

Godliness, self-judgment, self-control

Part 1

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[00:00:01] I'd like to read one or two passages of scripture to you. The first one being in the book of Ezra, Ezra chapter 9.

Ezra chapter 9.

Ezra chapter 9 and verse 4.

Ezra 9 verse 4.

Then were assembled unto me every one that trembled at the words of the God of Israel because of the transgression of those that had been carried away. And I sat astonished until the evening sacrifice. And at the evening sacrifice I arose up from my heaviness, and having rent my garment and my mantle, I fell upon my knees and spread out my hands unto the Lord my God, [00:01:01] and said, O my God, I am ashamed and blushed to lift up my face to Thee, my God, for our iniquities are increased over our head, and our trespass is grown up into the heavens.

Since the days of our fathers have we been in a great trespass unto this day, and for our iniquities have we, our kings and our priests, been delivered into the hand of the kings of the lands, to the sword, to captivity, and to a spoil and to confusion of face as it is this day. And now for a little space grace has been showed from the Lord our God to leave us a remnant to escape and to give us a nail in his holy place, that our God may lighten our eyes and give us a little reviving in our bondage. [00:02:05] For we were bondmen, yet our God hath not forsaken us in our bondage, but hath extended mercy unto us in the sight of the kings of Persia, to give us a reviving, to set up the house of our God and to repair the desolations thereof, and to give us a wall in Judah and in Jerusalem. And now, O our God, what shall we say after this?

For we have forsaken thy commandments. And then in the New Testament, the 11th chapter of 1 Corinthians, 1 Corinthians 11. 1 Corinthians 11 and verse 26.

[00:03:06] For as often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come. Wherefore, whosoever shall eat this bread and drink this cup of the Lord unworthily shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and

many sleep.

For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world. [00:04:07] Wherefore, my brethren, when ye come together to eat, tarry for one another. The second epistle of Peter, chapter 1 and verse 2. 2 Peter 1 and verse 2. 2 Peter 1 verse 2.

Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God and of our Lord Jesus Christ, according as his divine power hath given unto us things that pertain unto life and godliness through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue, whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, [00:05:04] having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, and to your virtue knowledge, and to knowledge temperance. And then lastly, the book of the Revelation, chapter 2.

Revelation chapter 2 and verse 1.

Revelation 2 verse 1.

Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write, These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks, [00:06:03] I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them who are evil.

And thou hast tried them who say they are apostles and are not, and hast found them liars, and hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted. Nevertheless, I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember, therefore, from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works, or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent. Chapter 3 verse 1.

[00:07:04] And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write, These things saith he that hath the seven spirits of God, and the seven stars, I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead. Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain that are ready to die, for I have not found thy works perfect before God. Remember, therefore, how thou hast received, and heard, and hold fast, and repent.

Verse 14.

And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write, These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God, [00:08:03] I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot. I would that thou wert cold or hot.

So then, because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth, because thou sayest, I am rich and increased with goods, and have need of nothing, Show us not that thou art wretched and miserable, and poor and blind and naked. I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich, and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear. And anoint thine eyes with eye salve, that thou mayest see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten, be zealous therefore, and repent. [00:09:03] Now can we sing another hymn? 182. O Lord, how blessed as day by day we pass along our pilgrim way, to know that

we are thine, thine through redemption's precious blood, which cleansed, which brought us nigh to God, in righteousness divine.

O Lord, in meek and godly fear, to follow and to serve thee here, do thou our hearts incline. 182. O Lord, how blessed as day by day we pass along our pilgrim way, to know that we are thine, [00:10:06] thine through redemption's precious blood, which cleansed, which brought us nigh to God, in righteousness divine.

Thine ever, thine to be with thee, for where thou art, thine alone must be.

Love will not be outlawed.

Love's resting place together share.

By the idols thou hast declared, [00:11:06] through grace to be thine alone.

O Lord, in meek and godly fear, to follow and to serve thee here, do thou our hearts incline to be for thee where thou hast been until we reach thee in that sea where thou wilt own us thine.

