

Submit to the righteous processes of God

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[0 : 00] I greet you in the name of Jesus this morning. You know, did you notice that phrase in that last song, prone to wander?

You know, our hearts, that old nature tries to draw us back. I don't like the thought that so many times those things are there.

And it's probably good for us to be aware. You know, in the devotional in 2 Timothy 3, there's two phrases I want to point out because if these two are taken care of, then what I will be talking about today will be so much easier taken care of.

For men shall be lovers of their own selves, and the other phrase is lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God.

Love of self and love of pleasure. It's something that we see so much in our day. It's what drives humanity, is a love of self and a love of pleasure.

[1 : 41] And if we can love God more than ourselves, and if we can love God more than pleasures, that's a huge step.

Now, a couple weeks ago, I know a lot of you were not here, but I talked about that river of life out of Ezekiel. And there's this one phrase that stood out to me more than ever before.

I don't remember it so much with this connection. But in Ezekiel 47, it's talking about this, as the angel took this man out into the river, and he took him out to the ankles, and then to the knees, and then to the loins.

But that little phrase here, where it says, he brought me through. He brought me through. And that, it probably started last Sunday morning, just a little bit before service.

This phrase kept coming to me. Well, two weeks ago it would have been. And then I started meditating on it, and, you know, he brought me through.

[3 : 06] You know, we, many times if we read this portion, and we think of this river, the river of the Holy Ghost, the river of life, flowing from the throne of God, and, you know, you get into the river, you're into the ankles, and you take a couple steps, and you're into the knees.

That's not how it was in this case. Says he, he took him, he measured a thousand cubits, and I found two measurements for that.

The one comes out to 1,750 feet, and the other one a little more. So it's over a quarter of a mile. And just thinking of this, I think that, you know, when we bring this into our life, and we bring this into our experience, we bring this into how our life progresses.

You know, you can't take a baby, and immediately it's full grown. There's a reason we have a few here in car seats, and we carry them everywhere they go.

And in the Christian life, you're born into this kingdom, and you're not immediately mature.

[4 : 41] But in the processes of God, he will take us on as we yield ourselves to him, as we love him more than we love ourselves, as we love him more than we love the things of this world, and the pleasures that this world has to offer.

As we yield to him, he will take us on. Ephesians tells us that he desires a pure and a spotless bride.

And he is washing us by the washing of the water of the word. And he cleanses us, and he purifies us, and he takes us on.

And as we grow, we leave behind more of those things that are a hindrance in the kingdom of God. Hebrews 12, 1 says, laying aside every weight in the sin that does so easily beset us, let us run with patience the race that is set before us.

You know, patience is something that is very hard to come by in our day and age. We live in the microwave age, and anymore, the microwave is slow.

[6 : 08] But the Christian life is not a microwave. The Christian life is a life of growth. And our roots must go down deep.

Or when the storms of life come, we will be blown over. But when those storms come, remember, Jesus is Lord of the storm.

As we walk with him, as we yield to him, as we live for him, and we allow him to lead us, he is in control.

He brought me through. What did God bring you through the last while? You know, we all have testimonies.

We all have things that God has been doing in our hearts. We all have things that if we allow him to, he will bring us through to a further place.

[7 : 13] And I praise his name for that. in Ezekiel 36. I want to get a few verses here. Here we have Ezekiel. You know, and he's one of those prophets that, you know, God gave him glimpses of the future.

God gave him glimpses of the new covenant. He gave him glimpses of things that were yet a long ways off. But in Ezekiel 36, verse 25, well, let's start, let's read verse 24.

For I will take you from among the heathen and gather you out of all countries and will bring you into your own land. And, you know, that, in, that happened, that is happening and it did happen with the Jews.

But I also believe that as a church, as a church of Jesus Christ, he draws the church out from the heathen, out from the kingdom of this world into the kingdom of Jesus Christ.

And then, verse 25, then will I sprinkle clean water upon you. You shall be clean from all your filthiness and from all your idols and from all I will cleanse you.

[8 : 39] A new heart also will I give you and a new spirit will I put within you and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh and I will give you a heart of flesh.

