

DELIVERANCE FROM OUR INFIRMITY

Peter Hay, Presbytery Word for week commencing Sunday 10 May 2026

Transcription of recording, slightly edited

This morning, I am going to continue to teach from chapter 5 of the book, *The Kingdom of God*, and I am going to be teaching from the section titled, 'The infirmity of the flesh'. I am going to flesh out that section of the book (page 74), drawing on some of the points that Vic made in his speaking notes that were handed out. I want to read the first paragraph from that section on the infirmity of the flesh, and then we will spend our time breaking that open and understanding this principle.

We wrote in that section: 'As a result of "the other law", our human *infirmity* is to misappropriate the word of God. [When we are talking about infirmity, we are not just talking about your sore knee or your difficulties. They are a fruit (or a consequence) of this infirmity. We are talking about something much more fundamental to our makeup as humans.] We do not understand why we do this, for what we will to do, we do not practise. Instead, we find ourselves doing the things that we hate. This sickness, or infirmity, was established in us when man ate from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. On account of one man's disobedience, we were all born with the motive to misappropriate the word for our own ends, which brings us into bondage to the law of sin and death. Apart from deliverance through the cross, every person walks, or lives, "according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience". They remain in bondage to Satan and this infirmity on account of *the fear of death*.'

That statement is actually pretty good, but way too concentrated. We need to unpack it and understand how this infirmity works and why we end up doing the things that we do not want to do. The things that we hate and fail to do are the very things that we are committed to do.

To understand our infirmity, the beginning point is to go back to the genesis of our infirmity. That is when Adam disobeyed God and ate the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. You will remember that as we were breaking this open, the beginning point was that Eve gave her ear to another word from Satan. This is Genesis

chapter 3 verses 1 to 3. This is Satan speaking to Eve. He said, 'Has God [that is *Elohim*] indeed said, "You shall not eat of every tree of the garden?" And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden; but not of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden." *Elohim* has said, "You shall not eat of it nor shall you touch it lest you die." '

Now this statement was the first action of deception because it was not *Elohim* who said that at all, it was Yahweh *Elohim*. When the Scriptures use the term *Elohim*, that is speaking about the individual person of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, but when it is using the term Lord God or Yahweh *Elohim*, it is referring to the fellowship of Yahweh and the expression of each person proceeding from that fellowship. It is an expression of one Spirit, and it is the fruit of offering. Satan is making a big point here now. He is isolating the Father and saying that the Father acts independently from the fellowship of Yahweh. Eve has picked this up. She also is saying, 'It was the Father who said this.' All a sudden she is already starting to be deceived.

It was Yahweh *Elohim*, the Lord God, who said that man was not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. It was not *Elohim*. For your reference, that is Genesis chapter 2 verses 16 and 17. Satan falsely declared that the Father's creative initiative was the expression of His own identity and life apart from the fellowship of Yahweh. The prerogative was with the Father; it was not the fruit of the Son and the Holy Spirit revealing the Father as an offering action.

Satan challenged the reality that the fellowship of headship is the order of life through which a man and a woman have their expression. He is immediately saying, 'The Father does not need the fellowship of Yahweh to have His expression. But that also means, 'Eve, you do not need to be in the fellowship of headship or the order of headship for *your* expression.' This is beginning to distort; it is a lie. He is starting to say, 'You can have a different expression, and it is not contingent upon fellowship.'

As the woman gave ear to Satan's overtures, she too identified *Elohim* rather than Yahweh *Elohim* as being the source of the command not to eat of the tree. The woman's response indicated a lack of clarity and a lack of conviction regarding the fellowship of headship. There is a lack of clarity there about where the word is proceeding from and how it is proceeding to her, and a lack of conviction about her participation in this fellowship. Because the woman ceased from choosing the fellowship and order of headship as the source of her definition and expression, she was susceptible to deception. She is listening to another word. It is not just the fact that she is *listening* to another word, she is *choosing* something. She is making a choice here, and as she has made that choice, she is now subject to delusion - deception. Her perception, her capacity to see is changing.

