

Sins of Omission

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When we first came into the Church—for most of us it was decades ago—one of the first things we learned that there is a way that seems right to a man or a woman, but that way ends in death. That's one of the first things Mr. Armstrong pounded into us. That's in Proverbs 14 verse 12. I'm just going to list these Scriptures. We won't turn there.

And then we found out that human nature, that the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. That's in Jeremiah 17:9. These are some of the basic Scriptures that we memorized when we first came into the Church. And then that theme was carried forward in the New Testament. Romans 8 and verse 5 and several verses after that, but the carnal mind is the New International says, 'hostile toward God.' And we began to learn that about ourselves.

And then we found in Romans 3 and verse 23 that all of us have sinned. Lest there be any confusion and we think "No, I'm not that bad," or "I haven't sinned." The Bible clearly says that all of us sinned. And in 1 John 3 and verse 4, we found that what sin was. Sin is the transgression of God's Law. And we began to understand the weight and importance of God's Law, but then the real clincher was in Romans 6:23 when we found that the wages of sin is death. And all of a sudden that sends a new urgency on what we're learning because if we continue in sin, we're all going to die.

But then the good news was as we find in several places in Revelation that we're told that if we can overcome, to him that overcomes is going to be a pillar in My Church, is going to be a pillar in the Temple of God. And so, there was hope for us. And we began to look very carefully at the Ten Commandments, look very carefully at God's Law.

And we began, as we first came in the Church, in the succeeding months and the first few years that we identified specific sins and we stopped doing them. And for some people, it was smoking and so they had to go through the agony of not smoking, stopping smoking. Breaking the Sabbath, working on the Sabbath and many people gave up jobs and for that and for the Holy Days. Some people who had a drinking problem began to recognize that and either cut out drinking entirely or toned it back a little bit because they had a problem. And then all of us, obviously, changed our diet because of clean and unclean meats. And we recognized what was food and what wasn't food and we made the appropriate changes.

And many of us had to change our language. I grew up and my dad grew up on a ranch and his language to put it most kindly was "salty." And then went to military school and military school about every third word is a bad word. And then go into the military and that carries forward. And when I came into the

Church, my language was just filthy, just foul! And you didn't think anything about it. It was just the environment you were in. And all of a sudden, you wake up and say, "Oh boy! I've got to stop doing some stuff here."

And so we stopped doing things that were sinful. We stopped committing sinful acts. Now with that in mind, we haven't got to the subject yet. Let's go to Ephesians chapter 4 and we're going to begin in verse 23. We identified things in our behavior that were wrong. And we were sinning and we repented of those sins and we ceased that behavior or began to cease the behavior. Sometimes it was in fits and starts, and some of us were faster than others. Ephesians 4 verse 23, notice what this says. This is the process we went through then and are going through now.

Ephesians 4:23. *And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; (KJV)*

Meaning: Have a new spirit up here between the ears. Have a new spirit!

Ephesians 4:24. *And that [you] put on the new man [or the new woman], which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. (KJV)*

So we began to try to take on the righteousness and the holiness of God and Christ in our lives, in our thoughts and our deeds, in our mind, in our heart and replace the old man and the old woman with the new man and the new woman.

Then in verse 25, notice what it says.

Ephesians 4:25. *Wherefore [because we want to put on the new man or the new woman] putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor: for we are members one of another. (KJV)*

Again, our neighbor is just what it says. It's our neighbor. Not just Church members.

Verse 26:

Ephesians 4:26. *Be angry, and [don't] sin: [and don't] let the sun go down upon your wrath: (KJV)*

So if we had a short temper, we began to try to curtail that.

Verse 27:

Ephesians 4:27. *[Don't] give place to the devil [by not getting rid of the wrath and the anger]. (KJV)*

Verse 28:

Ephesians 4:28. *Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that [needs]. (KJV)*

Support your family and have enough left over to give to those in need.

Verse 29:

Ephesians 4:29. *Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, (KJV)*

We began to evaluate. I certainly did of all the corruption that came out of my mouth. He says:

Ephesians 4:29b. *...but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. (KJV)*

We began to see that maybe we had a tendency to gossip or we had a tendency to put other people down and we made changes in our life.