I will put my spirit within you and cause you to walk in my statutes and you shall keep my commandments and do them.

You know, only by the spirit of God could the prophet have seen or heard such beautiful words describing the new covenant, describing what is only possible since the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ and the coming of the Holy Ghost.

He says a new heart I will give you and a new spirit and he says I will put my spirit within you. You know, the Holy Ghost has come and dwells within us and if we will yield to that Holy Spirit, what will be the outcome of it?

It says here in verse 27 and cause you to walk in my statutes you know, if we have the Holy Ghost and we allow him to have his way in our hearts, we yield to him when he talks to us, we surrender our heart and life to him, he will cause us to walk in his statutes, he will cause us to keep his judgments and to do them.

[10 : 22] This word that he has given us, he will cause us to walk in them. Why? Because he is the spirit of truth. He is the one that wrote this book.

He is the author of this book. Yes, many men wrote it, but the Holy Ghost is the author. And if we will yield to him, we will live by this book.

Now, we're just kind of laying a foundation here as we go in Deuteronomy chapter 8. In Deuteronomy chapter 8, verse 2 and 2 to 4.

Thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these 40 years in the wilderness to humble thee and to prove thee to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments or know.

And he humbled thee and suffered thee to hunger and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know, that he might make thee know that man does not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doeth man live.

[11 : 45] You know, in this part of this verse is well known because Jesus quoted it in his time of temptation, but the rest of this, these two verses is not so well known, but the reason says God led the children of Israel 40 years in the wilderness, and what was the reason for it?

He says to humble thee and to prove thee and to know what was in thine heart. You know, how does God know what's in your heart if he does not test you, if he does not try you, if he does not bring you into situations to see what comes out of you?

It's the same with us today. Just hopefully we don't, we don't, need to wander 40 years in the wilderness. We might not have much life left over if we did.

To prove thee and to know what was in thine heart. Remember that as we go on through this message today. That he might make thee know, that he would make us know that we do not live by bread only.

We do not only live by the material food, by the physical food that we eat, but we live by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

[13 : 31] That is what we must live by. Jesus told the disciples, he said, I have meat to eat that you know not of. That's what he's talking about.

The meat, the meat that this world does not know of. The meat that the unbeliever does not know of. But as we walk with our God, as we walk in the Holy Ghost, then we live by this word.

We live by this word. Now let's turn to James chapter 1. James chapter 1 and verse 2.

My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations, knowing this that the trying of your faith worketh patience.

But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing. Let patience have her perfect work.

[14 : 41] You know, back to that microwave thing. You know, we're always in a hurry, aren't we? We want things done and we want them done now.

But that's not how God works. That's not how God works. You know, there's another phrase, that I heard many years ago from a man of God.

He's been gone a long time, but he made this, he said this little phrase, the righteous processes of God.

You know, God's working and dealing in our heart is something is something precious. It is something to be desired.

It is a precious work that God is doing in the hearts of believers. And he called it the righteous processes of God.

[15 : 47] You know, and when those trials come, James says here, he says, count it all joy when you fall into divers temptations.

You know, can we find joy and comfort knowing that God is working in our heart, knowing that he is using whatever trial, whatever tribulation, whatever circumstances we find ourselves in, he is using it to do something in our heart, to change us and to make us more and more into the image of Jesus Christ, to cleanse us of those things that hinder us, to show us that these things are a hindrance in our life and to get us to cast them off, to cast them off and to be free from them and to continue on in growth and in walking with our Savior.

He says, count it all joy when you fall into divers temptations, knowing this, the trying of your faith worketh patience.

You know, it's that little word patience that we don't like, the meaning of this word patience. I believe we don't like that, do we?

You know, there's another verse here in James. Let me see if I can, it's in chapter 5. verse 10, take my brethren, the prophets who have spoken in the name of the Lord for an example of suffering, affliction, and of patience.

[17 : 34] Christians. You know, we think of the Old Testament prophets, we think of those men that, you know, many times they were very unpopular, many times they had to flee, they had to hide, you know, the people hated them.

Why? Because they spoke the truth and they prophesied according to what God was doing in the nation of Israel, and people hated them, the king hated them many times, and he says here, to take these men for our example.

