

Audio Transcript of Sermon
July 15, 2023
The Choice of Life and Death

Hello. Thank you for joining us today. My name is Tom Laign with Sabbath Bible Study. If your life is like mine, you are constantly finding yourself in a spiritual fight to do what is good while spiritually battling what is evil. That epic spiritual fight from the time of Satan continues in the modern age, and what seems to change is our technology. Fashions tend to come and go and circle around again, but that struggle between good and evil is a constant and will remain that way until Satan no longer has influence over us when the Kingdom of God is established on earth. Good versus evil is the epic fight contrasting two very real sides of human potential, and the proclivity for evil is so overpowering that God wanted to keep people from the knowledge of evil, even when the knowledge of evil was coupled with good.

Most of what we think of as good is thought of as good only because it contrasts with evil. As people, we do not easily conceptualize good unless what we see as good contrasts to evil. When God created mankind and put Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, He gave them free reign over every part of that garden, except for the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, of which they were not permitted to eat from, because if they did, they would die. Genesis two verse eight.

Genesis 2:8-17

8. And the LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed.

9. And out of the ground made the LORD God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

10. And a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads.

11. The name of the first is Pison: that is it which compasseth the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold;

12. And the gold of that land is good: there is bdellium and the onyx stone.

13. And the name of the second river is Gihon: the same is it that compasseth the whole land of Ethiopia.

14. And the name of the third river is Hiddekel: that is it which goeth toward the east of Assyria. And the fourth river is Euphrates.

15. And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it.

16. And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat:

17. But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.

The evil of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was the problem, and the knowledge of good derived from this tree is not much better as it contrasts with evil. Adam and Eve could have eaten from the tree of life, and choose not to. Imagine if they had how different things would be. Instead of living in a world where good and evil are in constant struggle, we would live in a world of righteousness which transcends everything we know about good. Instead of choosing from the tree of life, Adam and Eve ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and the world that we know today, stems from that act long, long ago.

Maybe we have a problem why God would pronounce death on a person who ate from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, because today we have lots of knowledge of good and evil, and that knowledge circles back to Adam and Eve. Other than through faith, we cannot comprehend what a world of righteousness would be like, and yet this death sentence hangs over all humanity because good and evil are linked to each other, and the Bible shows the human mind in its natural state favors evil over good. The funny thing is the human heart in its natural state favors evil over good, even though most people tend to think of themselves as good people. People lie to themselves telling themselves that they are good people showing the human heart is very deceitful. Let's read Jeremiah seventeen verse nine.

Jeremiah 17:9-10

9. The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?

10. I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings.

Jesus showed many different ways how the human heart is deceitful and wicked, and explained that while the Scribes and Pharisees were focused on ceremonial handwashing, they overlooked what actually defiles a person, the evil that oozes from evil, and what does that evil look like? Jesus gave an extensive list showing that evil oozes in many different forms. Let's see what He said as recorded in Mark seven verse twenty.

Mark 7:20-23

20. And he said, That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man.

21. For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders,

22. Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness:

23. All these evil things come from within, and defile the man.

As people who focus on what is written in the Bible, we might think none of what Jesus just listed applies to us. Yet Paul shows in Romans that for people who know God, we have to also be focused on glorifying God and being thankful, or we might find ourselves returned to a darkened state, where what Jesus listed becomes more prominent. Let's see what Paul wrote in Romans one verse twenty-one.

Romans 1:21-23

21. Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

22. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,

23. And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things.

God is routinely made out to be like ordinary people and what is found in nature. If it is not through movies and television shows, it is through what people believe. There are people who reject the idea of God, and yet worship the creation. When people reject God understanding soon leaves, and where there is no understanding of God or people who want to learn more about God, evil abounds through what is said and what is done. Peace is out of reach and destruction and misery are common. Romans three verse ten.

Romans 3:10-18

- 10. As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:**
- 11. There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God.**
- 12. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.**
- 13. Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips:**
- 14. Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness:**
- 15. Their feet are swift to shed blood:**
- 16. Destruction and misery are in their ways:**
- 17. And the way of peace have they not known:**
- 18. There is no fear of God before their eyes.**

Living in the modern age doesn't change what is written in the Bible, it only intensifies what is written in the Bible. Since the time of the New Testament, we are living in the last days, the days since Christ died, and in this age are perilous times where people are becoming increasingly focused on themselves and despising people who are good. In the modern time if people are increasingly despising people who are good, it can only mean people are increasingly favoring what is evil, and one of the greatest evils to occur is when people study the Bible and study the Bible, always learning, only to reject the truth of the Bible. Second Timothy three verse one.

