions) - so Paul is going to set forth some additional information in (:8b and :9) that will remedy that and give you some godly confidence.

- So 'Part 2' of the Godly Thinking of (:8) hearkens you back to what was said back in Romans 8:1-4 as you began to "*walk after the Spirit*" and put your sanctified position in Christ into practice in **righteousness**—and here in Romans 13:8-10 is where the 'rubber meets the road' (so to speak) where, by the effectual working of the sonship curriculum so far, as you utilize godly love in making judgmental decisions, you are to have the confidence in knowing that those decisions are "righteous" in God's sight—because, just as (:8b) says, *for he that loveth another* (with godly love as it was just taught to you) *hath fulfilled the law* (i.e., fulfilled the righteousness of the law).

- And that then leads naturally to the information that has to do with our godly Conduct & Behavior which will culminate in that "saying" *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself*.

- So really, what you've got here in (:9) [in the Godly Living aspect to our instruction of judgment] is:

1) An impressive statement that **verifies** the truth about that "love" that you are to *love one another* with—that is, it verifies the truth that when you do love another with godly love, you, indeed (or in truth) have fulfilled the righteousness of the law.

2) When it comes to godly love as the critically needed thing for us as sons to make judgments that are compatible with the righteousness of God, (:9) **validates** the power and effectual working of godly love to do just that.

- And therefore it gives you the confidence that when you make judgments based upon godly love & charity, you are making decisions that are in perfect keeping with your Father's own righteousness and are well-pleasing in His sight.

- But before we deal with the details of (:9) - we need to be reminded about some basic issues about the Law and the 10 Commandments, especially.

- (see notes on "The Tenor of the Law")

- (see notes on John 5:32-47)

- Now by the time you have received your instruction of Wisdom & Justice—and have had produced within you the 5 Core Features of Godly Love—those 5 Features of Godly Love are designed to effectually produce within you a strong concern for the “welfare” of others—(especially for the spiritual “wealth” or “welfare” of others)!

- Which makes a lot of sense out of why God has the apostle Paul list the 5 of the 10 Commandments that he does—because not only are those 5 the complete opposite of each corresponding feature of godly love—but those 5 are all dealing with or are concerned with ‘others’ ... with all men ... or to put it another way, with your *neighbor*!

- And that makes the statement (or saying or principle) of Part 1 of the godly Thinking the natural thing that it should be: *Owe no man any thing but to love one another:*

- And since Godly Love is now going to be the basis upon which you are going to make wise judgmental decisions in connection with your dealings with all men (just like your Father does) - you need to connect some things in your thinking so that you will have absolute godly confidence that your conduct & behavior (which is based upon your godly thinking) is going to be acceptable to God, compatible with God’s righteousness, and as you were made aware of all the way back in Romans 6— *even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness.*

- And so the law comes up, not because you’re under it; or are commanded to keep it to put your sanctified position in Christ into practice—but because BY GRACE THROUGH FAITH (i.e., by means of the effectual working of the curriculum for your sonship education) - as you operate upon Godly Love & Charity, you really ARE fulfilling the righteousness of the law.

- In other words, the righteousness of God is consistent with the love of God—and if you respond to a situation with the love of God, you will have made the right/righteous decision!

- Hence: (Part 2) *for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.* (that is, fulfilled the righteousness of the law)

- Now, why is that so? and how does that godly Thinking effectually work out in our godly Conduct & Behavior? (Paul expands in :9)

- And as we've noted, Paul now quotes 5 of the 10 Commandments — and as we've also noted, these are both specifically chosen and specifically ordered so that they match up with the order of the 5 Features of godly love as they were produced within us.

- And these 5 Commandments are designed to not merely teach you the opposite of what godly love is—but more importantly, (and what you **MUST** get out of all this) is that each feature of godly love **FULFILLS PERFECTLY** the particular law that is it's opposite partner (so to speak!)

- Put simply, **godly love fulfills the righteousness of the law!** (And you've received that godly love because you've been *walking after the Spirit*, and being *led by the Spirit of God* as a son!)

- And that's where your godly sonship confidence is going to come from as you make judgmental decisions by means of the godly love developed within you! (You'll confidently know that your decision is both righteous and godly!)

- So let's look at these 5 Commandments and see how they match up with the 5 Features of godly love—and more importantly see how godly love fulfills the righteousness of the law—which makes your sonship decisions in the realm of judgment, acceptable in God's sight (and really even more than that!)

- ***Thou shalt not commit adultery,***

- And my understanding is that the exact opposite of that (or its antithesis) is: The 1st Feature of Godly Love: **SELFLESSNESS.**

- What is "*adultery*"? — violation of the marriage bed; a married person having sexual relations with another (married or not).

- In fact, this particular law of Moses has found its way into our laws—truth is, adultery is considered a crime—granted, it's so common today that it's almost expected—but it's still regarded as a legal basis for divorce.

- It's first used in Exo. 20:14—and under God's program with Israel, it carried the **DEATH PENALTY** (Lev. 20:10 [both the man and the woman!]).

- So the Commandment is: *Thou shalt not commit adultery* — and at the outset, maybe you can easily see how godly Selflessness is the very opposite of committing adultery ... or maybe not.

- And here is where our reminder as to how the 10 Commandments were designed to be like that “Well-Head” issue—with a whole bunch of underlying sub-issues (or ‘lesser’ acts) that are just as unrighteous as the ultimate act (or the “Well-Head” issue) is going to help out.

- Because you kind of have to think about some of the surrounding or underlying thinking that would result in *committing adultery* (or *killing*, or *stealing*, or *bearing false witness* or *coveting*).

NOTE: It’s not that you can’t see how some of the 5 Features of godly love could match up with one of the other 5 Commandments or even more than one of the Commandments mentioned here—but the point is that there is something specific about each of the 5 Features of godly love that is being driven at in the matching up of it with the particular Commandment listed. (Each Command is the epitome of what comes from UNRIGHTEOUSNESS in the heart!)

- So with all that in mind—what’s the underlying motivation in *committing adultery*? (lust??? yes, but more than that)

- SELFISHNESS!; self-centeredness; self-importance; self-absorption, etc!

- Adultery is: you’ve got a spouse that you belong to—and the only thing that would motivate you to go and have a sexual relationship with someone who isn’t your spouse, is because you are SELFISH to the EXTREME!

- (based upon **selfish**, fleshly desires!)

- And so it’s pretty easy to see that *committing adultery* is the very **antithesis** of being SELFLESS! ... it’s the antithesis of the characteristic of God’s love that’s supposed to be established within you!

- But what is absolutely CRITICAL for you to understand and appreciate is NOT merely that *adultery* is the opposite of selflessness

... or that the only issue here is how not to commit adultery! ...

... but the issue is that you have this negative Commandment that is consistent with the very Righteousness of God Himself—and what you have to understand and appreciate here is that **YOUR GODLY LOVE KEEPS YOU FROM DOING THIS!!!**

- And it takes into consideration all of the underlying sub-type-issues of the heart and how you choose and determine and judge to act upon those heart issues! (Because this is the “Well-Head” issue, it accounts for the whole range of issues underlying it!) [how powerful love is!!!]

- i.e., you don't have to be told or commanded “not to commit adultery” ...

- No one, operating upon the basis of Godly Selfless Love would ever commit adultery (with or without a Commandment) ... because it would be selfish! ... and your Selfless Love wouldn't allow you to do that!

- And the point is—(the point in each of these is) - that your Godly Love has developed to the point where you can live righteously and godly in this world—with Godly Love as the principle factor in making your judgments! (your **guidance system**)

- So therefore, the RIGHTEOUSNESS of the law is fulfilled in Godly Love (Selflessness).

- ***Thou shalt not kill,***

- (Setting aside the issue of Capital Punishment, going to war, defending yourself, etc.) — Both the Hebrew (ratsach) and the Greek word (phoneuo) = to kill in the sense of committing murder.

- Obviously, this is the antithesis of **KINDNESS** (lovingkindness).

- The motivation to commit murder comes from such things as hatred, disdain, cruelty, envy, jealousy, rage, etc.