Satan contradicted God's word and he questioned God's motives. Now he has a bit of an 'in'. Now the conversation shifts even further and he says, 'Not only, Eve, did God say this, operating from Himself, but His motives are to keep you subject to Himself. He is limiting you. The word is limiting you.' He said to the woman, 'You will not surely die if you eat the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. For God knows that in the day you eat of it, your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God [that is like God the Father], knowing good and evil.' I would like to say that it was not just the ability to discriminate between good and evil. To be like God would be like having the capacity for the thoughts that are as numerous as all the sand on all the seashores. That is the capacity you would be able to have like God, knowing good and evil.

As Eve gave her attention to Satan's alternative word, her senses became distorted and we know that the fruit became like an enchantment or a charm, and it provoked in her a desire that had never been there before. You can see there is a twist on the word, there is a giving an ear to it and an agreeance with it, then there is a lie and that lie is resulting in a deception so that all a sudden this fruit acts like a charm and generates in her a desire that she has never had before. At the worship festival we made the point that she had been in the garden for about 4 000 years and had never seen the fruit like this before. Something had shifted in her perception. It was

a charm provoking within her the desire, and that desire was to become the source of her own life and destiny.

We know that she saw that the fruit was good for food, pleasant to the eyes and desirable to make one wise. Let us unpack exactly what she saw because I do not think that she just saw the fruit and went, 'That looks like a cheeseburger, and I would love a cheeseburger. I have never seen a cheeseburger before.' I do not think it is anything near as superficial as that. I think this is getting right down, quite acutely, to everything to do with her *being*. What about her perception?

The first thing that she perceived was that the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil would be 'good for food'. This means that her life would not be dependent on connection to the fellowship that belonged to Yahweh. Their life had been sustained because they were eating at the tree of life every day in fellowship with Yahweh in the evening. Their life was sustained through that conversation with Yahweh at the tree of life every day. When she saw that it was good for food, she was seeing that she could have life without having to be connected to that fellowship. That is what she saw. It was like she was seeing that she could be a Christian and it need not be contingent on her connection to fellowship. Her faith, her expression, her life was her own. That is the first thing that it meant when she saw it was good for food.

The second thing was that the fruit became 'pleasant to the woman's eyes'. What does that mean? That means she believed that the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil would give her power to fulfil her desires and expectations. You have food; it means you can be sustained and live apart from fellowship (or your life is not contingent on fellowship). Then you have 'pleasant to the eyes'. This becomes the belief that she would have the power to fulfil her desires and expectations. She can have those desires that are aroused within her. This sight that she received was contrary to the one desire that a son of man should have. The Scriptures are very clear. This was Jesus, the Son of Man's testimony, as He communicated it through King David. He expressed in Psalm 27 verse 4 the one desire that a man should have (a son of man or a daughter of man). 'One thing I have desired of

the Lord [or desired of Yahweh], that will I seek; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, and to behold the beauty of the Lord.' That word 'beauty' literally means 'pleasantness' - 'to behold the pleasantness of the Lord'. All a sudden something else now (another desire) is being aroused in her and her sight goes looking to the fulfillment of a desire other than to dwell in the house of the Lord forever, which is what her predestination was. The Son of Man, Christ Himself, proclaimed this very statement through King David and His desire was to behold the pleasantness of the fellowship of Yahweh as the context for His life and for His work. This is what she is now seeing as pleasant to the eyes.

Finally, the woman considered that the fruit would 'make her wise'. This was meaning that she would have the capacity (as I was saying before) for thoughts concerning herself and her household that numbered the sand of the seashore. She is seeing this fruit and she is saying, 'I am going to have the capacity to define the works and a destiny in the same way that God has done that for me. I will be like God.' Now that was a great deception. Most of us can barely keep two thoughts in our heads at one time. She thought she was getting the capacity for the number of thoughts that belong to the sand on the seashore. This creative capacity belonged to the knowledge of good and evil of which she would become the arbiter for herself and for her household. This is a great deception - a great presumption.