[00:12:01] Lord, may we always hold thy claim and overcome thee in thy name.

From earthliness be free, and by the daily love affair in living strength that path we tread, which leads us up to thee.

[00:13:12] I suppose it must be a true thing of us all that you read passages of scripture and you say to yourself, I don't really get any further than the surface there. I don't really understand what the link is.

And I freely confess that for many years I've had great difficulty in linking together 1 Timothy 3.16, the verse that begins great is the mystery of godliness, and what is said after that with the matter of godliness itself. [00:14:02] How do the two link together?

Well, I've reached the stage where I can't take any more books without getting rid of some of the books that I have. And it's very difficult to part with books and inevitably when you're trying to sort out the ones you would least miss, you finish up by reading them. And I happened about six or seven months ago to pick up a copy of Words of Truth.

Don't see many of them about at all really. I think it was a magazine of which F.J. Patterson was the editor.

But I quickly looked through the index and there was a heading, great is the mystery of godliness. So I turned it up and what I read there was absolutely worth its weight in gold.

[00:15:02] And when I read it I thought, that's the link. This is what the writer, there's no writer actually given, difficult to tell who it was. What he said was this, the truths which are given, god was manifest in the flesh, justified in the spirit, are not specific truths that relate to one thing.

The first one, god is manifest in the flesh, it's dealing with his own person. The second one is not talking about one specific part of his pathway. Very often that second statement is linked with his

baptism and angels were attendant on it. He said, it's talking about the whole of the pathway. And I read it down and it was what came at the end, which I think was worth its weight in gold. [00:16:01] He said, it is by these truths that god is known and it is from that knowledge that all godliness flows.

That was great help to me, that was. I could see the link as clear as a dye. And as I sat thinking about it, I remembered a statement that was made from this platform by John Blackburn nearly 20 years ago.

I don't know what it was he was speaking about, but he happened to be speaking about dispensations. The fact that god deals differently with his people in various days.

Recently we had some readings about it here. They're very necessary. I was in somebody's house a few years ago and I was in the bedroom where the library was and one morning I started having a look at the books and I tried the handle and it wouldn't open [00:17:02] so I couldn't get any of the books out. I was looking at the books totally unaware that the brother with whom I was staying was watching me.

And after about five or six minutes he said, are you surprised?

And I said, no, not really.

I'm not surprised at anything these days. But I have noted there's a marked preponderance of reform faith books.

He says, yes, I am not a believer in dispensations. I think it is puerile. John Blackburn was speaking about dispensations and at one point he broke off and he said this, there are some things that never ever change in any day of God's dealing, the principles of something never change and one of those is godliness. Godliness depends on matters like giving Christ the first place, [00:18:03] absolute obedience to God's word and then he said also a large helping of the spirit of self-judgment.

And it's about that that I want to speak this evening. What I want to do is look at some verses of scripture which speak very plainly about the matter of self-judgment and then an associated thing, the matter of self-control and then against that background to look at some of the issues that the Lord raises with three of the seven assemblies in Asia Minor.

The actual word self-judgment does not appear in the New Testament. The nearest to it is in the verses that we read from 1 Corinthians 11 where in verse 31 Paul writes, [00:19:10] if we would judge ourselves we should not be judged. Clearly the matter of self-judgment is one which is raised in that verse.

It's not only an Old Testament truth. I don't know anything about the language of the Old Testament but knowing a little bit about the language of the New Testament you can look at the translation that was made.

They say two or three hundred years before the Lord came and is in the language of the New Testament and so far as I can find the word self-judgment does not actually appear in the Old Testament. But in those verses that I read to you in Ezra chapter 9 there's no doubt that a man like Ezra [00:20:01] and when he appears on the scene of the writing of Ezra when he comes on what is

said about him Ezra prepared his heart to seek the law of God to do it and to teach in Israel statutes and commandments. That's an exemplary pattern.