2 Timothy 3:1-7

- 1. This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.**
- 2. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,**
- 3. Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good,**
- 4. Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;**
- 5. Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.**
- 6. For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts,**
- 7. Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.**

We cannot study the Bible only to reject the truth of the Bible, and Jesus showed that those who find life, that very same life of the tree of life from the Garden of Eden, the life that leads to righteousness and eternal life, is not the many but the few. The many He taught follow the way that leads to destruction. If the many follow the way to destruction, that leaves the few who follow the way that leads to life. We have to be among those few who follow the way that leads to life. Matthew seven verse thirteen.

Matthew 7:13-14

13. Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in there at:

14. Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.

Evil that afflicts those who are among the called, chosen, and faithful is found in unbelief, lack of faith, and this causes some to depart from God and return to what everyone else is doing. Those of us who are among the called, chosen, and faithful must encourage each other to be steadfast until the end, lest sin, whether it be our own sin, or the sin that is so prevalent in the world around us, hardens our heart. Hebrews three verse twelve.

Hebrews 3:12-15

12. Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.

13. But exhort one another daily, while it is called Today; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.

14. For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end;

15. While it is said, Today if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation.

We have to ensure we do not allow envy and strife to have any place in our hearts and minds. We must always give glory to God and never lie against the truth, because all of that stems from evil. Instead we focus on righteousness. James three verse thirteen.

James 3:13-18

13. Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom.

14. But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth.

15. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish.

16. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work.

17. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.

18. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.

David wrote of the evil he encountered and described coming across an evil person as if God was standing a far distance away and hiding Himself in times of trouble. What David saw thousands of years ago personified as evil is not much different than what we might see today. Evil persecutes the poor, the people least able to financially defend themselves. Evil is proud of plans for tomorrow and looks at greed as something good. Evil ignores God and instead is proud of who it is. What evil does brings harm to people even though evil never sees it that way. Evil doesn't even have respect for enemies and never considers that bad times can come to it. When evil speaks, the words are twisted to hide the true intent. Because evil ignores God, evil thinks it can do whatever it wants, and will prey on the most vulnerable in society. Psalm ten verse one.

Psalm 10:1-11

1. Why standest thou afar off, O LORD? why hidest thou thyself in times of trouble?

2. The wicked in his pride doth persecute the poor: let them be taken in the devices that they have imagined.

3. For the wicked boasteth of his heart's desire, and blesseth the covetous, whom the LORD abhorreth.

4. The wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek after God: God is not in all his thoughts.

5. His ways are always grievous; thy judgments are far above out of his sight: as for all his enemies, he puffeth at them.

- 6. He hath said in his heart, I shall not be moved: for I shall never be in adversity.**
- 7. His mouth is full of cursing and deceit and fraud: under his tongue is mischief and vanity.**
- 8. He sitteth in the lurking places of the villages: in the secret places doth he murder the innocent: his eyes are privily set against the poor.**
- 9. He lieth in wait secretly as a lion in his den: he lieth in wait to catch the poor: he doth catch the poor, when he draweth him into his net.**
- 10. He croucheth, and humbleth himself, that the poor may fall by his strong ones.**
- 11. He hath said in his heart, God hath forgotten: he hideth his face; he will never see it.**

The twisted words that evil uses pulls us back into the Garden of Eden when the serpent told Eve that eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil would not lead to death. The serpent told Eve that God knew the tree of the knowledge of good and evil would open their eyes to both good and evil. Genesis three verse one.

Genesis 3:1-5

- 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.**

Left out of the conversation by the serpent was the proclivity of the human mind to focus on what was evil. With the knowledge of good and evil, mankind knows good through understanding evil, and that connection to evil is what leads to death. That knowledge of good and evil gives all of humanity a choice, and it is a choice between life and death. God implored the people of Israel to choose life over death explaining that before them were two sets of choices, good in the

form of life, and evil in the form of death. Along with choices of life and death, good and evil, was the choice of blessing and cursing, all based on doing what God expects. Deuteronomy thirty verse fifteen.

Deuteronomy 30:15-20

15. See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil;

16. In that I command thee this day to love the LORD thy God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commandments and his statutes and his judgments, that thou mayest live and multiply: and the LORD thy God shall bless thee in the land whither thou goest to possess it.

17. But if thine heart turn away, so that thou wilt not hear, but shalt be drawn away, and worship other gods, and serve them;

18. I denounce unto you this day, that ye shall surely perish, and that ye shall not prolong your days upon the land, whither thou passest over Jordan to go to possess it.

19. I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live:

20. That thou mayest love the LORD thy God, and that thou mayest obey his voice, and that thou mayest cleave unto him: for he is thy life, and the length of thy days: that thou mayest dwell in the land which the LORD sware unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them.