- Killing someone is a decision to do “evil” rather than to *abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good*—therefore *killing* is at the **far end** of the spectrum of UNKIND BEHAVIOR!!!

- And therefore, with the Characteristic of Godly Kindness operating within you—you don't have to be Commanded "not to kill" - you don't have to be told "not to kill" —

— because as a properly educated son, if God's love is effectually working within you, your Godly Love would **prohibit** you from EVER "killing" or committing murder!

- That doesn't mean that you could volitionally override it—and make a free-will choice—but under the 'Divine Guidance System' of Godly Love & Charity, you WON'T commit murder: because lovingkindness "*abhors that which is evil*" - hence, it wouldn't go out and commit a heinous act of evil against someone!

- So therefore, the RIGHTEOUSNESS of the Law is fulfilled in Godly Love (Kindness)!

- ***Thou shalt not steal***, [klepto, Gk.]

- Usually, when something is *stolen* (or you steal something) - it's done secretly, and it's done dishonestly. [which tells you that something is going wrong in a person's **heart**]

- What is the underlying motivation of the heart for *stealing*?

- (note that there may be a whole bunch of motivations for stealing [and you can imagine both a so-called 'good' scenario and a 'bad' scenario] ... but my understanding is that either way, at the moment of the 'taking' (or the stealing) a particular thought is reached—or a particular 'line' is crossed.)

- And at the moment of the stealing—even in the face of the consequences—the mind says, I just don't care, I'm going to take it!

- And therefore, if you take all of the underlying sub-issues of the heart in connection with *stealing*—the whole thing can be boiled down to one basic, fundamental issue: A HARD-HEART; HARD-HEARTEDNESS—the exact opposite of TENDERHEARTEDNESS!

- (complete insensitivity to others!) [I don't care, I'll take it anyway]

- And sealing something from someone signifies in the loudest of terms: I DON'T CARE ABOUT YOUR NEEDS!

- And what was it that you learned as a son, when it came to utilizing Godly Tenderheartedness back in the curriculum for your sonship education?

- Rom. 12:13—*Distributing (not stealing) to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality.*

- At the core of Godly Tenderheartedness is a godly and merciful compassion that cannot overlook another's 'necessity' — tenderheartedness CARES about the needs of others.

- Stealing says, I **don't care** about the impact from taking from you (or your family). [stealing the "toys for tots"]

- By the way—stealing is also Selfish; and Unkind—but at it's core, it **doesn't care** about the impact upon the person, because the one doing the stealing is simply HARD-HEARTED to it all!

- You steal say, food, from someone else—even if it is for feeding your own family—however it may or may not be justified, the matter still comes down to: "I don't care if you're hungry, My heart is **hard** towards you—I care more for me and mine than I do you and yours."

- Therefore, *stealing* is the antithesis of TENDERHEARTEDNESS.

- And, again, if Godly Love is effectually working within you as taught to you by your Father—then you don't have to be told 'not to steal' - you don't have to be given a law or a command 'not to steal' — because your Tender Heart would NOT allow you to take something from someone else—in fact, your Tender Heart wants to "*distribute*" to a saint's need or '*necessity*' (not to take or steal from him)!

- So therefore, the RIGHTEOUSNESS of the Law is fulfilled in Godly Love (Tenderheartedness)!

- (By the way—where the Law is concerned and how we are to put our sanctified position in Christ into practice in righteousness “under grace”—do you see how things have progressed and developed from Romans 6:14-15ff? via Rom. 8:1-4 via Rom. 12:3ff and on and on ...)

... Godly Love, a divine guidance system for making judgmental decisions as a son!

- ***Thou shalt not bear false witness,***

- (or as it's stated in Exodus 20:16—*Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.*)

- Notice that it does not say, “Thou shalt not **lie**” - although lying is certainly involved in bearing false witness—and God's word certainly deals with lying and liars.

- What is the difference, setting-wise or frame-of-reference-wise between simply lying and ‘bearing false witness’?

- That word *witness* (or *false witness*) puts the issue in a LEGAL or COURTROOM setting or frame of reference—that is, it puts it in a context of **JUSTICE!**

- (and by the way, it's in our *instruction of Justice* that the Major Feature of Godly Love that matches up with and corresponds with this Commandment was generated within us!)

- “*Bearing false witness*” while it includes the idea of lying—it's a LEGAL expression of uttering falsehoods in the giving of testimony; to testify falsely; perjury; unjust slander; false accusation and the like—and it can be done either in a courtroom situation (publically), or even privately, outside of a courtroom by lying about someone or spreading rumors, innuendos, character assassination and so forth.

- What's the motivation underlying (or behind) *bearing false witness*? (for doing such a thing as that?) ... if you think about it, at kind of the ‘core’ of the issue is the issue of such things as self-promotion; self-preservation; saving face! ... and one of the major, core reasons behind ‘bearing false witness’ is the issue of bringing **HARM** to someone else! (maybe physically, maybe not physically)

- And to make matters worse, *bearing false witness* desires to do HARM to another **even though they don't deserve it!** (which makes it an INJUSTICE or an unjust act).

- It's the issue of—I want to see some punishment doled out on you ... and I'm willing to lie about it, and make it out so that you're made out to be guilty and worthy of the punishment or harm, even though you're not! (you're innocent).

- So if we keep thinking a bit more about the underlying motivation for someone to *bear false witness* against someone else—we sometimes express it in such a way as: “He’s out to get you!”

- And no matter how it's justified in the mind of the one bearing false witness—and no matter how warped his thinking is—in *his* mind, he's not only inflicting trouble on another person, but his thinking is one of:

- GETTING EVEN
- AVENGING HIMSELF!

- And where does that kind of terminology take your thinking?

- Romans 12:17-21 (1st & 2nd Component of Justice)
Recompense to no man evil for evil.
Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.

- And that's where your Father developed that 4th Feature of Godly Love: **MEEKNESS**.

- And **Meekness** is the antithesis of *bearing false witness*.

- Where *bearing false witness* takes a course of avenging or getting even—Meekness is not easily provoked or irritated; yielding; given to forbearance under injuries; humble, submissive, and patient; unresentful under injury and reproach ...

- Meekness is the containment within yourself of your 'rights' to redress something because you would rather pursue a course that, for some reason, is more important/meaningful to you.

- Godly Meekness doesn't seek self-promotion or 'saving face' - it's not resentful and bent upon 'getting even' and 'avenging' ...

... and even in an instance where you could justly have the right to be 'avenged' or have the right to some sort of legal satisfaction—Godly Meekness would rather contain all that, and pursue a course of action that is bigger and more important and more meaningful than even your own right to be avenged!

- And, once again, you don't need a Commandment or a Law (or to be told) not to *bear false witness*—because the Feature of Godly Love of Meekness keeps you from ever doing that.

- And again—therefore, the RIGHTEOUSNESS of the Law is fulfilled in Godly Love (Meekness).

- *Thou shalt not covet;*

- (or as it's stated in Exodus 20:17—*Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's.)*

- Now since we've only got one Major Feature of Godly Love left — we will see that the issue *coveting* is the exact opposite of Godly **Benevolent Goodness**.

- But we need to do a little bit more work on this one to see how they do match up (as opposite numbers, so to speak).

- Most generally, the word *covet* is defined as: intense desire; an inordinate desire (usually for something that someone else has [and you don't want them to have it]); LUST. (true/right)

- *covet* (and similar terms) all come from essentially the same Greek word: ἐπιθυμία (*lust*) ἐπιθυμέω (*covet*) = from “ἐπι” (an intensifier) + “θυμος” = to breathe violently; to be all in a **heat**; concentrated, intense desire & longing; lust.

- And *covet* does mean an inordinate, longing desire for what belongs to another. (that is, when used in its **bad** sense).

