

Audio Transcript of Sermon

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Defining Ourselves

Hello. Thank you for joining us today. My name is Tom Laign with Sabbath Bible Study. Here we are on the Sabbath, a day that has been set aside by God for us each week for the benefit of mankind. We know that Jesus taught that the Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath, and yet because we keep the Sabbath as Christians, some look down on us. They look at what we believe and somehow use their thoughts on what we believe as a basis to judge us. Those who see the Sabbath as irrelevant might define our faith as irrelevant, or they might use words or theological debates that are important to them as a means to define who we are and what we believe. But who we are and what we believe is not the same as what another person thinks we are or what we believe.

The course of history shows that one group of people often tries to define another group of people. Spanish Catholics used how they defined Jews to try and convert them to Christianity or to make them suffer the consequences. With the Nazis, Jews were defined to be less than human and a final solution was horrifically implemented. In modern American politics, liberals and conservatives work very hard to define the other viewpoint while others are redefining what it means to be evil or good, and to those who have been around for a while, it seems what was once evil is now considered to be good, and what was once good is now considered to be evil.

What is happening now is very real to us because it is happening to us in the world in which we live, but what is happening now is not much different than what has been happening since the very beginning of time, when Satan first defined what it meant to die. In the Garden of Eden, Adam and Eve were told not to eat of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil because if they ate of it they would surely die. Satan redefined what death meant when telling Eve that if she ate of that fruit that she would not surely die. Let's read the account in Genesis chapter three verse one.

Genesis 3:1-7

- 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 every tree of the garden?**
- 2. And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden:**
- 3. But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.**
- 4. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die:**
- 5. For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.**
- 6. And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.**
- 7. And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons.**

What Satan was telling Eve that if she ate of that fruit she would not immediately die, redefining death to be something that happens immediately after the action, when God spoke of a definite death, that death would come. Did Adam and Eve die right then and there after eating the forbidden fruit? They surely did not. Did Adam and Eve eventually die? They surely did. Using the subtlety of words, Satan deceived Eve who influenced Adam to do what they were told not to do. Using the subtlety of words, without calling God a liar, Satan defined God to be a liar while being able to in his mind to defend that he, Satan, hadn't actually lied, all because of how he chose to define death.

Since that time people have defined others, and we cannot allow other people to define us, who we are and what we believe. David and Saul gave us an example to look at. David was a man after God's own heart, but that is not how Saul saw him, and it took Saul a long time to accept David as the next King of Israel. Before that understanding, Saul came to define David to be a threat to his throne, and sought to kill him, and when David became aware of the opportunity to take out this man who saw him as a threat to the throne, those who were with David defined Saul to be the enemy who was delivered into his hand citing a promise from God as

justification for David to take action. Let's read first Samuel twenty-four verse one.

1 Samuel 24:1-22

- 1. And it came to pass, when Saul was returned from following the Philistines, that it was told him, saying, Behold, David is in the wilderness of En-gedi.**
- 2. Then Saul took three thousand chosen men out of all Israel, and went to seek David and his men upon the rocks of the wild goats.**
- 3. And he came to the sheepcotes by the way, where was a cave; and Saul went in to cover his feet: and David and his men remained in the sides of the cave.**
- 4. And the men of David said unto him, Behold the day of which the Lord said unto thee, Behold, I will deliver thine enemy into thine hand, that thou mayest do to him as it shall seem good unto thee. Then David arose, and cut off the skirt of Saul's robe privily.**

What David did caused him to be conflicted because how the others around David defined Saul, to be the enemy, was not how David defined Saul, who defined Saul as the Lord's anointed. That's a huge gap between the two viewpoints. I can see how the people around David saw Saul as the enemy, and I can also see how David focused on the office that God had given Saul. Because David allowed others to define Saul as an enemy of David when David saw Saul as the Lord's anointed, David felt conflicted and directed his people to bring no harm to Saul. Verse five.

- 5. And it came to pass afterward, that David's heart smote him, because he had cut off Saul's skirt.**
- 6. And he said unto his men, The Lord forbid that I should do this thing unto my master, the Lord's anointed, to stretch forth mine hand against him, seeing he is the anointed of the Lord.**
- 7. So David stayed his servants with these words, and suffered them not to rise against Saul. But Saul rose up out of the cave, and went on his way.**
- 8. David also arose afterward, and went out of the cave, and cried after Saul, saying, My lord the king. And when Saul looked behind him, David stooped with his face to the earth, and bowed himself.**

David also explained to Saul that the people around Saul were also trying to define David as the enemy of Saul, and David used what had just happened to

explain that he sought no harm to Saul because Saul had been chosen by God to be king. Verse nine.