Prepare your heart to learn to do and to teach and there isn't any doubt when you read those words it's very difficult sometimes to read those words without being moved by the spirit of the man who himself so open before God identifies with the nation and I was reading to you words that were words of self-judgment. He identified himself absolutely thoroughly with what the nation had done not only in the past but actually in the present despite the fact that God had given them an opportunity [00:21:03] they had forsaken his law and his commandments.

There are three chapter 9's in the Old Testament Ezra chapter 9, Nehemiah chapter 9 and Daniel chapter 9 and in each of them the spirit that comes out in the person who is speaking is the spirit of self-judgment. He doesn't speak about what his brethren have done only he speaks about what he has done and he identifies with them. The matter of self-judgment is a very clear one in the Old Testament and it's equally clearly raised by the Lord Jesus in the New Testament. You know sometimes I mean some of you may have misunderstood this but for years and years until only about two years ago and then when I was looking for something else did I understand how wrong I had been on one of the verses of scripture. [00:22:04] The beginning of Matthew 7 the Lord speaks and he says judge not that ye be not judged and then he raises this matter of taking the beam out of your own eye before you cast out the mote which is in your brother's eye. Now I always thought because I suppose the first time I heard somebody speak about that he said the mote is like the little speck of dust which is in the beam of the sun and so I thought the beam there was a beam of light and I was absolutely amazed when a couple of years ago I discovered quite accidentally that the beam is actually a beam of wood a plank of wood and it accentuates what the Lord is saying before you try to take the little speck out of your brother's eye take out that great plank of wood which is in your own [00:23:02] and they're very clear words and it wasn't only using that kind of image that the Lord addressed the same subject on another occasion right at the end of Mark's gospel he said he was talking about salt and when the salt loses its savour how is it going to be salted? and then right at the end he says have salt in yourselves and be at peace with others we so easily turn that round the other way we say about others they ought to be doing this and a very critical spirit can come into our hearts and sadly too often into our meetings rather than valuing one another we criticise one another but the Lord said have salt in yourselves put the principle of righteousness very strongly in your own conscience [00:24:05] there isn't any doubt that the Lord spoke very plainly about the matter of self-judgement probably one of the clearest parts in the epistles is the actual verses that I read to you and I want to look at them for a few moments it always appeals to me as one of the greatest favours that ever we can have in this world that is to respond very simply to the appeal of the Lord's love expressed on the night of his betrayal were a friend on his deathbed to ask you to undertake something you would be at great pains to fulfil the dying wish there cannot be anything that exercises a greater charm over our hearts than that which was expressed on the night of his betrayal [00:25:05] when the Lord said this do in remembrance of me but it's the later part I want to look at because every favour from God brings with it a consequent responsibility and it's also the clearest passage in the New Testament epistles which speaks of this matter of self-judgement I don't want to look at all the verses but I think I ought to say this very plainly because several times in past years when visiting people who've drifted away it's obvious that they misunderstand the words verse 27 wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread and drink this cup of the Lord unworthily shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord breaking the bread and drinking of the cup unworthily [00:26:05] is not because you're not worthy it means doing it in an unworthy manner the Corinthians some of them were going along to that sacred feast they did it under the influence of alcohol and Paul says that is doing it