- By the way—(just to correct a mistake I made a long time ago) — the word *covet* can be used in a **good** sense—in fact, Paul uses it in a good sense a couple of times —

But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way. (1 Cor. 12:31)

... covet to prophesy ... (1 Cor. 14:39)

- But when the word *covet* is contained in the Law as it is in the 10th Commandment—you're in a context in which the issue of *coveting* is **Ungodly**—and not only does Exodus 20:17 make that apparent, but such a passage as Psalm 10:3 does as well (*For the wicked boasteth of his heart's desire, and blesseth the covetous, whom the LORD abhorreth.*)

- Now just as we've had to do for the previous 4 Commandments—we have to kind of come along and utilize our understanding and appreciation for how the Law was designed to work in connection with the “Big 10” (the 10 Commandments) —

— and what I mean by that, once again, is how the 10 Commandments were to function as that “Well-Head” or Comprehensive Commandment to a lot of other related sins and ungodliness that lie underneath it.

- And the “Well-Head” Commandment (of the 10) is designed to be able to dig down to other issues of the heart and make them known to you—and that's what we're after.

- And you have to do this kind of work here (for all 5) in order to get down to what it is, specifically, that is being driven at so that it ‘clicks’ in your thinking just how these 5 Commandments are the antithesis of the 5 Features of Godly Love—and **more importantly**, how each of those 5 Features of Godly Love really do fulfill the righteousness of the law! (confidence in your Godly Guidance Sys.)

[because until you get that, you really haven't got the effectual working of Romans 13:9 sufficient enough for you to put it into practice in your godly Conduct & Behavior in connection with making sonship judgments in your dealings with all men in general.] ... in other words, you won't be able to effectually *love thy neighbour as thyself!*

- So what we're after here is to think about *coveting*—and what can be 'attached' to it (so to speak) that puts it in an ungodly sense.

- Because the word *covet* itself, fundamentally doesn't do that. Otherwise, it could never be used in a good sense.

- In fact, Paul puts an adverb on it to exult the idea even further ... *covet earnestly the best gifts* ... (no idea at all that *covet* is ungodly)

- So there's got to be a concept or an issue that's attached to *coveting* that, when it's attached to it, **that's** what puts it in an ungodly realm.

- And that's how it's being used when it's put in one of those Commandments in the Law.

- And that's the context here in Romans 13:9 ... but it's also used that very same way back in **Romans 7:8!**

- (read Romans 7:7-8)

- What we're after is that word **concupiscence**—because that's the concept that the apostle Paul identifies with **ungodly coveting!**

- Notice that Paul didn't say: *But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of 'lust'* (even though he used that word back in [:7]) ... or *all manner of 'coveting'* ...

- Therefore, Paul's understanding in connection with ungodly *coveting* is that the general aspect of ungodliness that is attached to, or belongs to, or underlies ungodly *coveting* is: **concupiscence**.

- And on top of that—Paul says that when he tried to take that 10th Commandment and put his functional life in Christ into practice, that it *wrought in me all manner of concupiscence*.

- Therefore there's a number of manners of *concupiscence*—and Paul says, "Sin took occasion by the 10th Commandment (*thou shalt not covet*) and wrought in me every sort of vile, disgusting, disgraceful, rotten ugly ungodly category of *concupiscence* it could!"

- Now the “*manner*” of *concupiscence* that we’re most familiar with (if you’re familiar with the term at all) - would be **sexual** *concupiscence*. [see **I Thessalonians 4:3-5**]

- (but that’s only 1 “*manner*” of it!)

- So to get to the ‘root’ issue of ungodly *coveting* (and to discover how it stands as the very opposite of Benevolent Goodness) you have to think about what *concupiscence* is in a more generic way than just sexual lust.

- *Concupiscence* = made up of 3 parts:
 “con” + “cup” + “science”
 con - cup - science

- The Latin Prefix “con” = together with, or running together with, or putting together with.

- The word “science” is easy enough—it’s the basic issue of “knowledge” or “knowledge acquired through study” — primarily empirical knowledge (derived from observation) - hence, it’s “sensed” knowledge, [which is why it ends up being associated with sexual *concupiscence*, because of the ‘sensation’ involved].

- But the real core of the matter is the “**cup**” concept.

- And as we learned back in Romans 7, that’s a short form for the word “Cupid” (the Roman god of love).

- Far from being the sweet cherub seen at Valentine’s day, Cupid was a raunchy, obscene and vulgar Roman god. The Roman cult of Cupid believed that he ruled as the son of Night and the son of Hell, and that he mated with Chaos to produce both men and gods. He’s often depicted as carrying two sets of arrows: one set gold-headed, which inspired love; and the other lead-headed, which inspired hate.

- *Concupiscence* came to indicate extreme inordinate sexual appetite—and could be applied not only to sexual lust, but to extreme, vehement, carnal desire **for worldly things in general**. [what we call today, hedonism]

- And the truth of the matter is: CUPID IS SELF LOVE!

- And the basic concept involved in *concupiscence* is the issue of **satisfying your self & your senses and pursuing that because you think or act like you DESERVE it!**

- And that's the core issue in ungodly coveting—you long for something or desire or lust for something—but you do it for pure self-satisfaction because you want to receive whatever kind of profit, benefit, and joy that you can get out of it at the expense of someone else (or to the ignoring of someone else).

- By the way—godly coveting is to long for something, desire something that's profitable, beneficial, and helpful at the expense of yourself, for someone else!

(which is why, at the end of I Cor. 12, in dealing with all of the body-type godly Conduct & Behavior as members one of another, they're told to "covet earnestly the best gifts" for the mutual benefit of every other member of the body—not for their own self-satisfaction, benefit/profit!)

- And now you should begin to see how "*Thou shalt not covet*" really is the exact opposite of godly Benevolent Goodness.

- The underlying motivation of *coveting* is SELF love (or *concupiscence*) - it's the issue of selfishly satisfying yourself and your wants and your desires and your needs over and above anyone else's.

- In other words, *coveting* is the issue of solely being concerned with, and doing everything you can to promote **your own welfare** (fulfilling your own desires and sensual pleasures) - and with NO concern for the welfare of others!

- And the 5th feature of godly love (Benevolent Goodness) is the issue of being concerned with, and doing everything you can to promote & administrate the Goodness of God Himself to/for the welfare of others! (Because you value & esteem them the same way God values & esteems them!)

- And again—ungodly coveting is the exact opposite of godly Benevolent Goodness—because ungodly coveting is the issue of

promoting your own welfare; promoting your own good; seeking benevolence to come to you (especially at the expense of others) - and only being satisfied when you're on the receiving end of it — but Benevolent Goodness seeks the promotion, the welfare, the benefit of others (even at the expense of yourself!).

- And what all these 5 Major Features of Godly Love are going to do now (in the *instruction of godly judgment*)—now that they've been brought into existence and are up and running well—is that they are now going to have the capacity to recognize, discern and identify anything what would be “*ill*” to your neighbour!

- And on the basis of those 5 Features of Godly Love effectually operating within you—you do NOT want to work any “*ill*” to your neighbour!

- And so what God is having the apostle Paul do in citing those 5 Commandments and matching them up with the 5 Features of Godly Love (not merely as the exact opposite of them; but how they validate and verify the reality that the righteousness of the law is fulfilled when you love another exactly the way God Himself does) - what gets accomplished in all that is that you now have in your possession the mechanical means (so to speak) for making every judgmental decision in connection with your neighbour.

- Therefore, any *judgments* you make on the basis of recognizing an “*ill*” and then determining NOT to do it—**amounts to a full-fledged decision made on the basis of properly developed Godly Love!**

- And therefore by taking the time to give you the information in (:9) about those 5 Commandments—you get the time to recognize the development of godly love within you; and you get to recognize that your godly sonship Conduct & Behavior with regard to godly love is going to be righteous in God's sight; and you gain the confidence in the ‘guidance system’ that godly love is and is going to ever be to you in your sonship life! (in making *judgmental* and even *equitable* sonship decisions)

- So you don't need to be told—you don't need a Commandment or a Law to tell you not to *covet*—because your Benevolent Goodness would keep you from ever promoting your own good at the expense of others (or to the harm and neglect of others)!