The woman gave the fruit to Adam, and he accountably chose to disobey God. He was not deceived; he knew what he was choosing. Instead of getting what they were promised by Satan, they received no new knowledge except one grain of sand - that was that they were naked! That was the only new knowledge that they gained. They were naked; they were cut off from life; they were afraid and they were ashamed and they started to feel the physical effects of death caused by their sin. So out popped a grey hair - like that. I half-suspect that they actually began to get sick. All a sudden, the impact of their disobedience (or their sin), the death of it, began to roll over them. They have no new knowledge; they are cut off from life; they are beginning to touch the effects of death. They are naked; they are afraid and they are ashamed. That was the

fruit of eating this — that was the fruit of their disobedience.

We are going to go slowly here because this is where the infirmity is. They are beginning to touch the infirmity already. They have already sinned and they are touching the death. They are feeling the effects of dying, and they are naked, and they are afraid. That is the infirmity. But the infirmity is so much more than that. We read that the infirmity is to misappropriate the word. What is the relationship between this condition that they have found themselves in and this tendency to engage with the word of God in a particular way that does not lead to salvation and only leads to further torment?

Separated from the word of their predestination, they were motivated (or driven) to clothe themselves representing a projection of their limited and tenuous self-image. They are no longer connected to their predestination, which, as we know, is as exquisite and as detailed and as glorious as the thoughts that God has for each one of us numbered uncountably. That is what they have lost. In their stead, they have only what they can generate as a self-image. The best way that that image can be communicated is the equivalent of sowing fig leaves together as a projection of their own self-image. It is tenuous. They are vulnerable.

Here is my key point: I am going to speak around this to try to land this key point about our infirmity. Transpiring from their fear and nakedness was a new instinct. Transpiring from their fear and nakedness was a new instinct. This was an instinct that was established within them that they had never had before. This instinct emerging from fear and from nakedness was *self-preservation*. That is what we heard today from Mel. Self-preservation. They had never had to do that before. They were never afraid. They were never ashamed. They were clothed with the word that belonged to their predestination as they chose it each day with Yahweh. Now they are naked. They are afraid of dying and something instinctive has gripped them and it reflexes beyond their own understanding. That is what we mean by instinct. You do not have to think about it; it just happens. You reflex to it. This new instinct was the instinct of self-preservation. This had never been a response that was native to

their creation, but it was now activated within them without their consciousness or without their will. Self-preservation is not by will. If someone goes to hit you and you put your hand up to stop them, it is just an instinct to preserve yourself. If you had to think about it, you would not have enough time, and you would get socked in the face. It is built-in now, to preserve your life.

This is where we have to connect this instinct with the other law and the law of our mind. The outcome of eating the fruit of the knowledge of good and evil was that a new motive was established within mankind. That motive was the drive to name ourselves, and that motive is called another law or the other law. That other law works through the law of your mind. If you are living by that other law... (that is what is established in them because of their disobedience) ... if you are living by that other law, it means that you are in the same condition of fearing death and nakedness. Everybody who is living by the other law which operates through the law of our mind (wherever you are operating by the law of your mind), that instinct of self-preservation will happen without you even thinking about it. That is what we are saying.

I will read it the way I have written it, and we will keep unpacking it. Springing from the motive of another law at work within them (and the law of sin that was now at work in their members - the law of sin being the desire to have life according to my own image), they instinctively engaged in actions to preserve themselves. By instinct we mean that they did not understand or comprehend what they were doing. They just did it to preserve their life. Taking action through the law of their mind as the expression of the other law within them, even the good that they endeavoured to do was motivated by self-preservation. Think about it. The other law is the motive to have life according to my own definition. I am doing that on the basis of good and evil. As soon as I am acting through the motive of the other law governed by the law of my mind (as I reason what is good or evil, even when I go to take what is good), I am motivated by self-preservation. I am taking what is good so that I can have life and I am not going to die. Can you see that I did that - not even thinking about it. I am just thinking that this is a good thing. But the motive behind that is the

other law through my reason and the instinct that is driven that is self-preservation. It is inherently self-centred.