unworthily and the person who does that unworthily eats and drinks judgement to himself it's nothing to do with our place by the work of God we are altogether fitted to remember him I'm not discounting the fact that it's important that we constantly exercise self-judgement and we constantly ask ourselves whether our lives day by day and the greater part of our lives by far is spent out of the company of one another whether in our lives day by day [00:27:03] we are living out those truths that we know that's the matter of drinking, eating or drinking unworthily it's not saying my life is not up to the standard I'm not worthy it's nothing to do with that it's talking about doing it in an unworthy manner I will say this some years ago I came out of a meeting breaking of bread it had not been a very happy meeting we don't have any vicars to blame if meetings don't reach that sense of the Lord's presence the responsibility is ours therefore it's extremely important how we come together we should always come together in living touch with the Son of God I came out of a meeting just ahead of me were a couple of older brothers and I heard one say to the other [00:28:01] I caught ten boxes of fish in the morning meeting and I thought to myself well perhaps that's one reason why it wasn't the happiest of meetings but I said to myself I wonder whether I by my being in touch or out of touch with the Lord was a contributor to a meeting like that but I particularly want to draw your attention to these words verse 31 and verse 32 if we would judge ourselves we should not be judged but when we are judged we are chastened of the Lord that we should not be condemned with the world anybody who looks at Young's Concordance or anybody who has little knowledge of the New Testament will know that as in English but to a greater far degree [00:29:02] prefixes are put to words I mean in English you have the word pose and so you have purpose, depose, repose, suppose the language of the New Testament does it in a much greater way and in verse 31 it says if we would judge ourselves it uses the basic word to judge but it uses a prefix and therefore it has the meaning of scrutinizing looking very closely I wonder often when we listen to the word of God being ministered do we go home and look at our lives and say I wonder to what degree that truth I enjoy and if I enjoy it do I live it in power and does it make an impact where I move day by day and then it goes on to say if we scrutinized ourselves [00:30:02] we would not be judged that's the plain word to judge then when we are judged we are disciplined of the Lord and anyone who looks up a concordance will know that discipline, the word discipline in the New Testament is the training up of a child what a great mercy that if we move out of the path and we need to be brought back and sometimes it can be done in a severe way it's always done in the light of the fact that we are children of the Father and we are disciplined as children are disciplined with this in view that we should not be condemned with the world and the word condemned there is the basic word for judge with another prefix and it has a very strong meaning and then you get these very sobering words [00:31:03] that we read a little earlier up in verse 30 for this cause many among you are weak and sickly and many sleep clearly in the New Testament the matter of self-judgment is raised alongside that there is another word which is raised and that is the word self-control the word is never actually translated as self-control it's always translated by the word temperate when I was a lad my early schooling was in a church school a Church of England school and certainly one of the mistresses who left an impression upon me was a believer I was going down the M6 a few years ago in my work and I found I had an hour spare so I came off and I went to the church [00:32:02] which was by the side of the school and the grounds of the churchyard were overgrown and I thought I knew roughly where this lady was buried I was totally unaware that there was a man watching me and after a while he says what do you want I said I'm just trying to find the gravestone of a lady called Miss Ethel Buchan oh he said come inside he said and we'll find the interment record and then he took me to it and when he took the grass away here it said Ethel Buchan departed to be with Christ and that woman left an impression on me and from early days impressions like that they never really leave you this matter of self-control it's like a number of other words in the New Testament [00:33:05] which mean a particular thing but are never translated that way some of us recently were at the funeral of a brother obviously was greatly respected a huge number