- Your desire is to promote and administrate God's goodness to others.
- And therefore, the RIGHTEOUSNESS of the Law is fulfilled in godly love (in this case, in the feature of Benevolent Goodness).
- And before we go on—I just want to point out just how **glorious** it is to be able to have godly love developed within us by our Father, and then to operate upon that as the means by which we make adult, sonship *judgments* (not only acceptable in His sight, but to His pleasure).
- And what I'm after here is that by setting these 5 Commandments over against the 5 Features of Godly Love—you need to realize that more than just being 'righteous' and acceptable to God's justice—those decisions you make in sonship judgment **are going to be GODLY!**
- Why? Because you're going to make them for the **same reasons** your Father would make them!
- It's not just the issue of being told/commanded to make the right choice—and the you make it ... but you're going to make the right choice for the right reasons!
- In other words—(for instance with "*Thou shalt not commit adultery*") ... you, as a son, are never going to not commit adultery just because God said not to do it in the 10 Commandments!
- No. as a properly educated son, you're not going to commit adultery **BECAUSE YOU LOVE LIKE GOD DOES** with GODLY SELFLESS LOVE and because of that, you would NEVER hurt your spouse (you'd never indulge in that selfish behavior)!
- Now in both cases (1) being commanded; and (2) loving like God does—the "right" decision is made—but only one of them can be considered "God-like" (or godly) — and you not only get to make the correct choice, but you get to make godly *judgments!* (and genuine godliness is able to take place in the judgments you make)

- And folks, that's what it's all about with the issue of godly edification—with being conformed to the image of Christ—and emulating your Father in all you think/say/and do.

- Any questions? Comments?

- Now in view of all that—(:9) comes to the issue of just how it is that we are to Conduct and Behave ourselves as sons in connection with our dealings with all men (especially our “*neighbour*”).

- Once the 5 Commandments are given—and once you've come to understand and appreciate them in light of the 5 Major Features of Godly Love—and once you recognize that the judgments you make by means of that Godly Love will result in the very righteousness of God Himself (fulfilling the righteousness of the Law) - verse 9 goes on to say ...

9 ... and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

- **and if there be any other commandment**—the obvious thing at this point (after citing 5 of the 10 Commandments) is that since those 5 are fulfilled in righteousness by means of Godly Love effectually working within you—then it stands to reason that you can apply that same principle to the **whole** Law (all 600+ laws).

- So Paul goes on to say—**it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely,**

- “**briefly**” = in a way that occupies a few words, concisely; — and the issue here is that even though it's going to be few words and concise, the truth is, it's **not** going to be watered down or diminished in the sense of forgoing parts of it, rather, the Law can be (and is designed to be stated in a single thought or statement). [actually, 2 statements]

- “**comprehended**” = most generally: to lay hold of, to seize, to grasp, to “catch” — also, to lay hold of with the mind, to take in—to **lay hold of all the points of any thing and include them within the compass of a description or expression**—hence, to embrace all the parts of something, but to describe it in summary form. (OED)

- Notice that it does NOT say, “briefly stated” - No—it’s to be COMPREHENDED! — in fact, most, if not all of the newer/modern/so-called better English translations have: “summed up”.

- Granted, the Greek word can be translated a variety of ways — however, (as it always is), the King James translators saw something in the CONTEXT that demanded that the word *comprehended* is the most excellent choice of all!

- And when taken together, “*briefly comprehended*” embraces the issue of summing something up (although even that’s not really precise enough for what’s going on here) - but by using the word “*comprehended*” the translators picked up on the critical nature of what is being stressed and emphasized by Paul in Romans 13:9.

- We’re **not** after merely summing up the Law into one nice, neat statement for Reader’s Digest (*thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself*) - [as if that’s the goal of this little exercise] —

— rather, what the context is after here is to drive home a ‘**catalytic**’ *saying* or principle that a properly educated son can put together with all that he’s been taught up to this point—and then by means of that *saying*, end up with a powerful ‘divine guidance system’ installed in his inner man that gives him the capacity to make *judgmental* decisions just exactly like his Father does!

- And that doesn’t merely take ‘summing up’ ... **that takes comprehension!**

- “Comprehend” is actually an advanced and intensified form of “conceive” and “understand” — (George Crabb) - “To *conceive* is to put together in the mind; to *understand*, is to stand under, or near to the mind; to *comprehend* signifies **to seize or embrace in the mind.**”

“Conception is the simplest operation of the three; when we *conceive* we may have but one idea, when we *understand* or *comprehend* we have all the ideas which the subject is capable of producing.” (Crabb)

- (Charles Smith) - “We understand matters of ordinary discourse and the practical business of life. To comprehend is to **embrace a thing in all its compass and extent.**

I understand the meaning of a word—I comprehend the action of a machine.”

- So because of the critical nature that this *saying* is going to be to you as a son—the excellency of your King James Bible tells you that this isn’t just a summing up that’s going on here—but it’s a critical statement that is given in the form of a *saying* in which it is to be SEIZED upon and **EMBRACED** in your mind to the extent that it become the Prince-Ruler or Governor of your sonship Conduct & Behavior in connection with making *judgments* about your godly relationship with your “*neighbour.*”

- So we have ... “*and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, ...*” — we’ll leave off dealing with the issue of a “*saying*” for now, and we’ll come back to it later on.

- For now, notice that God doesn't have the apostle Paul say: ‘and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself’ ... but He adds that word *namely.*

- “*namely*” = particularly, especially, **above all**—in other words, what you’ve got here is its own “Well-Head” type issue—that is, what is contained in the following statement is to be regarded by you as a son (vital for your sonship “issues of life [functional life]” in connection with the *judgments* you make)—this is to be regarded as the “HEAD” of it all.

- The statement, *thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself* is supposed to be given “Head-Ship” **above all** that is contained in the Law.

- It is the single issue that stands at the Head of it all ... and as such, it’s going to become a PRINCIPLE to you as a son—it’s going to be the ‘Prince’ ruler that so occupies your mind that it will govern all of your godly sonship Conduct & Behavior in connection with it! (you’re to give it ‘Head-ship’ position, judgment-wise)

- And what you've got here is 'emphasis upon emphasis' (so to speak) - because when you understand and appreciate what a *saying* is to God, and how He intends for it to be used in sonship education—as we will see), that's putting very strong emphasis upon this statement just by itself.

- But because you have that additional wording, ***in this saying, namely, ...*** the word *namely* puts even greater force on the statement that follows it and therefore alerts you to the fact that this is something to be given great importance and demands great attention!

- By the effectual use of it will determine your *judgments* and what path you take in connection with them!

(Corresp. Exhor.)—*Take fast hold of instruction; let her not go: keep her; for she is thy life. (Pro. 4:13)*

- Therefore, after pulling out the 5 Commandments of the 10 that match up with their opposite number Feature of Godly Love—then God says:

... and if there be any other commandment (in the same manner that the previous 5 operated and were fulfilled in righteousness by means of the effectual working of Godly Love—in that same manner, the entire Law operates that way), it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

— in this case, it's the taking of something massive (such as the Law of Moses as contained especially in Exodus through Deuteronomy) and reducing/condensing/distilling it down to a single statement—and doing so without LOSING anything that's contained in the massive information of the Law.

- Godly Love—with its Selflessness, Kindness, Tenderheartedness, Meekness, and Benevolent Goodness is comprehensive enough, that if you operate upon the basis of ***it***—then that provides for the righteousness of Law/God to be produced within you as you *walk after the Spirit*, and to be put on display as God's living word works out in your living, functional, sanctified sonship life!

- Put simply, the righteousness of the law is going to be fulfilled **in you**. And that's not a ho-hum thing! — That's **stunning**—because the **righteousness** of the law is the exact same thing as the very **righteousness** of God Himself!

- Now before we go back and consider what a *saying* is—let's first of all look at the *saying* that is to take 'head-ship' (so to speak) in our thinking and work itself out in our sonship Conduct & Behavior in connection with godly judgments.

- It's a very familiar expression: ***Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.***

- Obviously, you're not left to your own personal preferences as to the kind of love, or the manner of love, or defining love, or describing it — no — the "*love*" here is specifically described and defined in those 5 Core Features of Godly Love (S,K,T,M,B/G).

- Now this isn't the first time this statement has been made in God's word—in fact, you're probably most familiar with it as being something the Lord Jesus Christ said during His earthly ministry—which would put it in God's program with Israel.