The apostle Paul highlighted that this was the infirmity that we inherited from Adam's disobedience. The infirmity is not just that I am dying. The infirmity is that because I am dying and because I have another law operating within me, everything that I do, whether good or evil, is driven by self-preservation. When I am operating by self-preservation, it is the opposite of love which is to lay my life down to reveal another. Because I am living by self-preservation rather than the law of love, I come under the judgement of God, even if I am trying to do good. Can you see that - even if I am trying to do good? This is what Paul wrote in Romans 7 verses 14 to 17. I hope these Scriptures from Romans 7 start to sparkle for you in the light of this principle. 'For we know that the Law is spiritual [you can say the word of God there if you like - the word of God is spiritual], but I am carnal, sold under sin ['sold under sin' means 'through an exchange']. For what I am doing, I do not understand. [When Paul is saying that, he is not saying, 'I just cannot reason it; it is a principle too complicated.' He means, 'I did it and I did not even think about it when I did it.' That is what he means by, 'I do not understand it. I just do it.'] For what I will to do, that I do not practise; but what I hate that I do. If then, I do what I will not to do, I agree with the Law that it is good... [What am I using to agree with the Law? I am using my mind to agree with the Law. As soon as I am doing that, I am using the law of my mind to say, 'That word is good.' The law of my mind is the expression of my other law.] ...I agree with the Law that it is good. But now it is no longer I who did do it, but sin that dwells within me.' As I agree with the Law, through the law of my mind, what happens? Sin revives and I take an action or do something that is contrary to the thing that I am trying to attain to. I am going to give you an example from me in a moment and that will help explain this principle. Are you seeing the point? Wherever the other law is operative through the law of my mind, whatever I am doing, even if I am trying to do what the word says, the motive behind it instinctively is self-preservation. Because it is self-preservation, even if I marginally get there, I am still sinning.

For a Christian, our problem (or the expression of our infirmity) is carnality. For a person who does not know Christ, who is not born as a son of God, they do not have this dilemma. They just sin. They just sin. Everything they do is self-defined, everything they do is under condemnation. For us, we do not want to be like that, do we? We are hearing the word, and we want to be obedient. For us, our problem is carnality. Carnality is only peculiar to a Christian. The person who is not born of God or does not know God is not carnal. They are just fallen. A person who is carnal is someone who has been born of God, born of the Spirit, and established in the fellowship of the body of Christ, but still lives by the operation of another law. That is what carnality means. Can you see that the unbeliever is not carnal? They are just an unbeliever. The carnal person is someone who is actually born of God, born of the Spirit, but sets their mind a different way. That is what it means to be carnally minded. We will get to that in a moment.

Carnality refers to a person who has been born of God, but who still lives by the motives of the other law. Think about it. We have a person who is born of God. They still have the other law in them, and when they act by the other law through the law of their mind (even when they hear the word of God), the action that they are taking is not motivated by sonship; it is motivated by self-preservation. Can you start to see the dilemma now? This is the carnal dilemma.

In this condition, when the word is proclaimed, we engage with the word through the law of our mind. In our carnal condition, this is what we do. The word is proclaimed; we engage with the word through the law of our mind. It means we sit there and we are judging the word. You might be sitting there going, 'Well, I am not judging.' What you are doing (what we all do if we are carnal or living carnally) as the word is being proclaimed, we are going, 'This is good for me' or 'This is not so good for me.' It is not like everyone is sitting here as the Pharisee going, 'Peter's a goose, although I like that point and I did not like that one.' It is how you are interfacing with the word that is coming to you. You are sitting there listening to it and going, 'Oh yes, that would be good. Yeah, gee, yeah, I had better do

that. Yikes, I do not want to go to hell.' Can you see - all through the reasoning of your mind and nothing to do with the conviction of your spirit?