of people there and in the meeting room the brother who was taking that part of the service read the verses from 2 Corinthians 5 absent from the body present with the Lord and I think it's verse 9 where Paul says therefore we labor that whether present or absent we might be well-pleasing unto him well the word therefore we labor actually is a word which means to be ambitious it occurs three times in the New Testament is never translated that way self-control appears four times in the New Testament [00:34:01] and I read one of the occasions to you in the first chapter of 2 Peter but it's always translated as temperate I remember now why I referred to my school days one of the things that we had in our school was a man, they always used to call him alcoholic Joe but it was a man who came round twice a year and he talked to us all about the dangers of alcohol very plainly and certainly it weighed with me and it has ever since I don't think you can press from the scripture being teetotal but certainly the warning about excess drinking is very plainly there and you fail to heed it and you'll see the sad spectacles that we see in our land today if you think of temperance [00:35:02] that's what I always think of people not drinking but that's not what it is it's talking about self-control the actual noun self-control three times in the New Testament the verb is used once and if I can read it to you in the interlinear it's an excellent setting because it tells you what self-control is this is 1 Corinthians 9 and verse 25 and our authorised reads and every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things the interlinear reads but everyone that strives in all things controls himself in Galatians chapter 5 [00:36:01] it's spoken of as one of the fruits of the spirit there isn't any doubt that new birth gives life and life from God brings the ability to control ourselves I've read the words to you in Peter for this reason that where it's introduced in the epistle of Peter it follows the word knowledge and this is 2 Peter 1 and verse 5 beside all this giving all diligence and to your faith virtue and to virtue knowledge and to knowledge temperance clearly we have life from God that's spoken about in verse 3 all things that partake that pertain to life and godliness verse 4 where it speaks it uses the expression [00:37:01] partakers of the divine nature but it's important that there is diligence in making sure that the scriptures that we hear about are reflected in the way in which we live our lives it cannot be without note that the word self-control follows the word knowledge knowledge we get from the scriptures of truth self-control is making sure that those scriptures are reflected in our lives very plainly in scripture it speaks of self-judgement and it speaks of self-control and it's against that background that I'd very briefly like to look at the issues which are raised in the second and third chapters of the book of the revelation I'm not sure how worthy how trustworthy the chronology is of our authorised version [00:38:01] Bishop Usher's chronology I think it's called if it's right the time lapse between Paul writing the Ephesian epistle and John writing the revelation is from AD 62 to AD 96 34 years you'd hardly credit it would you that when Paul wrote to an assembly and he had nothing there to complain of he opened up his heart freely with everything that he'd received from the glory the highest and the best not just on an individual plane I don't know whether any of you get the magazine The Bible Leave Quarterly but the current issue condemns Darby's view of justification and I've been writing to the editor [00:39:03] of the magazine pointing out one or two things from scripture and if you talk to reform faith people and thank God for them they're absolutely four square on the essentials but you probably know that they look on the law as governing their life a person who tries to obey the law will always be disappointed Christianity is not looking at ourselves Christianity is looking at Christ and in Christ we're absolutely perfect and so you read the words in Ephesians chapter 1 that we're accepted in the beloved doesn't just say accepted in Christ not even accepted in Christ Jesus but accepted in the beloved and you say what is the measure of that acceptance you say it must be perfect that's where we stand before God where we are tonight we're accepted in the beloved [00:40:01] but not only that he opens up in the second chapter what pertains to the Christian company in a collective way so we're spoken there as being the habitation of God by the spirit 30 years after opening his heart with the highest and the best he writes to that assembly he commends things that are to be commended but right at the very heart of it he says these words I have against thee that thou hast left by first love

it's rather a shame that our authorised has put in italics the word somewhat because it tends to tone it down but first love and it may not be the first in time if it's an unusual word well not an unusual word but a word for first which really means the best kind so for example it is used in Luke 15 [00:41:02] as the best robe Paul uses it in the first epistle of Timothy as the chief of sinners it's of the very best quality that means Christ having undisputed sway in every part of our lives and our hearts are absolutely taken up with him you say that's normal Christianity yes it is but it would cease to be normal to the assembly where Paul had ministered the highest and the best and in verse 5 and these are the words that I'd like to draw your attention to because in these three assemblies and you probably would notice as I read the words the issue of repentance is raised in five of them I don't know whether anybody would remember but the late Jack Stoddart must be going back 20 years ago [00:42:02] but in an issue of scripture truth and he was the first one who drew it to my attention he had an article on the repentant saint and he took it from the second and third chapter of the book of the revelation and the Lord says to that assembly and it's like the mainspring of a watch everything may seem to be perfect outside all the things are still there but the very power that makes it go has gone and once Christ is out then it may be a while before it becomes apparent that there will be an ultimate drift away and the Lord says remember therefore from whence thou art fallen it's a wholesome thing really you know to look back and say where am I today in relation to where I was before remember therefore from whence thou art fallen [00:43:02] and repent and do the first works those works that the Lord commended were not the best first love and first works go hand in hand and he says do the first works or else I will come unto thee not quickly I don't think the the Lord deals hastily some while ago I was talking to a brother about something that I felt pretty strongly about and I said to him you know God doesn't deal hastily hastiness is not a way of God's dealing there's an example of it in Thyatira I gave her space to repent hasty dealing is not God's way, he's patient the Lord says remember from whence thou art fallen and repent and do the first works or else I will come unto thee [00:44:02] and remove thy candlestick out of his place there's no Christian testimony in Ephesus today can't think of the read Andrew there's a brother who serves the Lord in Izmir the old Smyrna and he says no there is no Christian testimony today in Ephesus seven times the Lord uses the words he that hath an ear let him hear what the spirit is saying unto the assemblies has the Lord's voice a word to us today about the matter of first love in chapter three I read to you the words to Sardis just two things I really want to speak about [00:45:02] verse two be watchful and strengthen the things that which remain which are ready to die I don't know whether it's still done but certainly in the early years in my connection with the meetings I may have picked up a wrong accentuation but whether it was said openly or not you got the impression that Thyatira that's the catholic church Sardis that's the protestant church Philadelphia that's the brethren may not have been said that way but that was the impression you get could you find words that so describe where we are at the moment strengthen the things that remain which are ready to die they're not words for protestants they're words for us today and the Lord says [00:46:02] for I have not found thy words perfect before God I think the first person who drew this to my attention was John Blackburn and he was I think it was in a series that was dealing with the truth of the church and he said it must be noteworthy that the word which is used here for perfect is a word which means complete and it's exactly the same word which is used in Colossians 1 verse 23 or thereabouts where the apostle says to the assembly in Colossae that to him was given the dispensation to complete the word of God what was it that completed the word of God for Paul was not the last writer of the [00:47:02] last book in the canon of the new testament but what he did what he did write about was that which he received from heaven about the truth of the assembly someone gave me a few weeks ago an interesting book of George Muller and George Muller was referring to the days when to stand up for the truth of God was very costly I want to refer to that in a moment but in it it was talking about the Bartholomew massacre that was when it was absolutely appalling the way that it was done that was when the catholic church in France