Later at the end of Joshua's life, Joshua had a similar message and reminded the people of his time that there was a choice between serving God, the gods worshipped prior to Noah, the gods of Egypt, and the gods of the Amorites. He told them to put away these gods. We tend to think of all Israel since the time of Abraham worshipping God, but these verses indicate otherwise, and that all of these years after the Exodus, this type of worship was continuing. Joshua then warned the people of turning away from God and the people all proclaimed loyalty to God. Joshua twenty-four verse fourteen.

Joshua 24:14-24

14. Now therefore fear the LORD, and serve him in sincerity and in truth: and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood, and in Egypt; and serve ye the LORD.

15. And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.

16. And the people answered and said, God forbid that we should forsake the LORD, to serve other gods;

17. For the LORD our God, he it is that brought us up and our fathers out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage, and which did those great signs in our sight, and preserved us in all the way wherein we went, and among all the people through whom we passed:

18. And the LORD drave out from before us all the people, even the Amorites which dwelt in the land: therefore will we also serve the LORD; for he is our God.

19. And Joshua said unto the people, Ye cannot serve the LORD: for he is an holy God; he is a jealous God; he will not forgive your transgressions nor your sins.

20. If ye forsake the LORD, and serve strange gods, then he will turn and do you hurt, and consume you, after that he hath done you good.

21. And the people said unto Joshua, Nay; but we will serve the LORD.

22. And Joshua said unto the people, Ye are witnesses against yourselves that ye have chosen you the LORD, to serve him. And they said, We are witnesses.

23. Now therefore put away, said he, the strange gods which are among you, and incline your heart unto the LORD God of Israel.

24. And the people said unto Joshua, The LORD our God will we serve, and his voice will we obey.

The choice between life and death was not only a choice for the people living then, it is a choice for all of us living today, and Jesus also spoke of good and evil explaining that if a tree is good, the fruit is good, and if the tree is corrupt, the fruit is corrupt. He went on to show that evil people can't genuinely speak of good things, unless they are motivated by deceit. He did show that good people do good things and evil people do evil things. Finally, Jesus explained that even our words are important, that words can be words of good or evil, and by our words we will be judged. Matthew twelve verse thirty-three.

Matthew 12:33-37

33. Either make the tree good, and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt: for the tree is known by his fruit.

34. O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.

35. A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things.

36. But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.

37. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.

Even Proverbs shows that life and death, good and evil, are empowered by what we say. Proverbs eighteen verse twenty-one.

Proverbs 18:21

21. Death and life are in the power of the tongue: and they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof.

Jesus not only spoke of good and evil and the need to reject evil, Jesus did that himself. In a prophecy of Jesus recorded by Isaiah, we are shown that not only was Jesus to be born of a virgin and called Immanuel, He would refuse the evil and choose the good, all after the Kingdoms of Israel and Judah would lose their kings. Isaiah seven verse ten.

Isaiah 7:10-16

10. Moreover the LORD spake again unto Ahaz, saying,

11. Ask thee a sign of the LORD thy God; ask it either in the depth, or in the height above.

12. But Ahaz said, I will not ask, neither will I tempt the LORD.

13. And he said, Hear ye now, O house of David; Is it a small thing for you to weary men, but will ye weary my God also?

14. Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

15. Butter and honey shall he eat, that he may know to refuse the evil, and choose the good.

16. For before the child shall know to refuse the evil, and choose the good, the land that thou abhorrest shall be forsaken of both her kings.

Refusing to do something and choosing to do something are both conscious acts. Evil doesn't just happen, nor does good just happen, and as we consider what is good and evil around us, all of that stems from choices people made, and we have to make sure we are refusing evil and choosing good in our own life. Because words are linked to good and evil, we also have to be careful with the words we use. Even Jesus used words carefully knowing that some people whom He would encounter were evil. God, who became flesh and dwelt among us, is righteous and does righteousness, and Jesus chose his words carefully knowing evil was trying to ensnare Him. That was a common ploy of the Pharisees and they finally thought they had Him where He could either affirm loyalty to God or affirm loyalty to Caesar. In their minds, either way, they thought they had Him.

They asked Jesus if it was lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, and right away Jesus perceived their wicked intent and carefully replied demonstrating that since it was Caesar's image and inscription on the coin, that they should render to Caesar the things which are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's. Jesus not only used few words to explain, but explained in such a way that any rebuttal by the Pharisees could have been perceived as disloyal to Caesar, so instead of challenging Jesus, they were stumped and silenced, and simply left. Matthew twenty-two verse fifteen.

Matthew 22:15-22

15. Then went the Pharisees, and took counsel how they might entangle him in his talk.

16. And they sent out unto him their disciples with the Herodians, saying, Master, we know that thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest thou for any man: for thou regardest not the person of men.