- And since that's true, and since we're dealing with the way in which the righteousness of the Law of Moses was and is supposed to be understood to be 'fulfilled in righteousness' - I think it would be good to do a little background work here and gain some appreciation for this issue—because it's an issue in BOTH programs (in God's program with Israel, and in God's program with us, the members of the church, the body of Christ in this dispensation of grace).

- And that's due to the fact that Justification, Sanctification (spiritual fitness), and Sonship are common to both programs. (Of course, God's business is entirely different and distinct; and the doctrine to accomplish His business is different and distinct).

- BACKGROUND: Matthew 22

- This is late in the Lord's earthly ministry—He's almost to the point where He will no longer deal with the vain, religious leaders of Israel any longer (concluding them in ignorance) - but graciously, He still gives them a few more opportunities to change their mind!

- In the last 2/3 rds of the chapter, the Lord is going to deal with 3 groups of Israel's vain religious leaders: the Herodians (a powerful religious-political party aligned with King Herod—and always trying to ingratiate themselves with Caesar), the Sadducees, and the Pharisees.

- All 3 of these groups (groups that would normally hate each other) are all coming together in order to destroy the Lord's ministry and ultimately have Him killed.

- And each group is going to haul out their 'pet doctrine' (so to speak) and attack the Lord with it in hopes of tripping Him up and exposing Him for a phony.

- (read :15) - They're going to attempt to trap the Lord in a kind of spider 'web of foolishness' in hopes that as the Lord responds to it and tries to talk His way out of it—that He'll just get tangled up more and more until He's kind of like a bug ensnared in a spider's web.

- First up are the Herodians (religious, but mostly Political!)
- (read :16-22)

- Next up to bat are the Sadducees—and they are a religious bunch who were convinced in their own minds that they believed and held to the Law of Moses—but like all the other vain/religious leaders of Israel, they had corrupted the Law to suit their own preferences.

- And to really understand the Sadducees, you kind of have to know a little bit about what heavily influenced them — and to get that appreciation, you have to think a bit about what had gone on just prior to the Lord Jesus Christ coming into this world.

- The Sadducees' pet doctrine (or cornerstone doctrine) was that there was no such thing as "resurrection" from the dead.

- And one of the main reasons they held to this was that they deemed themselves to be (while religious) intellectually enlightened (so to speak).

- And you have to understand and appreciate that when the Lord's earthly ministry takes place—it's in the 4th Install. of the 5th CoP—and Israel had just come out of that 3rd Instal. (**silence of God**)!

- And during the 3rd Instal./5th CoP—during the silence of God—that was a time in which God not only went silent and there was a famine of the hearing of the words of God in the land of Israel—but God also allowed something to take place during that time in connection with the wisdom of man.

- God allowed the wisdom of this world to go to its greatest lengths, and have its ‘golden age’ (so to speak) and see if it would come to know God and recognize the truth as contained in His word.

- Remember that this was the time in which the real ‘heavy hitters’ of Greek philosophy were living and having an enormous impact and influence upon the world.

- Socrates (469-399 BC)

- Plato (427-347 BC)

- Aristotle (384-322 BC)

- By the way—the apostle Paul actually points to this over in I Cor. chapter 1—and he tells you there that when man tried to find God and truth and wisdom on his own, HE TOTALLY FAILED!

- The wisdom of this world found nothing!

- But what did emerge was a heavy reliance upon human reasoning to the point that it became the ‘final authority’ and God’s word was no longer the ‘final authority’.

- And for the Sadducees, human logic and human reason of Greek Philosophy and greatly influenced them—they didn’t believe the Scriptures as the ‘final authority’ or the repository of truth—they operated upon the authority of human reasoning which led to the issue of human SCIENCE! (ala Hippocrates)

- So while the Sadducees were religious (believing there was a God, and held to a corrupted version of the Law) - they were kind of the scientists of the vain/religious leadership of Israel. (in only the most basic sense of it)

- And therefore they believed there was no resurrection, no spirit, no angels, and other things along those lines.

- They were greatly influenced by Greek philosophy and elevated advances in science and philosophy above the authority of the word of God.

- (read :23-28)

- Now remember that they don't believe in a resurrection—but what they're doing is attempting to present what they consider is a foolish situation that (if there really is a resurrection) is a “catch” or a “gotcha” or an insurmountable problem based upon something Moses said back in the law.

- The idea is that if a man married a woman and died before having any children, then his brother could marry her and raise up children unto his brother—which had to do with providing for a legal heir and for purposes of inheritance of his brother's estate. (which is in Deut. 25)

- But the Sadducees come up with what they think is an impossible situation to ever rectify (if there really is such a thing as a resurrection) - and that is that 7 brothers take the same woman for their wife because each previous brother died before having children—and even the 7th died before having children ...

... then the dilemma is: Whose wife is she when they all die and are resurrected? Because all 7 have a legal claim on her as their wife—and since none of them had a child with her, then none of them could say they had a better claim than any of the other brothers ... so, “gotcha”! (hee hee hee, snicker)

- (read :29)

- (They didn't expect to hear that!) — they are in great error because they are operating upon another authority—the authority of pure human logic and the human scientific method based upon Greek philosophy. (All of which is not only prone to error, but **highly** prone to error!)

- (read :30)

- And first of all they're in error because they *don't know the scriptures* — because if they went by the written word of God, then they'd know that in connection with the resurrection, a **change** takes place that makes what they proposed a “**non-issue**”!

- Briefly put—there will be no marriage at all in the resurrection because there will be no death, hence no need to deal with legal heirs for the purpose of passing on lands and estates to the next generation (there won't be a "next generation")!

- Notice also that the Lord not only straightens them out in terms of the scriptures—but also the **angels!** (which they didn't believe in, either!!!)

- Well, that takes care of their stupid/foolish question—but the Lord is going to go after that second issue of "*Ye do err, not knowing ... the power of God.*"

- Because what the Sadducees are thinking in connection with there being no resurrection is the preposterous idea that God doesn't have the power to do it (that's just not very 'scientific'!)

- And if God doesn't have the power to raise the dead, then He's pretty wimpy/powerless ... and it's pretty foolish and irrational to worship a god like that! (you Sadducees are morons!)

- (read :31-32)

- The Lord takes them to Exodus 3:6—(burning bush = the bush is Israel; the burning indicates the nation enduring the fire of trial, tribulation, and the PoE against them [attempting to consume them, but not being able to because of God's Jehovahness & grace]).

- The critical thing here is that issue of "***I am***" not, "***I was***"! - this was said to Moses long after Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob had physically died ... but according to God, **they were still alive!** (Therefore, *God is not the God of the dead, but of the living!*)

- And that just destroyed their 'trap' — it destroyed their erroneous thinking about the resurrection, the spirit, and even the angels!

- (read :33) - When the Lord teaches God's word, He teaches it as one having authority because He handles it as the final authority that it is—and when the multitude hears Him teach it, they're astonished at His doctrine because when He handles what is said back in Exodus, He handles it as the final authority on the matter—He knew exactly what

God said—and He believed every word that was said, and didn't try to make the word of God bow down at the throne of human wisdom and human rationale, and human common sense, and scientific dictates like the Sadducees did! (sound familiar??)

- (read :34)

- So now common enemies put their differences aside and come together to get rid of the Lord—so “out number one” [Herodians– the Lord just destroyed their pet doctrine]; “out number two” [Sadducees—destroyed their pet doctrine], and now up to bat are the Pharisees (combined with the Sadducees).

- (read :35-36)

- “*the great commandment*” doesn't mean the longest—rather, just as the Law was set forth (back in the *tenor of the law*) in those 10 Commandments, which functioned as that “Well-Head” in which a whole bunch of other related issues were down underneath it, and each of the 10 functioned as a comprehensive commandment (or the epitome of it all) ... well, there are actually other commandments that functioned that exact same way. (more than just those 10)

- And the Lord doesn't cite any one of the “Big 10” - but rather cites two comprehensive commandments that **stand above** even the 10 Commandments ... and really, stands above even more than that!