Take the prophets for an example of suffering, affliction, and of patience. you know, those men, they were men just like we are.

You know, in verse 17, it says, Elijah, he was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain, and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months.

You know, and then during that time, the king, he sent to all surrounding nations, did you see Elijah? Did he flee into your kingdom? Are you hiding him?

[18 : 54] Where is this man? I got to find him. I want to kill him. Elijah, he was a man just like you and I. He was you know, patience, allowing God to work in our hearts and change us and to make us, to make us into the man, into the woman that God would have us to be.

The trial and the proving of our faith brings out endurance, steadfastness, and patience, endurance, you know, you know, endurance.

You know, many times when things don't go well, we wonder, well, what did I do wrong now? What did I do wrong now? You know, you don't see that Elijah, he asked God, what did I do wrong now when the king was after him?

No. He knew he had done right. Jezebel tried to kill him. She threatened him and he ran, but he knew he had done right.

First Peter one. Verse six, wherein ye greatly rejoiced, though now for a season?

[20 : 31] if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations, that the trial of your faith being much more precious than of gold that perishes, though it be tried with fire, might be found in the praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.

Our faith, the trial of our faith, it is much more precious than gold that perishes. What is our value system in this life?

Do we value the working and the dealing of God more than gold? things that are temporal are the things that we see, the things that we don't see, those are eternal, and let us have our treasure, our treasure in heaven and not on earth.

He says, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptation. You know, sometimes the things we go through, they're hard, they're tough, they bring a heaviness, they bring a heaviness, but, but God, hallelujah, but God, he will take us through, and if we will yield to him, he will deal with things in our heart, and he will cleanse us, he will set us free, he will, we will have deeper roots for the next time.

You know, you will be better prepared for some hard thing you will face in the future, you will be better prepared to minister to your fellow man, if we will yield to the righteous processes of God, if we will yield to his working in our heart.

[22 : 37] You know, there's never, there's never a circumstance or situation that goes to waste. I believe our God, he will use it, he will use every, every situation, every trial, every, every temptation that comes your way, he will use it in your life to build you up, and to draw you closer to him to make you a tool more better fitted for the master's use.

In chapter four, here in first Peter, verse 12, Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you.

In other words, when the fiery trial comes, you don't think it's strange. That's normal in the Christian life.

It is. It's normal in the Christian life. But rejoice inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings, that when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.

if ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye, for the spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. On his part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified.

[24 : 19] If we are reproached for the name of Christ, then his glory, his spirit will be upon us and will carry us through. Verse 15, but let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters.

Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God on this behalf. For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God.

And if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?

Judgment must begin at the house of God. And I believe, I believe that God is working to cleanse his church and to set us free from every hindrance, from anything that might hinder and hold us back from being fully equipped and being fully useful in his kingdom as he desires.

Amen. Hallelujah. Lay aside every weight. You know, I quoted that already, but let's look at that just a minute in Hebrews 12.

[25 : 40] Lay aside every weight and the sin which does so easily beset us. Run with patience the race that is set before us. You know, and it's not just a hundred yard dash, no, but it's a race that is set before us.

And it continues on from now until the day we die, until he takes us home to glory. That's how long this race will be.

And he says, lay aside, lay aside whatever hinders, whatever holds you down, whatever keeps you from fully fulfilling the will of God.

Whatever, whatever holds you back from fulfilling the will of God that he has called you to in your life, that must be laid aside looking unto Jesus.

Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

[26 : 51] Consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds, ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin.

Consider Jesus, no one has ever gone through more, worse, contradiction and blasphemy than what he did.

Verse 5, Ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children. My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him.

For whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth, and scourges every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons.

For what son is he whom the father chasteneth not. My son, despise not the chastening of the Lord. You know, as we go through life and God uses these situations, whatever situation it might be, it comes into your life that he allows, he, you know, if we, if we, if we, if we at some time, if we do not yield to his word, he will chasten, and he will bring other things into our life to chasten us, to try to bring us.