9. And David said to Saul, Wherefore hearest thou men's words, saying, Behold, David seeketh thy hurt?

10. Behold, this day thine eyes have seen how that the Lord had delivered thee today into mine hand in the cave: and some bade me kill thee: but mine eye spared thee; and I said, I will not put forth mine hand against my lord; for he is the Lord's anointed.

11. Moreover, my father, see, yea, see the skirt of thy robe in my hand: for in that I cut off the skirt of thy robe, and killed thee not, know thou and see that there is neither evil nor transgression in mine hand, and I have not sinned against thee; yet thou huntest my soul to take it.

12. The Lord judge between me and thee, and the Lord avenge me of thee: but mine hand shall not be upon thee.

13. As saith the proverb of the ancients, Wickedness proceedeth from the wicked: but mine hand shall not be upon thee.

14. After whom is the king of Israel come out? after whom dost thou pursue? after a dead dog, after a flea.

15. The Lord therefore be judge, and judge between me and thee, and see, and plead my cause, and deliver me out of thine hand.

It was at this time that Saul came to realize that the David that was before him was not the David who had been defined by his people, and Saul also realized that God was with David and would bring the throne to David. Verse sixteen.

16. And it came to pass, when David had made an end of speaking these words unto Saul, that Saul said, Is this thy voice, my son David? And Saul lifted up his voice, and wept.

17. And he said to David, Thou art more righteous than I: for thou hast rewarded me good, whereas I have rewarded thee evil.

18. And thou hast shewed this day how that thou hast dealt well with me: forasmuch as when the Lord had delivered me into thine hand, thou killedst me not.

19. For if a man find his enemy, will he let him go well away? wherefore the Lord reward thee good for that thou hast done unto me this day.

20. And now, behold, I know well that thou shalt surely be king, and that the kingdom of Israel shall be established in thine hand.

21. Swear now therefore unto me by the Lord, that thou wilt not cut off my seed after me, and that thou wilt not destroy my name out of my father's house.

22. And David sware unto Saul. And Saul went home; but David and his men gat them up unto the hold.

As people we look to a person's place in life and use that to define who the person is. For instance we are all probably familiar with the words of Paul who said that when he was a child that he spoke like a child, understood as a child, and thought as child, but when he became a man, he put away childish things, and while those are meaningful words for us, these are also words that define what it is to be a child. The gospels don't record that Jesus spoke like a child, understood as a child or thought as a child, which is why when Jesus did things as a child the people marveled. What Jesus did as a child exceeded their definition of a child. Jesus is not the only Biblical figure to whom we are introduced as a child. Hannah, the mother of Samuel, had asked God to give her a son, and when God gave her a son, her son Samuel ministered before God wearing clothing specially made by his mother year by year and did what was right before God. The sons of Eli however did not do what was right before God. First Samuel two verse eighteen.

1 Samuel 2:18-21

18. But Samuel ministered before the Lord, being a child, girded with a linen ephod.

19. Moreover his mother made him a little coat, and brought it to him from year to year, when she came up with her husband to offer the yearly sacrifice.

20. And Eli blessed Elkanah and his wife, and said, The Lord give thee seed of this woman for the loan which is lent to the Lord. And they went unto their own home.

21. And the Lord visited Hannah, so that she conceived, and bare three sons and two daughters. And the child Samuel grew before the Lord.

With Jesus and Samuel we see that God does not define people solely by age. God also doesn't solely define people by where they are born. Ruth and Orpah were from Moab and married sons of Elimelech, husband of Naomi. Soon Elimelech died and so did his two sons, and Naomi decided to return to Israel encouraging her daughters-in-law to stay in their own country. Ruth decided to come to Israel

with Naomi, and could not be otherwise convinced by Naomi to stay behind. Ruth one verse fourteen.

Ruth 1:14-18

14. And they lifted up their voice, and wept again: and Orpah kissed her mother in law; but Ruth clave unto her.

15. And she said, Behold, thy sister in law is gone back unto her people, and unto her gods: return thou after thy sister in law.

16. And Ruth said, Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God:

17. Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: the Lord do so to me, and more also, if ought but death part thee and me.

18. When she saw that she was stedfastly minded to go with her, then she left speaking unto her.

Ruth didn't allow her mother-in-law to define where she should live, and chose to come with Naomi to Israel. There are all sorts of reasons why people predetermine what can or can't be done. They decide for other people and define other people for reasons that might only make sense for them. Timothy was advised by Paul to not allow any person to despise him because of his youth. The older a person gets the easier it becomes to look down on those who are younger. It's not uncommon to hear phrases like when you were born I was older than you are now. Timothy was taught not to allow people to despise him but was also taught to act as a seasoned spiritual veteran, to be an example to all believers, in what he preached, in what he said, in the love he had for others, and how he acted spiritually, through faith in all purity. First Timothy four verse twelve.