- (read :37-39)

- And then the reason the Lord bring up the second issue is because of what He's going to say in :40 —

- (read :40)

- What the Lord is saying here is highly significant if this lawyer and the others in the audience (the Sadducees, and especially the Pharisees who prided themselves as being Biblical Scholars and experts in the Law of Moses) - if they would just think about what the Lord is saying here when he takes these 2 greatest commandments and adds to that, *On these two commandments hang all the law **and the prophets***. (more than just the law)

- Why add “*the prophets*”?

- First of all ... *on these two commandments hang all the law* ... (by the way, notice how that this ‘lawyer’ who is supposed to be an expert in the law—he thinks that there’s only 1 great commandment—and to his surprise, there’s actually 2! ... which exposes the fact that he really doesn’t know how the Law was designed to work!)

- Everything in the Law—as far as all its commandments and everything it says regarding God’s righteous commands, laws, statutes, etc. can be summarized in these two commands:

1) *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.*

- This ‘side of the coin’ of the ‘greatest’ commandments of all—this one (and “first”) command is the summarization of all that is contained in the Law that deals first and foremost with: **THE PERFECTION OF GODLY LOVE TOWARD GOD HIMSELF.**

- Note: This is not the first time this statement is made in God’s word — Deuteronomy 6:5; 10:12; 30:6 (Palist. Cov.!).

2) *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.*

- This is the other ‘side of the coin’ of the ‘greatest’ commandments of all—and this one is the summarization of all that is contained in the Law that deals with: **THE PERFECTION OF GODLY LOVE TOWARDS YOUR NEIGHBOUR.**

- Note: This isn’t the first time this statement is made in God’s word either —

- It actually gets going back in Exodus 23:4-5.
- Leviticus 19:18; 19:33-34

- Again, everything set forth in the Law can be summarized in those two commands: Perfection of love toward God; Perfection of love toward your neighbour.

- And if my understanding is correct, this issue (and these 2 greatest commands) are reflected even in the arrangement of (and the sense & sequence of) the 10 Commandments themselves. (see chart)

- And when it comes to what Paul sets forth in Romans 13:9 — by the time you get to that point, the first issue (or first ‘side of the coin’) - [which is the issue of the perfection of love toward God], should already be well underway!

- And the truth is—the principle of both of these 2 greatest commands are **true** in BOTH programs! (and would be true if God had 1,000 programs!)

- Now let’s get back to that issue of why the Lord doesn’t just say, *On these two commandments hang all the law* — but He adds a ‘kicker’ to that when He says, ... **and the prophets**. (and this will help us out to understand and appreciate how the law operated a little bit better background-wise)

- If you think about how and when God raised up prophets in Israel—and more importantly, **why** prophets began to be raised up in Israel—you’d appreciate that the ‘when’ was following the giving of the Law.

- And that was primarily due to what the Law contract amounted to, and especially the courses of punishment contained in it.

- And Israel would begin to experience those 5 Courses of Punishment and all of their curses due to the fact that Israel was failing to keep the Law contract.

- But what is sometimes overlooked (or not paid careful attention to) isn’t just the sin and unrighteousness and evil doing that Israel was involved with—but rather, those punishments were coming upon them so that it would make so they would realize the obvious truth that they were **NOT** loving the LORD their God *with all their heart, and with all their soul, and with all their mind*.

- ... and because they were **NOT** *loving their neighbour as themselves!!!*

- Otherwise, they would be getting all those blessings of the Law contract, instead of the cursings!

- But because they signed on to that Law contract—and because sin, indeed, was an issue—and because they weren’t doing everything that the Law says—therefore, they knowingly signed on to undergo those 5 courses of punishment.

- And in view of that—God began to raise up prophets to Israel as they underwent those 5 CoP in order to set forth God’s indictment against them.

- And if you pay attention to the indictments that God’s prophets laid against Israel—(or that God, through His prophets indicted Israel) - all those indictments; all those accusations of sin; all those manifestations of wickedness; all those declarations of trespasses and transgressions—and all of that kind of business—were all accusations and indictments and declarations of offenses and failings and so forth **in connection with those 2 summary commandments!** (that’s why)

- And at times—the prophets would be indicting Israel for failing to *love the LORD their God with all their heart, with all their soul, and with all their mind*

- And at other times—God would be indicting them through the prophets for failing to *love their neighbour as themselves.*

- And here in Matthew 22—by the Lord responding to the Lawyer’s question in that manner—and then when they get together with the Pharisees and mull this all over and think about it all—if there is any vestige of honesty of heart there—the response ought to be that they truly have NOT done either of those 2 commandments!

- And when the prophets came along and indicted them as a nation for that—it included **them, too!**

- And when you go back and look at the indictment of the prophets—and their indictment against the Nation Israel—and especially when you deal with those prophets that were raised up and functioned during the 2nd Install./5th CoP — (before the 3rd when God went “silent”) - prophets like Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi—the Lord makes it plain & clear as He addresses the leaders of the vain religious system (the Priests & Chief Priests, and others that later on became called Pharisees & Sadducees) — God made sure that they understood that they were included in that indictment of the whole nation—and for failure that can be summarized by BOTH of those “greatest commandments”!

(and incredibly enough, the Lord then gives them another honest opportunity to change their minds in Matt. 22:41-46)

- Now the reason why I've dealt with some background information concerning this issue of the saying "*Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself*" is to make sure that we **don't make the mistake** of thinking that the apostle Paul is saying that we, (as adopted sons and members of the church the body of Christ in this present dispensation of grace in which we live), are supposed to put our sanctified, functional, sonship life that we have "in Christ" into practice by utilizing the Law of Moses to do it.

- (Which, if by now, you have the effectual working of Romans 6:14-8:13 [especially], you would **never ever** think of doing such a thing as that!!!)

- So, at this point, there's no danger in that! right?

- So the issue for us now is to understand and appreciate WHY this saying is to be the BIG THING that it is—in other words, why does Paul bring a commandment from God's program with Israel under the Law into our dispensation of grace and set it forth as a "*saying*" which is to function as a catalyst that allows for us to make godly sonship judgments—and to be part of our 'divine guidance system' in making those judgmental sonship decisions in connection with all men in general.

- Why can godly love (in those 5 Major Features of S,K,T,M,BG) be put into a single saying (*Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself*) and why can we as sons in this dispensation of grace be sure and confident that when we operate upon that saying in our dealings with all men in general, that we are NOT operating upon our flesh and our fleshly personal preferences—but rather, are operating under grace and fulfilling the righteousness of the Law as we behave and conduct ourselves accordingly, and as we labor with our Father to *work no ill to our neighbour* by utilizing godly love as it is expressed in that saying?

- How is it that we can confidently operate upon a saying that, up until this time was a commandment under the Law of Moses in God's program with Israel without ever thinking that we have to go back under the Law of Moses to do it?

- And when you can make some critical connection here—you'll get a far better understanding & appreciation for the might and POWER that Godly Love is and will continue to be throughout your sonship life!

- As well as gain a better/advanced understanding of how Biblical godly edification is designed to work.

- In it's most basic/fundamental function—the Law was designed to make it so that IF (and that's a 2nd Class Condition “if” - [“if” and it's NOT true]) - if a person could keep it perfectly, a person could produce his own justification and become righteous in God's sight; and produce his own sanctification and become holy in God's sight. (and be spiritually fit for God's use).

- Justification: Deuteronomy 6:24-25

24 And the LORD commanded us to do all these statutes, to fear the LORD our God, for our good always, that he might preserve us alive, as it is at this day.

*25 **And it shall be our righteousness**, if we observe to do all these commandments before the LORD our God, as he hath commanded us.*

- Sanctification: Leviticus 11:44-45

*44 For I am the LORD your God: **ye shall therefore sanctify yourselves**, and ye shall be holy; for I am holy: neither shall ye defile yourselves with any manner of creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.*

45 For I am the LORD that bringeth you up out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: ye shall therefore be holy, for I am holy.

- But the big problem (of course) is that the Law demands your flesh in order to be put into operation—and when your natural, sinful flesh grabs hold of the Law, it makes sin and sinning worse, not better (as per Romans 7).