slaughtered one knight and it was in the dead of night when it took pass the large numbers of the Protestants [00:48:02] I don't know whether you would remember this but when the gulf war was taking place the British general was called general de la billiere he can trace his lineage right back to the Huguenots who came over those that were able to escape came to Britain and brought with them a tremendous amount of skill when nations deal hardly with the saints of God they lose a tremendous amount when they drive them away, they drive them away they drive away people who have ability they drive away people who have standards of integrity they drive away people who work hard but when you were reading all these things I said to myself what a tremendous debt we owe to the reformers but with all the preparedness to say that they seem to have no light at all about the true calling and nature of God's assembly [00:49:02] they don't believe in the distinct calling of the assembly they believe that all believers right back as far as Adam to the last one that will be gathered in before the at the point that the Lord comes again for us that's the whole assembly mixes up Old Testament call and that but I want to raise the issue with us tonight, how much do we know about it, to what degree do we treasure it there isn't any doubt that in the New Testament it's expected that as Christians we grow you've only got to look at 1 John 2 where the apostle speaks to babes, to young men and fathers, it's expected that there's some degree of maturing the epistle to the Hebrews Paul speaks about wanting to be in a position where he could give them strong meat but they were only in a position [00:50:02] where they should where they were able to take milk rather than strong meat the New Testament plainly expects as believers that we grow and we mature and when you read these words I have not found thy works perfect before my God isn't it a thing that we ought to do a little bit of heart searching about how much do we know and treasure the truth of God's assembly to what degree does it colour our attitude towards our fellow brethren in fact to every other believer because if that assembly is precious to Christ and there is no doubt that in the New Testament it's plainly taught then every part of it ought to be precious to us but it's very costly the apostle goes on and uses these words, he says remember therefore how thou hast received and hold [00:51:02] fast and repent it doesn't say remember what thou hast received but remember therefore how thou hast received having a bit more time to read than I used to have, I took down recently the book about William Farrell and he was misjudged there isn't any doubt about that when you read the book about him he was always thought as being a person who was too finickety in fact when you read the account of him, what he tried to do was to bring people back to the supremacy of the scriptures, not ideas that developed but the pure plain word of God and ultimately his strenuous efforts resulted in him and many others losing their lives bringing it a little more up to date [00:52:02] two years ago was it?