[28 : 23] Remember, Ezekiel said, he will cause you to walk in his statutes, and that is one of the things that he uses. If we do not walk in his statutes, he will bring chastening to bring us into the right way, to bring us into the place that we will walk according to this word.

Romans 5, verse 1, 1 through 5, therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

Not only so, but we glory in tribulations also, knowing that tribulation worketh patience. Now remember, here we have it again, you know, think it not strange, the fiery trial that will come.

Rejoice in these things, and here he says, glory in tribulations also, knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope, 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.

The Holy Ghost is given unto us, and the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts, but let us rejoice in tribulation. Why?

[30 : 18] Not because of the tribulation, but because of what comes out of the tribulation. if we yield ourselves to him as we go through a hard time, as we go through a hard trial, a big test in life, and we yield to him as he takes us through that, look at the wonderful result.

Yes, it will work patience, and experience, and hope, and hope maketh not ashamed. yes, the righteous processes of God, his working, his working in our heart, it's something very precious.

You know, if there's a man, if there's a man that God does not work in his heart, the Bible says he's not a son, he's a bastard, he's an illegitimate child, he's not yielded to God.

Malachi chapter 3 verse 1 Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant whom ye delight in, behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of hosts, but who may abide the day of his coming, who shall stand when he appeareth, for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fuller's soap, and he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness, righteousness, then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the

Lord, as in the days of old and as in former years. Who may abide the day of his coming?

[32 : 37] The coming. What's he talking about? He says, my messenger I will send before me. John the Baptist came, and then Jesus came, and now the Holy Ghost came.

But who may abide the day of his coming? Who shall stand when he appeareth? For he is like a refiner's fire, and like fuller's soap.

You know, these are things that the modern church does not like. But John the Baptist, when he talked about the Holy Ghost, he said in Matthew chapter 3, he said here, the axe is laid to the root of the trees, therefore every tree which bring not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire.

Verse 11, I indeed baptize you with water into repentance, but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear.

He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire, whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner, but he shall burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.

[33 : 59] John the Baptist, here prophesying of the coming of the Holy Ghost, and his fan will be in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor. He will, Jesus will baptize with the Holy Ghost, and with fire.

In Malachi, he says, who may abide the day of his coming, for he is like a refiner's fire, and like a fuller's soak. The Holy Ghost will refine his church.

The Holy Ghost will refine your life, if you will yield to him, if you will allow him, he will change you more and more into the image of Christ.

You know, it is only a proud human heart that will say, well, I'm just fine. I don't have any need of refining. I'm just fine the way I am.

That's a proud human heart. The Holy Ghost, he will sit as a refiner, as a refiner and a purifier of silver and of gold.

[35 : 14] You know, a long time ago, I studied into this, and you know, the process of refining silver is a very delicate process.

It's a very delicate process, and they bring that temperature up, and the perfect temperature is 960 and a half degrees. And once they get it there, you know, they keep skimming the top off, the impurities and the dirt and all those defilements, they come to the top, and they skim them off, and they skim them off.

And, you know, how do they know when that silver is pure? It's when they look into that silver, and they see a perfect reflection of their selves.

that is how, that is when you will be perfect, is when Jesus looks into your life, and he sees Jesus.

That's what the Holy Ghost is after, that we all look like Jesus. He is changing us more and more into the image of Christ.

[36 : 27] And once we get there, you know, that's what Ephesians says, until the full stature of the fullness of Christ. That is his goal.

That is what he's after. That is what he's after. And here in Malachi, what does he say here? He will purify the sons of Levi.

He will purify his church. Why? That they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness. That what comes out of your life will bring glory to God.

That what comes out of your life will be the pure river of life. The same river that flows from the throne of God. That same river will flow through your life out to a lost and a dying world.

Do we allow God to change us? He uses circumstances. He uses situations. He uses men. Yes, and that's probably the hard one, is when God uses your fellow man to work in your heart.

[37 : 53] His work of purifying us, changing us, growth, love. Yes, yes. Psalm 66 talks about the same thing.

Tried as silver is tried. Yes, being tried as silver is tried. Let's go to 2 Timothy.