- But just as Romans 7 teaches, that's **my** fault: **not** the fault of the Law—(*Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just [righteous], and good. Rom. 7:12*)

- Wherefore the Law is the expression of God's own **righteous and holy** norms and standards.

- Which means that the Law is the **exact equivalent** of God's perfect righteousness and God's perfect holiness.

- And again, perfect righteousness (or Justification) and perfect holiness (or Sanctification) are the Two essential requirements for a person to be spiritually fit in order to be utilized by God in His service and in His business.

- And this is true either under the Law in God's program with Israel, or under Grace in God's program with the body of Christ today!

- And my understanding is that what you are supposed to perceive (as you look back upon all the doctrine you've been taught—and as you gain a better appreciation for how the Law was designed to function) — is that whether it's under the Law or under Grace, **the whole issue of spiritual fitness “hangs” upon Godly Love and Charity!**

- In fact, you could say that all of Godly Edification “hangs” upon Godly Love and Charity! (regardless of what program you're in)!

- And so what you should be expecting to see take place is that somewhere in your godly sonship education, your Father is going to set out to produce His very own Love in your heart.

- And one side of it (so to speak) will have to do with the development of the perfection of love towards God Himself—and the other side of it will have to do with the development of the perfection of love towards your neighbour.

- Because, if you: 1) *Love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind ...* and 2) *Love thy neighbour as thyself ...* then you have fulfilled the righteousness of the law (because **ALL** the Law “hangs” upon those 2 things!)

- And that's **briefly** the way in which spiritual fitness gets accomplished—and how godly edification gets accomplished:
1) Perfection of love towards God; 2) Perfection of love towards your neighbour.

- And for us as members of the new creature of the church the body of Christ in this present dispensation of the Grace of God—the perfection of love towards God has gotten underway from Romans chapter 1 through chapter 11; and the perfection of love towards your neighbour has gotten underway in our Sonship Education from Romans 12:3 and following.

- And although the perfection of love towards God has already gotten underway from Romans 1 and following—it's not that it is finished by now, but it's going to continue going on through the Curriculum for our Sonship Education until it gets 'perfected.'

- You're going to learn to love God for a whole lot more reasons than you do right at this moment!!!

- This first issue of the Perfection of love towards God gets pointedly addressed in Romans 8:28—and then Paul deals with the Corinthians about their **lack** of loving God over in I Corinthians chapter 8—and then in II Timothy, Paul teaches that one of the hallmarks pertaining to the evolution of man’s ungodliness as this present dispensation of grace continues on, is that of Christians themselves becoming “*lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God.*”

- But since the Curriculum for our Sonship Education is now (in Romans 13:8-10) focusing upon the development, growth, and perfecting of Godly Love & Charity towards our neighbour—it can, (as Paul says), be *briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.*

- And the great thing that you can do by now—is to look back through the doctrine you’ve been taught—and comprehend how it is that GRACE has made it so you can Think, Live, and Labor (and do “good works”) unto God’s honor & glory, and to His pleasure ... not by means of the Law and Law-keeping—but by Grace through Faith!

- And you can know that doing “good works” (as Paul says in Eph. 2:10, *For we are his (God’s) workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto **good works**, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.*) — you know, therefore, that doing “good works” is NOT legalism; it’s NOT going under the Law; and it’s NOT inconsistent with GRACE in any way!

- And you can confidently know that, because you can make all of the proper “**connections**” with the doctrine you’ve been taught since you got the doctrine of your Sanctification underway—(in other words, you’ve got some real Sanctification intelligence!):

CONNECTIONS:

- Romans 5:20 ... But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound:
- Romans 6:4 ... even so we also should walk in newness of life.
- Romans 6:14 ... for ye are not under the law, but under grace.
- Romans 6:19 ... for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness.

- Romans 6:22 ... But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.
- Romans 7:24, 25 ... O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. ...
- Romans 8:1 ... There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.
- Romans 8:4 ... That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit
- Romans 8:6 ... For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life [functional life] and peace.
- Romans 8:11 ... But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.
- Romans 8:13 ... For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.
- Romans 8: 14, 15 ... For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.
- Romans 12:3-13:7—(the production, growth, and development of Godly Love in those 5 Major Features: S,K,T,M,BG)

- And when you can make all those “connections” - you can really begin to understand and appreciate in a far more deep and meaningful way what it means to be **UNDER GRACE!**

- Being “under grace” is NOT merely the issue of being able to “rightly divide the word of truth” — it’s FAR MORE than knowing “Time Past” “But Now” and “To Come”!!!!!!!!!!!!

- You kind of get the idea of why Paul was so ecstatic and ‘fired up’ there in Romans 11:33 when he said, *O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!*

- And folks, all this is another advance in the understanding and appreciation of how godly edification works! And it produces a deep understanding and appreciation for the POWER of Godly Love & Charity!!!

- Now that we've gained a sufficient understanding and appreciation (or 'sonship intelligence') for this "*saying*" (*Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself*) — and **why** it is the **powerful thing** that it is — powerful enough so that it can come along and **regulate your Conduct & Behavior** (by Grace through Faith) in making judgmental sonship decisions in connection with how you respond, react, and relate to all men in general—the final thing to do (in dealing with our Godly Conduct & Behavior in [:9]) is to recognize what it means for our Father to give us this 'catalytic' type statement in the form of a "*saying*".

*9 ... and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this **saying**, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.*

- As we've noted before—one of the reasons why Romans 13:8-14 is so often mishandled, or poorly handled is due to the lack of appreciation for the Sonship Curriculum in general (that this section is dealing with an adopted son receiving *the instruction of Judgment* as the 3rd of 4 fundamental sonship decision-making skills) ... but more than that, there is oftentimes a failure to appreciate the very fact that instruction in *judgment* has a **different nature** to it (than the instruction of Wisdom or Justice).

- Acting as that 'catalyst' - our instruction in *judgment* is going to take a relatively **small** amount of information and put it together with all that we've already learned, and all the godly edification that has now taken place within you—and it's got the capacity to produce within our minds "principles" that we are to install in our understanding — that, because they are "principles" (based upon the word "Prince"), they produce within our minds an upright, upstanding, and outstanding Ruler to whom you look to for **guidance!** (That 'divine guidance' system)

- And these *sayings* are going to act so as to give us 'points/posts of guidance' - and for evaluating potential 'paths' - and for taking the previous instruction of Wisdom, Justice, and Godly Love—and incorporate all that information, and utilize it in a more powerful way than we've ever utilized it before.

- First of all—notice carefully the terminology: Up to this point, that statement "*Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself*" has been called a "*commandment*" - and rightly so since it was made to be part of the Law of Moses under the Old Covenant.

- However, since we are not under the Law, but under Grace as the means for putting our sanctified, functional sonship life into practice — and since Godly Love & Charity is the means by which we are going to make *judgmental* decisions in our Conduct & Behavior towards all men in general—and since the *instruction of Judgment* has this different nature to it — then God has reason to change the terminology to perfectly fit both our being members of the new creature of the church the body of Christ in this present dispensation of grace; and to perfectly fit Sonship Education in connection with the nature of *the instruction of Judgment!* (What accuracy!)

- Therefore, we are not being given a ‘commandment’ as if we’re under the Law—but we are given a “**saying**” - and there’s something very **significant** about a *saying* to a properly educated son!

- When you look up the word *saying* in a dictionary (or in a dictionary of Synonyms [in order to get the shade of meaning of the word]) ...

- **Webster’s 1828** = “an expression; a sentence uttered; a declaration; a proverbial expression.” (not much help there)

- **OED** = an utterance, enunciation; recitation. Something said by a more or less distinguished person, an apophthegm, a dictum. Something commonly said; a proverb. The remarks of a person considered collectively. (not much help either)

- **George Crabb** gives a little more light on the subject:
— A *saying* is something that is said habitually.

- it’s the expression of a given sentiment.