1 Timothy 4:12-16

12. Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.

13. Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.

14. Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery.

15. Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all.

16. Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.

When we consider what it is to define ourselves, we are best to think of who we are to become, and not who we were. Jesus taught that we are called to deny ourselves-not to live an ascetic life, but to live life where who we were does not define who we are becoming. We cannot hold fast to who we were if our hope is on who we are to become. Luke nine verse twenty-three.

Luke 9:23-26

23. And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.

24. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it.

25. For what is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away?

26. For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and in his Father's, and of the holy angels.

There is no denying that we were all born as sinners but we cannot define ourselves to remain as we were born. We have to reach higher knowing we all have a proclivity for sin as we define ourselves to be something beyond what we currently see. As we reach for that something higher we have this belief system that is foundational for us. We cannot allow others to define us through what they believe about us. Paul told the Colossians to let no man judge them in regard to what they ate or drank or in respect to a Holy Day, God's Calendar, or the weekly Sabbath. Colossians two verse sixteen.

Colossians 2:16-23

16. Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days:

17. Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ.

18. Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind,

19. And not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God.

20. Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances,

21. Touch not; taste not; handle not;

22. Which all are to perish with the using; after the commandments and doctrines of men?

23. Which things have indeed a shew of wisdom in will worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body; not in any honour to the satisfying of the flesh.

We cannot allow the commandments and doctrines of men to define what faith means to us. Instead of trying to grow faith through the commandments and doctrines of men, we are to be focused through Jesus Christ on things like what is true, what is honest, what is just, what is pure, what is lovely, what is of a good report, what is of virtue, what is worthy of praise. These are the things we are to be thinking of. Philippians four verse four.

Philippians 4:4-9

4. Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice.

5. Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand.

6. Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.

7. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

8. Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.

9. Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you.

As we understand what it is we are to spiritually do, we need to do those things in our own life without judging others. In a world where others may claim spiritual beliefs make them feel unsafe, we know and practice that in this present world we are here to judge no person, and where no judgment is rendered, there can be

no feelings of being unsafe. Instead of focusing on others, we solely focus on what we spiritually need to do in our own life. Matthew seven verse one.

Matthew 7:1-5

- 1. Judge not, that ye be not judged.**
- 2. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.**
- 3. And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?**
- 4. Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye?**
- 5. Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye.**

We spiritually thrive in a judgment free zone, though we also do not tolerate doubtful disputations. We do not judge others so that we are not judged by God as a hypocrite. When Satan defined for Eve what it meant to die, Satan was introducing a doubtful disputation. Satan created doubt about death for which there could be a dispute. While we spiritually thrive in a judgment free zone we do not allow that judgment free zone quality to become a playground for doubtful disputations. Instead of trying to wow each other with this or that trinket of truth, each of us knows we will stand before the judgment seat of Jesus Christ to give an account of ourselves to God. We are accountable before God for what we individually do, and that individual accountability gives no place to bringing judgment to others. Romans fourteen verse one.

Romans 14:1-12

- 1. Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations.**
- 2. For one believeth that he may eat all things: another, who is weak, eateth herbs.**
- 3. Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth: for God hath received him.**
- 4. Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand.**
- 5. One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind.**

6. He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it. He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks.

7. For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself.

8. For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's.

9. For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living.

10. But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.

11. For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.

12. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.

We are not defined before God by what others do or do not do. We are defined before God individually by what we do ourselves. We need to remember what Paul told the Galatians and how he was crucified with Christ, how his life was about Jesus Christ living through him. We need to define ourselves not by other people, but by Jesus Christ. Is how we live our life reflective of how Jesus Christ would live his life? Galatians two verse fifteen.

Galatians 2:15-21

15. We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles,

16. Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.

17. But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, is therefore Christ the minister of sin? God forbid.

18. For if I build again the things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor.

19. For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God.

20. I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

21. I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.

Peter wrote that we are built up as a spiritual house, a holy priesthood to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. Though Peter uses different words, he affirms what Paul describes of living a life reflective of what Jesus Christ would do, no longer living a life where who we were born as controls what we do, but who we are to become, joint heirs with Jesus Christ, is what controls what we do. We are chosen, considered by God to be royal priesthood, a holy nation, and a peculiar people. First Peter two verse one.

1 Peter 2:1-10

- 1. Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings,**
- 2. As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:**
- 3. If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious.**
- 4. To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious,**
- 5. Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.**
- 6. Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded.**
- 7. Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner,**
- 8. And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed.**
- 9. But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:**
- 10. Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.**

Remember that if a person considers the faith that we have and concludes that we are a peculiar people, that we have an unusual or strange faith or religion,

their attempt to define us is already confirmed by the verses we just read. In writing to the Ephesians, Paul explained that we can no longer define ourselves to be the person who we were when we were born but must look forward to the return of Jesus Christ as it is through Jesus we are saved. The person whom we were born as must die off as the person whom we are to become emerges through the faith we have knowing that we have a God of great mercy who will bring us to a place of salvation, and not through anything we do, but through the gift of God having been created in Jesus Christ for good works, and having been created in Jesus Christ for good works, it is essential we do what is expected of us. Ephesians two verse one.