In this carnal condition when the word is proclaimed, we engage with the word through the law of our mind. The instinct of self-preservation is activated because we agree with the word, having agreed with it in our mind. All a sudden this subconscious basic response is the drive to connect with what is being said. Self-preserving. It is activated because we agree with the word considering that it will be good for us and for our house to preserve us from the ravages of sin and the ultimate condemnation. That is why we are doing it. We do not want to touch death. We do not want to be a sinner because we do not want to die.

Let us do an example now. I am going to do an example of me. I have come to church, and I have heard and delighted in, for example, the word on headship in a marriage and in a household. I have sat there and I have been listening to it, and I thought finally, someone (Luke Pomery) gets up, and he finally makes some sense. I have it! I totally understand this headship, why it is so important. I am absolutely thrilled. This is really what we need. Lisa and I and our family, we need this word. I have agreed with the Law that it is good. I have delighted in the word of headship, so we proceed on home from church intent on engaging in life as a reformed married couple and as a family. However, arriving home, knowing that we have some visitors coming for *agape* fellowship, I barely make it through the door before I lose my cool at one of the children for not doing their chore properly the day before, because the house does not look all neat and tidy. I berate them, calling them a silly, lazy scallywag, or words to that effect, for not being obedient to me, reminding them that we just heard that children are supposed to be obedient to parents. Something has come out of my mouth that was not the blessing of life. Having already delighted in the word, now I am taking the word that I am delighting in, and I am using it to hurt someone else who has not met my expectations - my lazy scallywag son or it could have been a daughter. I am not finished there. For my wife has taken it upon herself to serve our guests a meat-free dish, because she believes it will be good for us and for them. Again, I take strong umbrage at my wife

for failing to submit to my headship and to proceed from me as we had just heard earlier in the day.

Now once I have cooled down, I am deeply grieved by the pain that I have caused others and the terrible way I feel. Does anybody have that same dilemma? That is the operation of the other law, and that was the fruit of an instinctive response I did not even know that I was doing, having agreed with the word with the law of my mind. Because it was the law of my mind, it was an instinctive response, and as soon as my life was threatened, or the projection of our house was threatened, bang, an explosion, and sin revived and what happened? There was death everywhere. I died; the children died; Lisa died. It was just death. Can you see this is an infirmity? The very word that was supposed to bring life to our house has resulted in the very opposite. You can see Paul saying, 'Oh, wretched man than I am. What do you do about this?'

I am feeling deeply grieved by the pain I have caused others and the terrible way I feel, wondering, 'Where did it go so wrong so quickly?' Paul said that this is the evidence of something. This is Romans chapter 7 verses 9 to 11. 'I was alive once without the Law [so I came into church alive, the word was spoken], but when the commandment came [this is a word of Christ my King coming through messengers. I totally believe that. Coming - the commandment came and I took hold of it this way], sin revived and I died. And the commandment, which was to bring life, I found to bring death. For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it, it killed me.' This is the infirmity that we are talking about. I am hoping that the infirmity is getting clear now. The key is: how do we find deliverance from this wretched state?

The reality is that my condemnation began as I took hold of the word through the law of my mind through which the motive of the other law is active. You can put 'law of my mind' and 'other law' together. I was coveting the life that was promised in the word because I was afraid of death. As soon as you are engaging with the word through the law of your mind, you are doing that because you are afraid of death because the law of your mind is the fruit of another law. This was the desire to have life apart from God in yourself.

The outcome of that was death. The exercise of the other law through the law of your mind is because you are afraid of death.

Paul highlighted that this was a dilemma in Romans 7 verse 25: 'Then with the mind I myself serve the Law of God but with the flesh the law of sin.' This is one of the most misunderstood passages in the Bible and particularly in this chapter. It looks like you are supposed to serve the Law of God with your mind. As you are listening, agree with it, but make sure you do not serve the law of sin with your flesh. But that is not what it is saying at all. It is saying that if you endeavour to serve the Law of God with your mind, you will inevitably serve the law of sin with your flesh. The issue is what you do with your mind. Now register that this is the dilemma: the carnal Christian only lives by the law of their mind. They become the arbiter of the word - what is good or evil to them. That is why they can never receive the word of present truth. It is the reason they never have a confession, and it is the reason they never have testimony. They cannot have a testimony because they are dying, because the carnal mind is death. It is an infirmity. Can I say to you today that you do not need to live like this? We should not be living like this. We have been delivered from an Old Covenant. We are supposed to be living by the New Covenant of the Spirit.