I don't know what it would be 1542 so we're talking about the 50th the 450th anniversary of Tyndall William Tyndall very few people know about him about 10 years ago a book came out the title is unfortunate really because it puts people off but it's a splendid book absolutely well worth reading it's called God's Outlaw and I think it is in print again, it's gone through a number of issues recently a much more detailed volume was written and was very expensive so I borrowed one from a friend the first volume is by far the better it's written by somebody who obviously was not just a believer [00:53:02] but sympathized with a man who had one thing in front of him right from the very beginning he was a tutor to some titled person's children somewhere in Gloucester and in those days the Catholics held sway Tyndall had been reading the scriptures he obviously had some contact with the reformers at Oxford and one night at a dinner there was a Roman Catholic dignitary and he said things and Tyndall in a very restrained way pointed out that was not what the scriptures said and this Catholic dignitary said I would that God's word gave way to the Pope's word and Tyndall said if God give me my desire the day will come when the boy who walks over the leaf following the plough will know more of God's word than thou dost and that's how he spent his life and every time [00:54:02] you pick

up your New Testament thank God because 90% of the New Testament came from the pen of William Tyndall he coined new words the Passover did not exist it was his word that he introduced and quite a number of other words as well but his life was always on the run he realized that he couldn't achieve what he wanted to do in England and so he fled to the continent and as soon as he fled to the continent Henry the 8th made sure that all the ports in England were patrolled so that any of his testaments that were coming in were seized in fact England had a couple of hauling harvests and so they needed corn so badly that the ports couldn't take it in so what was said was wherever you can [00:55:02] get in bring corn and in the smaller creeks and crannies of the south coast when the bags of corn came in inside was Tyndall's New Testament they burned them and for everyone that they burned because they had to buy them from the people to burn them another 10 could be printed but that man when he was 42 was martyred remember therefore how thou hast received living out the truth of God is not an easy thing, it's costly it's costly in terms of your job it's costly in terms of your reputation and the Lord says to Sardis remember therefore how thou hast received and hold fast and repent in bringing it to a close in the third chapter of the book of the revelation the Lord speaks to the [00:56:02] assembly of Laodicea I probably ought to have said something about the way in which the Lord presents himself but it's opportune just to make one comment here it says these He brings Seth the Amen the faithful and true witness and the beginning of the creation of God the Amen I think is very plain isn't it someone who says so be it and that's what the Lord did no matter what the cost was he said Amen and laid down his life he was a faithful and true witness he has a right to address an assembly that wasn't faithful and true and he's also the beginning of the creation of God it's an interesting word the word beginning it's a word that doesn't necessarily mean the thing that you start with but it's the thing that you have [00:57:02] in mind the best illustration is when you build a house you don't start with a roof that's what you want to do ultimately you want to get a roof over you but you start with sound foundations and then you build sturdy walls and the last thing that goes on is the roof that goes over the top the roof over your head that's what the word means when it says the beginning of the creation of God and I think what it's simply saying is what this creation always had in mind from the beginning was the fact that Christ should come and one day should reign supreme and every Christian heart says Lord haste that day and he's the one who says to Laodicea because thou art neither cold nor hot I will spew thee out of my mouth there isn't any doubt about the fact that [00:58:02] to be lukewarm is absolutely obnoxious to the Lord you could scarcely get words with greater pathos could you because thou art neither cold nor hot I will spew thee out of my mouth but at the end he says these words as many as I love I rebuke and discipline be zealous therefore and repent. Marvellous that isn't it when he raises with the first assembly the love that gradually was fading away at the end he speaks of a love that never changes as many as I love I rebuke and discipline be zealous therefore and repent now there are some fairly weighty issues raised in those words to the assemblies aren't there and I think [00:59:02] we've established from scripture that it is the matter of self-judgement and self-control and whatever way those things come to you there isn't any shadow of doubt as far as I'm concerned that they're issues which are addressed to each one of us as individuals today he that hath an ear let him hear what the spirit is saying unto the assemblies and may God grant that the deep spirit of self-judgement and self-control might produce within us a proper response to what the Lord has to say to us