Ephesians 2:1-10

- 1. And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins;**
- 2. Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:**
- 3. Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.**
- 4. But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us,**
- 5. Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, by grace ye are saved;**
- 6. And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:**
- 7. That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.**
- 8. For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:**
- 9. Not of works, lest any man should boast.**
- 10. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.**

That hope that we have leads us to walk by faith and not by sight knowing that we live a physical existence that as it is for all people will come to an end as the physical existence we know is transformed into spiritual and eternal life. We are not defined to be who we were at birth, but who we are to be at that spiritual transformation. It is because of that spiritual transformation that is to come we

have been given the Holy Spirit today, and with that Holy Spirit, we know that even though we live a physical life, we also have this spiritual connection to God. Second Corinthians five verse one.

2 Corinthians 5:1-8

- 1. For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.**
- 2. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven:**
- 3. If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked.**
- 4. For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life.**
- 5. Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit.**
- 6. Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord:**
- 7. For we walk by faith, not by sight:**
- 8. We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.**

Being defined by not who we were born as but who we will become at that spiritual transformation, that leads us to love God and keep His commandments. We know that it is our faith grounded in Jesus Christ as the Son of God and not how others define us that will lead to our victory in overcoming this world. First John five verse one.

1 John 5:1-5

- 1. Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him.**
- 2. By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments.**
- 3. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.**
- 4. For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.**

5. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?

Even if how the world defines us leads us to understand that we are hated by the world, we should not be surprised by that because we do not focus on the life we have today, we do not focus on the life we had at birth, we focus on that future spiritual transformation as that which defines us. The best indication of that future spiritual transformation is that today we love the brethren and as we are able, we help those who have need. First John three verse thirteen.

1 John 3:13-23

13. Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you.

14. We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death.

15. Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.

16. Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.

17. But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?

The faith that we have is not a faith of words, but a faith based on truth and through action. What we do should not make us feel guilty because we are to love one another. Verse eighteen.

18. My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but indeed and in truth.

19. And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him.

20. For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things.

21. Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God.

22. And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight.

23. And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment.

The faith that we have is not a faith grounded in speculation of what will just happen in the future nor is it a faith reflecting on just what happened in Biblical past, but is also a faith of what we are doing now. We are not defined by who we were at birth and will ultimately be defined at that future spiritual transformation, and what happens at that future time is based on what happens now. The faith that we have is not just based on speculation about the future or Biblical history but is love from a pure heart, a good conscience, and genuine faith. As we await to be defined at this future spiritual transformation, we should define ourselves today through the lens of a pure heart, a good conscience, and genuine faith, and if we find ourself short in any of these areas, we need to consider why that is. First Timothy one verse four.

1 Timothy 1:4-7

- 4. Neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith: so do.**
- 5. Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned:**
- 6. From which some having swerved have turned aside unto vain jangling;**
- 7. Desiring to be teachers of the law; understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm.**

We cannot allow ourselves to be defined by what is important to this world. We live in a world where a fight can arise over the use of a word, where financial gain is considered a sign of God's blessing and approval of one's actions, because God does not bless what He does not approve. We are reminded that as long as we have food and clothes our needs are being met and beyond food and clothes we should not define who we are by money. First Timothy six verse three.

1 Timothy 6:3-12

- 3. If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness;**
- 4. He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings,**
- 5. Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself.**
- 6. But godliness with contentment is great gain.**

7. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out.

8. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content.

Those who desire to be rich will find a conflict with the faith that they have because money and riches spiritually cannot be what defines us. Verse nine.

9. But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.

10. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

Spiritually what defines us is following after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, and meekness. We can never give up on our fight for eternal life. Verse eleven.

11. But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness.

12. Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.

It is a mistake to allow other people to define who we are. From the very beginning of time, carefully defining words has been used by Satan to separate people from God. People have also been defined in ways to make them appear as an enemy, like when David was defined to be the enemy of Saul, and Saul was defined to be David's enemy. We cannot allow others to define who we are, nor can we define ourselves to be who we were when we were born. We are all awaiting that future spiritual transformation that comes through Jesus Christ and it is through our older brother Jesus Christ that we are defined knowing we are created in Jesus Christ for good works, and to walk in those good works.

Thank you for joining us today. God-willing we'll get together next time on the Sabbath. Until then, thank you for joining us today.