- “sentiment” = (usually & most generally we think of a *sentiment* in only 1 way: the expression of one’s personal **feelings**) - however, while it does have to do with how a person ‘feels’ about something - the truth is that the word *sentiment* is an expression of a person’s **mental attitude**—of a person’s **attitude of either approval or disapproval**—it expresses a person’s view as to what is right or agreeable or ideal. (which naturally engenders emotion)

- a *saying* is a pointed sentiment pronounced by an individual, and **adopted by others**.

- (interestingly, Crabb notes that “a *saw* is a barbarous corruption of a *saying* current among the ignorant!”)

- a *saying* always carries the mind back to the one speaking!

- there is always one who speaks a *saying*—and there is always as much value and esteem placed upon the one who utters it, as much as on the *saying* itself! [end Crabb]

- And what we’re dealing with here is a *saying* of **GOD** our **Heavenly Father**—**NOT** of some stupid immoral philosopher who ends up committing suicide!!!

- Now when you look at the word *saying* only from a “word study” - or from a Dictionary definition (or even a Synonym Dictionary to get its shade of meaning) - in this case, you really don’t get much help.

- So you really can’t understand or appreciate **why** our Father gives us a *saying* here (to govern our Conduct & Behavior) simply by doing a word study on it—in fact, you will never find the meaning of a *saying* in the way in which it’s being used here in Romans 13:9 in any dictionary (English or Greek)!

- So what you have to do in this case is to find out from the word of God itself what a *saying* means to God Himself ... and what it means in the context of Sonship Education!

- And the reason why I’m making such a big deal out of this is because in Sonship Education, this is one of those “leaving home for good” matters that I often talk about.

- That is, with the *instruction of judgment*, you have reached a point where the nature of how you’re going to be taught by your Father makes a pointed “shift.”

- At the point of having received the instruction of Wisdom and the instruction of Justice—a shift takes place whereby as a son begins to be taught the rest of his Level I Sonship Education ... the father begins to utilize a method of teaching his son by way of giving his son some *sayings*—and those *sayings* are very powerful & power/capacity-producing things!

- And a son is supposed to perceive the power and the capacity that his Father's *sayings* are to him—they are matters that are critical to the success of his functional life **from now on!**

- So let's get a sufficient understanding & appreciation of what a *saying* is in connection with our Sonship Education.

- You're first alerted to the fact that you're going to be handling the information contained in the *instruction of Judgment* a little bit differently than you've handled the *instruction of Wisdom & Justice* in the corresponding Exhortations & Expectations to the *instruction of Judgment*.

- Proverbs 4

- The first 9 verses are the Fatherly Exhortations to His son as He and His son evaluate the son's education so far—and are given at that Sonship Checkpoint that we went over a prior to beginning our *instruction of Judgment*.

- Then (:10-13) form the Pre-Doctrinal Exhortation to receiving the 1st Component of the *instruction of Judgment*.

- Then (:14-19) form the Post-Doctrinal Exhortation after the 1st Component has been received.

- Then (:20-22) is the Pre-Doctrinal Exhortation to receiving the 2nd Component of the *instruction of Judgment*.

- And finally, (:23-27 especially, but also going on in chapter 5:1-6) are the Post-Doctrinal Exhortation after receiving the 2nd Component of the *instruction of Judgment*.

- And if you notice in the beginning of both the Pre-Doctrinal Exhor. to the 1st Component; and the Pre-Doctrinal Exhor. to the 2nd Component—in other words, in (:10), and in (:20) — you have, for the very first time since the Sonship Education has gotten underway, that word "*sayings*" ...

10 Hear, O my son and receive my sayings; and the years of thy life shall be many.

20 My son, attend to my words; incline thine ear unto my sayings.

- And it's no random accident that you have the apostle Paul saying there in Romans 13:9 ... *and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this **saying**, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.*
- Because that word *saying* is supposed to match up with the Fatherly Exhortations to His son—that now, in the *instruction of Judgment*, the teaching is going to be based upon some sayings (and what those *sayings* have the power/capacity to do)!
- And Paul doesn't want you to treat that expression, *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself* as a “commandment”—he wants you to treat it as a **saying**! (it can function as **both**!)
- And when you're dealing with *the instruction of Judgment*, you're dealing with some *sayings*—with information contained in the form of a *saying* (or more than one *saying*).
- And one thing that a properly educated son knows how to do—is how to deal with his Father's *sayings*.
- Because in Sonship Education, a *saying* isn't just treated merely as a pithy sentiment of his Father—or as a ‘Christian Slogan’ (that never accomplishes anything except to make bumper-sticker makers rich)!
- So we need to know what a *saying* is to God, and how He expects us to deal with a *saying*.
- (Note that a *commandment* is easy—you simply do what is said. But a *saying* is going after far more than simple obedience to a command!)
- My understanding is that when it comes to the Biblical understanding for the way in which God Himself uses a *saying*—especially in the education of His sons in making godly judgments—by the time you get to God giving you a *saying*, that *saying* stands at the end of an awful lot of issues that have been taught and understood by both Father and son—and therefore that *saying* has some strength and some capacity to it because it's not just some ‘cute-sy’ slogan, rather, it is the expression of the outcome of a whole bunch of doctrine!

- And the *saying* indicates to the son how the doctrine he's leaned can now be utilized—and how the Father intends for it to be **worked out** in the son's functional life—especially in making wise *judgments* in connection with others!

- (How do I know that? well, even though Paul gives it in a *saying* form, remember that the expression *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself* was a **commandment** contained in the Law!)

- So if we can find a place in God's word where He indicates how it was that He composed the Law and **constructed** the Law—then we may find some indication as to how a *saying* works.

- **Psalm 119** — composed in 22 8-verse sections that follow the Hebrew alphabet—contained in Book V.

- The Remnant is instructed here in the way in which the Law is constructed—and basically, they are taught how they are going to be able to utilize the Law when God resumes His program with Israel.

- And God wisely, and ingeniously constructed the Law so that He could make full use of it—and do with it in all its various functions what He wanted and needed to do with it at every point in His Prog/w/Isr.

- And the members of the Remnant of Israel are the ones who are going to get instructed in all God's genius of how He constructed the Law to the hilt—because they're going to be the ones who take the Law as it will exist during the Kingdom, and proclaim it to the ends of the earth (as it says back in the preceding Psalms).

- (1st Section— :1-8)

- When it comes to the “instruction” section or aspect of the Law, they are made up of those components listed here.

- And my understanding is that one of the things mentioned here is the beginning of a *saying* ... (:4), that term “*precepts*”

- A *precept* is generally the beginning of a ‘concept’ - (and a concept is a putting together of all of the ‘cepts’ [= a thing laid down in the mind].

- And when you string a bunch of concepts together, one of the things you can make out of them is a *saying* (or *sayings*)!

- And that's why, when you're over in the book of Isaiah (28:10-13) - you have God indicting the apostate element in Israel as to their failure to be taught properly (in contrast to the members of the Remnant of Israel), and their failure to teach the Law properly—and their making a mockery out of the issue of: *“precept, upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little”*

- (That's how God designed the Law to be taught)

- And that's a bit of an insight into the **construction** of the instruction ministry of the Law.

- And the truth of the matter is, God has constructed our Sonship Education, too!

- The instruction of our Sonship Education is fully **constructed!** (and I know you know that by now)

- We know the general sense & sequence to Romans through Philemon—and we know the general format for our education as sons—and the various forms of doctrine that make up the various Levels (and Phases to the Levels) and so forth.

- But all I'm after in all this, is to point out (and to give you a small taste) of how God views a *saying*—and what all goes into a *saying* **from God's perspective.**

- And it's not just merely a short, pithy slogan—rather, it has some real might and power and capacity to it, because to God, His *sayings* are **constructed** from a great deal of sound doctrine! (the point being, they are CONSTRUCTED!)

- And because of how the godly edification has been taking place, we're able, therefore, to come to a point where we're able to deal with a section of it that's going to contain its information in these *sayings*.

- And what I'm after is that you understand & appreciate that a *saying* (or *sayings*) can only be properly handled when you have first of all learned and attained the effectual working of the precepts and the concepts [*line upon line*] and then the Form of sound doctrine—then you're finally ready to handle one of your Father's *sayings*!