17. Tell us therefore, What thinkest thou? Is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar, or not?

18. But Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, Why tempt ye me, ye hypocrites?

19. Shew me the tribute money. And they brought unto him a penny.

20. And he saith unto them, Whose is this image and superscription?

21. They say unto him, Caesar's. Then saith he unto them, Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's.

22. When they had heard these words, they marvelled, and left him, and went their way.

Today, we have to be careful with the words we use. While we focus on the Kingdom of God and God's righteousness, evil personified today like the Pharisees of the time of Jesus will try to convict us through the words we use. We can either give them an easy victory and be careless with our words, or like Jesus we can make them walk away through the words we use. Paul told the Ephesians that they should let no corrupt communication proceed out of their mouth, and that they should speak words which edify, build up and strengthen, people. Ephesians four verse twenty-five.

Ephesians 4:25-32

25. Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another.

26. Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath:

27. Neither give place to the devil.

28. Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.

29. Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.

30. And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.

31. Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice:

32. And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

Proverbs reminds us that pleasant words are sweet to the soul and health to the bones. Proverbs sixteen verse twenty-four.

Proverbs 16:24

24. Pleasant words are as an honeycomb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones.

Also shared in Proverbs is a comparison between perfectly chosen words and ornate jewelry, even when correction is given. Proverbs twenty-five verse eleven.

Proverbs 25:11-12

- 11. A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver.**
- 12. As an earring of gold, and an ornament of fine gold, so is a wise reprove upon an obedient ear.**

David wrote not only of the law of God and the need to be kept from presumptuous sins, but the need for his words and thoughts to be acceptable to God. Psalm nineteen verse seven.

Psalm 19:7-14

- 7. The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple.**
- 8. The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes.**
- 9. The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever: the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether.**
- 10. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.**
- 11. Moreover by them is thy servant warned: and in keeping of them there is great reward.**
- 12. Who can understand his errors? cleanse thou me from secret faults.**
- 13. Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression.**
- 14. Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer.**

Even though we have a choice between life and death, eternal life itself is a gift given to us through Jesus Christ. We make that choice today by yielding ourselves to being servants of righteousness and not yielding ourselves to be servants of uncleanness and sin. Romans six verse fifteen.

Romans 6:15-23

- 15. What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid.**

16. Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?

17. But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you.

18. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.

19. I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: 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.

20. For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness.

21. What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death.

22. But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.

23. For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

In writing to the Ephesians, Paul again reminds us that it is through grace we are saved through faith, and that all of that is a gift given to us, but Paul also reminds us we were created in Jesus Christ for good works and that it is expected of us to walk in those good works, showing that doing what God expects of us is linked to this gift of eternal life. 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.**

Walking in the good works that is expected of us and being careful of the words we choose never gives us a reason to call evil good and good evil. What the Bible calls evil is evil even when this world applauds it as righteous. Isaiah five verse eighteen.

Isaiah 5:18-23

- 18. Woe unto them that draw iniquity with cords of vanity, and sin as it were with a cart rope:**
- 19. That say, Let him make speed, and hasten his work, that we may see it: and let the counsel of the Holy One of Israel draw nigh and come, that we may know it!**
- 20. Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!**
- 21. Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight!**
- 22. Woe unto them that are mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to mingle strong drink:**
- 23. Which justify the wicked for reward, and take away the righteousness of the righteous from him!**

Like at all times in the history of mankind, there is so much in the world that is contrary to what God wants, and we can never abandon our loyalty to God. We cannot allow ourselves to become like this world and must instead allow our minds to be transformed by the Holy Spirit. Romans twelve verse one.

Romans 12:1-2

- 1. I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.**

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.

In choosing good over evil, and life over death, we always make that choice with faith, because anything done without faith is sin, and that brings us full circle back to evil and death, even if what we intend to do is otherwise good. Romans fourteen verse twenty-two.

Romans 14:22-23

22. Hast thou faith? have it to thyself before God. Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth.

23. And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin.

In our struggle between good and evil, in that battle to overcome, we know that God is faithful to keep us from evil, and that God will deliver us from unreasonable and wicked people, because not all people have faith. From that we know we can have full trust in God and full awareness that evil will try and ensnare us. Second Thessalonians three verse one.

2 Thessalonians 3:1-5

1. Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, even as it is with you:

2. And that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men: for all men have not faith.

3. But the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep you from evil.

4. And we have confidence in the Lord touching you, that ye both do and will do the things which we command you.

5. And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ.

We have a choice between life and death knowing that evil will try and ensnare us, but we also know that God is faithful and will keep evil from us. That epic battle we all face of fighting to do good while battling evil is a conflict we each will face, but through faith we know that God is faithful and will keep evil from us, showing that we will win by spiritually fighting to do good.

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.