We have to be careful that we do not take the New Covenant of the Spirit and make it old through the reasoning of our mind. Paul highlighted that this was the dilemma saying, 'So then, with the law of my mind I serve the Law of God, but with the flesh... [the outcome is that in my flesh] ... I serve the law of sin.'

The answer to this dilemma was given to Adam and Eve and to all of us in the garden of Eden, and I think you will be glad to get to the answer to the dilemma. (Or maybe you like being caught in sin and death, I do not know. But that is terrible.) Let us find the secret - the mystery that belongs to deliverance from this infirmity.

The source of our problem is the garden of Eden, and the answer to our problem is the garden of Eden. This is why the Spirit is saying, 'You have to be restored to the tree of life in the Paradise of God.' The Lord in mercy provided an atonement for Adam and his wife, which they then needed

to choose every day. The lamb was taken on the tenth day. They fell hours before the lamb was going to be taken. It is not like the Lord is just generating a contingency for this flop. The lamb was always going to be taken on the tenth day, but now it was to be sacrificed as a means of atonement. That means it was to be a means of re-engaging Adam and Eve so they could be one with Yahweh again. That is what atonement means. It does not mean that your conscience is appeased; it means that you are able to be one Spirit again - atonement. A lamb was slain (and that lamb became the provision of clothing to cover the nakedness of their lost predestination), and blood was shed. That blood became life for them.

They did not just choose it in the moment. They had to choose that atonement fellowship every day, because that lamb was symbolising a whole way of life for them. The way that we wrote it in Vic's notes was, 'The lamb that was slain for this purpose symbolised their participation in the process of overcoming sin. This involved making offering every day at the gate of Eden.' There is one offering - one lamb - but their connection to that atonement process is daily offering. What did that offering look like? It involved making offering every day at the gate of Eden and embracing the difficulties that they experienced in the context of their work as a participation in this offering. Every day now they are going to endure difficulties which is the fruit of their sin, but if they do it as a participation in this atoning lamb, it is changing them. They are being recovered.

This is what the Lord said to Eve in Genesis chapter 3 verse 16, 'I will greatly multiply your sorrow and your conception; and in pain you shall bring forth children.' Pain, difficulty, sorrow. What is that connection to atonement? The apostle Paul gave us that answer in 1 Timothy 2 verse 15. Her connection to the atoning work of the Lamb is this: He said, 'Nevertheless she will be saved... [It is a pathway of salvation] ... she will be saved in childbearing if they continue in faith, love and holiness with self-control.' This is a daily fellowship now in an offering - for a woman. We heard that again from Mel's testimony, embracing the difficulties that belong to deliverance from this self-preserving infirmity.

What about Adam? This is such an amazing point, because he did not curse Adam. What did he curse? He cursed the ground and He said, 'Cursed is the ground for your sake; in toil, you shall eat of it all the days of your life. Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you, and you shall eat the herb of the field.'

If Adam and Eve had not chosen this atonement, they would have been given up by the Lord as Cain later was. It is interesting that Cain *did* overcome the thorns and thistles, and he brought forth an amazing harvest from the ground; but it was not what belonged to his obedience, and it was not the offering that the Lord was asking for. It was still a motive driven by self-definition? What was the outcome? God gave him up to his idolatry. In the end, everything that he could do himself became the thing that he worshipped. It was a god of his imagination; he was imagining who he could be. That is not what we want. We do not want to be given up to our idolatry. It is a damnable state when God starts answering you through your idol. If your idol is your religious projection and you believe that God is speaking to you through your idol, you are in a very, very sorry state. That is not how He is speaking to us.