Chapter 2. verse 15. Verse 15. Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

Then he talks about a couple men that have erred and gone out, followed the wrong way. But in verse 19, nevertheless, the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, that the Lord knoweth them that are his.

And let everyone that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity. Let everyone that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.

[39 : 10] What is the definition of iniquity? It is our own way. It is what our carnal nature desires. It is what my carnal mind would have me to do.

That's iniquity. It is only what pleases God is what the new nature and the Holy Ghost brings.

It is as we are led by the Spirit of God, we are sons of God. But let everyone that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.

But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth, some to honor, some to dishonor. If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honor and sanctified and meet for the master's use and prepared unto every good work.

work, you know, we have a part in these things. We make many decisions. Which way are we deciding?

[40 : 24] Are we surrendering to God and his spirit? Are we following him? He says here, if we will, if a man will purge himself from these, if we will purge ourselves from the things that are just that bring dishonor, that are not gold and silver, if we purge ourselves from those, then we can be a vessel unto honor, sanctified, set apart, and cleansed, and meet for the master's use.

1 John 1, 7. Let me just get that verse. That's not the one I thought.

We'll get that one later. We walk in the light as he is in the light, and we have fellowship one with another. And the blood of Jesus Christ, his son, cleanses us from all sin.

In chapter 3, verse 3. Well, let's read the first three verses. Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God.

Therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God. It does not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.

[42 : 09] And every man that hath this hope in him, purifies himself, even as he is pure. The same thought that we had in Timothy.

If we have this hope in us, we will purify ourselves, that we will be a vessel of honor, that we will be pure and clean and acceptable and useful in his sight.

second Corinthians chapter six, starting verse 14.

chapter 10. Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers. What fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? What communion hath light with darkness?

What concord hath Christ with Belial? What part hath he that believeth with an infidel? What agreement hath the temple of God with idols? For ye are the temple of the living God?

[43 : 23] As God has said, I will dwell in them and walk in them. I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you, and will be a father unto you, and you shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.

Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

Having these promises, having what promises? Having the promise that we are the temple of the living God, and that he dwells in us, and he walks in us.

He will be our God, and we will be his people. Having therefore these promises, he says, let us cleanse ourselves.

Cleanse ourselves from what? From all filthiness of the flesh. And many times, you know, we think of being cleansed. We think of not committing all those sins.

[44 : 44] And that is part of it. He says, and spirit. The things that we commit in our mind. The things that we do, that we think, and we speak, and so on, that are wrong.

He says, put them away. Perfecting holiness. Perfecting holiness. It's a walk. It's a growth.

It's a process. It's a process that God is taking each one of us through. We, as children of God, there is no escaping that.

There is no getting away from it. But we are in this process of growth. And how we respond to his working in our heart is up to us.

Will we love self more than God? Will we love the pleasures of this world more than God? Or will we put him first?

[45 : 54] Will we serve him with all our heart? Will we allow him to put his finger on those areas in our life that need to change? Will we yield to him?

He says, touch not the unclean thing. You know, you look out there. And many professing Christians, they're wallowing in unclean things.

Things that are not right. Things that are not holy. They're allowing things in their life. And they're making a mockery of the holiness of God. They do not represent him.

They do not represent holy God. Because they allow unclean things in their lives. He says, touch not the unclean thing.

And I will receive you. So the opposite must be true. If we allow the unclean in our life, he will not receive us.

[47 : 05] Perfecting holiness in the fear of God. The fear of God. A godly fear. Knowing that the God we serve is a holy God.

And if we will serve him, we must also be holy. We must allow him to cleanse us and set us free. Are we submitting ourselves to the righteous processes of God?

That is the question I want to leave with us this morning. Are we allowing him to deal with those issues?

With those things in our heart that are a hindrance? You know, things that we might not realize. Things that maybe they're not wrong in themselves.

But they hinder us from fully walking in what God has for us. Are we allowing him? Are we giving him the freedom?

[48 : 16] To just go through every little nook and cranny in our heart. And expose and cleanse. Are we keeping some things hidden in some back corner?

Purifying. Every man that has this hope in him purifies himself. What does it say? Even as he is pure.

The perfect example, our Lord Jesus. Jesus. Let's pray.