This is what Paul said in Romans chapter 1 verses 21 to 25, 'Although they knew God [Cain knew God; he knew the voice of the Lord], they did not glorify Him [as the source of their predestination], nor were thankful, but became futile in their *thoughts* [that is the law of their mind assessing and judging the word that is coming to them] and their foolish hearts were darkened. [That is a spirit that has been extinguished. No illumination. No capacity to receive the word of present truth. That is a foolish heart] Professing to be wise [full of reason], they became fools and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man. [This is a bit like the Pharisee who prayed to himself and said, 'God, I thank God that I am not like the tax collector.' Speaking to himself sounds like the law of your mind. Then, who does he address? God. Speaking to himself, 'God, I thank...'. Who does he think God is? Himself. It becomes an idol - a religious projection] ... Professing to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man - and birds and four-footed animals and creeping

things. Therefore, God also gave them up to uncleanness in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonour their bodies among themselves, who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshipped and served the creature [that is talking about man] rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever.'

Now thankfully, we have a High Priest who understands our infirmities - this dilemma that we have. He priests to us a participation in the atonement that He finished for us. That atonement has been made; it is completely finished. But we have a great High Priest who is fully acquainted with all the sorrow and grief and pain associated with our infirmity, and He has pioneered a pathway for each one through that, back to recovery with Yahweh. He priests to us a participation in those difficulties every day for our sake. We have to choose this process every day, in the same way that Adam and Eve had to choose the atonement that God had given to them. We have to choose the *word* of it, and we also have to choose the *implications* every day of our fellowship with Christ in His offering and sufferings. We have to choose what He is priesting to us.

Hebrews chapter 4 verses 14 to 16 says, 'Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession... [The beginning point of hearing the word is not, 'This is good for me?' The beginning point is a confession. Can you see why it is so important we understand this principle of confession and testimony? It is because if you are going to receive what Christ is priesting to you as your participation in atonement, you need a confession.] ... Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathise with our weaknesses [that word 'weaknesses', literally is 'infirmities' - totally sympathetic; totally aware; has totally negotiated it - everything to do with delivery from the effect of sin and the other law], but was in all points tempted as we are yet without sin. [So, what do we do?] Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy... [In my example before, I did not ask for mercy. I just presumed, 'I am going to do this; this is good for

me.' The first thing that we do when we come to the throne of grace is ask for mercy. And by mercy, what do you do? 'By the mercies of God present your bodies a living sacrifice.' Mercy is what we receive first] ... Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.' As we have said many times, that is not what that Scripture says. It says, 'Find grace to bind you as if you are being bound to a boat.' That ark is the body of Christ. It is the fellowship of Christ's offering and sufferings.

The beginning point is the word of Christ as He comes to us as the King. We do have to come and listen to the word that is proclaimed to us. There is nothing wrong with the word; that is what Paul said. 'Is the problem the Law because it is causing sin to arise?' No, the word is perfect. It is coming from heaven, from the throne of God through messengers, like lightning to you. Nothing wrong with the word. Our problem is the fear of death leading to the instinctive response of self-preservation that springs from the other law through the law of our mind.

We cannot deliver ourselves from the fear of death. You cannot just sit there and say, 'I am not going to be afraid' as if that can quell your self-preserving thing. It happens without you even thinking. We cannot deliver ourselves from the fear of death, but the Spirit helps us to receive the King and His word when He comes.

Here is a key point: Every time the King proceeds to speak to us, He comes saying, 'Do not fear.' It is not you saying it; it is Christ saying it. 'Do not fear, I am your faith, your exceedingly great reward. I am the substance of the thing that you are going to hope for. Do not fear.' Can you see that is not just at the beginning of our salvation; that is every time the King comes to speak. How do we know that? Because every time the word is coming, it is coming to deliver the faith to you so that 'the just shall live by faith.' For the righteousness of God is revealed, what? From faith to faith. Every time the word comes; it means every time the speaker is coming saying, 'Do not be afraid'; it means, 'Do not reason with your mind; open your heart; allow the word to expose you and to convict you - to shine a light into your heart.'

Faith comes by hearing and we are exhorted to take heed how we hear. The question is, when the word is being spoken, how is your mind oriented? When you are sitting there hearing the word, how is your mind oriented? We must set our minds on the Spirit as we come to hear the word. That is the first thing. As was said to us today, 'The Spirit then, as we walk in that word, brings to our remembrance that word, that in the circumstances, is needed.' You have to set your mind on the Spirit, not on your reason. We must set our minds on the Spirit as we come to hear the word and then as we walk in the light of the word. Let us unpack now. We will move from Romans 7 to Romans 8.

Romans 8 verses 5 to 6: 'For those who live according to the flesh [that just means carnally] set their mind on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.' We need to go another layer and say, 'Well, what does it mean to set our mind on the Spirit?' Verses 14 to 17: 'For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are the sons of God. For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by which we cry out, "Abba, Father". [Can you see that our first response to conviction is not, 'I am going to do it.' The first response to conviction is, 'Daddy, Daddy, I do not know. I cannot do this. Abba, Father.'] ... The Holy Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are a child of God... [The word is coming and proclaiming your sonship as you are proclaiming, 'Daddy, Daddy,' instead of 'Yes, I am going to do that.'] ... The Holy Spirit bears witness with your spirit, and He says, "Yes, you are a son of God, so long as you indeed suffer with Christ that you also may be glorified with Him." '

The Spirit who is bringing conviction to you and convincing you that you are a son of God is then leading you in the fellowship of ground that is bringing forth difficulties, and households where there is sorrow, grief and travail, and it is bearing the fruit of righteousness in you. That is what the Spirit is doing as you walk by the Spirit. Can you see this is a 'mind set on the Spirit'?

The fruit of that is going to be life and peace. Paul said, 'The Spirit Himself bears witness with our

spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together with Him.' We set our minds on the Spirit by asking for His help. He helps us to receive with meekness. If you have to ask for help, you are meek. Even Jesus asked for help. He helps us to receive with meekness the word through which we are planted in the body of Christ. That is James 1 verse 21. This is how we are yoked with Christ who is meek and lowly in heart, and we find rest for our soul by fulfilling our predestination. We are yoked to Christ who pioneered as King the pathway of salvation which He priests to us as a participation in His offering and sufferings. You see the work of Melchisedek, King-Priest in both the word that is coming to us, and then the priesting of the works that belong to that word.

I want to finish with Isaiah 50 verses 4 to 9. This is the way of discipleship. We are to hear as disciples because we humble ourselves to hear what the Spirit is saying morning by morning or season by season as we walk in the light of the word. By this means we are joined to the fellowship of Christ's atoning work which He priests to us to deliver us from our infirmity and to establish us in the righteousness that belongs to sonship. Isaiah 50 verses 4 to 9 says, 'The Lord God has given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him who is weary. [Instead of cursing coming out of my mouth in frustration, what is coming out of my mouth? A word for the weary; a word that is edifying]. He awakens me morning by morning, He awakens my ear to hear as the learned... [I would like to say, 'He awakens me to a new day.' But I think for many of us, He is also awakening us out of the malaise or the slumber that belongs to our carnality. It is the Spirit who is bringing conviction in relation to that, so that we do wake up from our flesh.] ... He awakens me morning by morning, He awakens my ear, to hear as the learned. The Lord God has opened my ear and I was not rebellious. [We are being able to hear the word and then it delivers us to a fellowship in suffering]. I gave my back to those who struck me [that is a chastening work], and my cheeks to those who plucked out my beard [that is dealing with our deviation or our iniquity]; I did not hide my face from shame and spitting. For the Lord

God will help me; therefore I will not be disgraced. [I am not going to be continually falling into the state of wretchedness]. Therefore I have set my face like flint, and I know that I will not be ashamed. He is near who justifies me; who will contend with me? Let us stand together... [This is returning to fellowship in our houses; from house to house; in the church; it is a fellowship of Yahweh; it is the kingdom of God]. ...Let us stand together. Who is my adversary? Let him come near me. Surely the Lord God will help me.' That is the help of the Holy Spirit.