Verse 30, it says:

Ephesians 4:30. *And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby [you] are sealed unto the day of redemption. (KJV)*

He says, "You don't want to grieve God's spirit, go against God's spirit."
Therefore:

Ephesians 4:31. *Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: (KJV)*

Malice is a motive. Malice means you want to get somebody. You want to put somebody down. So it deals not only with the words that come out or the deeds, but with the motives behind those deeds. And he says, "Don't have malice towards God's people or anybody for that matter."

So we began to identify and put away our sinful deeds as we came into God's Church.

Now, with the Passover two weeks away from tomorrow and the Spring Holy Days rapidly approaching, what we want to do is turn our attention to a different type of sin because the sins that I've been talking about are things we did. And they're right out there and you begin to recognize them and you begin to put them away. But there's a more insidious kind of sin that we want to talk about today.

Let's go to Hebrews chapter 3 and verse 13.

There is a characteristic of sin that should just shake us to our boots, as—John was pointing out in the sermonette—we begin to evaluate ourselves. Hebrews 3 and verse 13 says:

Hebrews 3:13. *But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through [and this is what we're getting at] the deceitfulness of sin. (KJV)*

If we get into a pattern of sin, in and of itself it is deceitful. It can trick us. It can put blinders on us. And we have to be very careful that we go to God at this time of the year and ask to have our sins revealed as painful as that is. None of us wants to be corrected. None of us wants to have light shined on our sins and shortcomings, but we should be praying to God that "Please put Your spotlight on my sins so I can see them and I can repent."

But notice what David said in Psalm 19 and verse 12. David, as we all know, had some serious hidden sins and faults that came out over time, but he understood that. Psalm 19 and verse 12, David says:

Psalm 19:12. *Who can understand his errors? (KJV)*

Sometimes we have a hard time understanding our sins and our errors. But in light of that question, he says:

Psalm 19:12b. *[C]leanse [You] me from secret faults. (KJV)*

Or secret sins or secret errors.

The Hebrew for secret means "to conceal or to hide or to keep secret."

And so what we want to do at this time, focus our mind and our attention, led by God's holy spirit to those secret sins we have, those hidden faults that we have, those shortcomings that we have because we want to change to be the new person so we can marry Jesus Christ.

And we often don't realize that the type of sin I'm going to talk about, we don't realize the nature of this sin until we've been in the Church awhile, till we've, let's say, grown and matured a bit and gone past the milk onto the meat of God's Word, gone past the relative easy stuff of writing out a tithe check or not going into work on the Sabbath or not eating ham with your scrambled eggs. This is far more insidious, far more difficult than those because, as I said in the beginning of the introduction, we begin our journey into God's Church by ceasing to do certain things. Things we've been doing all our lives, if they're sinful, we stop doing them.

But let me pose to the question as we get to the subject. "Can we sin by not doing something?" Now, think about that. Can we sin by not doing something or omitting to do something? This is not just a blatant doing something and then we see it and repent, but can we sin by not doing something? So the subject we want to discuss today is *The Sins of Omission*, sins we can commit by not doing a certain thing.

Now, these sins are far more difficult to deal with and to recognize because it's not something we overtly do. If a foul word slips out of your mouth, it's there for the whole world to hear. And you get down on your knees and you repent of it.

Or somebody gets angry and says something they shouldn't say, it's right there. But a sin that you don't do—I mean, excuse me—an act you don't make or an operation you don't take is not out there. It can be a sin because you don't do something. And, therefore, it's harder to recognize and harder to see.

We can sin by what we do not do. Let's go to Luke chapter 10.

I've had the flu for the last three weeks and this is in the downhill side of it. And I have this cough that just will not quit. So, pardon me if I cough in your ears and drink some water. I've got a cough drop stuck down in here that I hope will help a little bit.

Okay, this is the most blatant example that Christ gave us of how we can sin by not doing something. Luke chapter 10 beginning in verse 25, and this was a situation where a lawyer stood up and they were trying to mess Christ up and trick Him. And, of course, they failed utterly.

Luke 10:25. *And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him [or tested Him], saying, Master, what [can] I do to [have] eternal life? (KJV)*

Well, that's a logical question. It's a good question. So Christ said unto him in verse 26:

Luke 10:26b. *What is written in the law? [How do you perceive it? How do you read it? How do you understand it? (KJV)*

In verse 27, the lawyer said:

Luke 10:27b. *[You shall] love the Lord [your] God with all [your] heart, and with all [your life], and with all [your] strength, and with all [your] mind; and [your] neighbor as [yourself].*
28) *And [then] he said unto him [Christ said], [You have] answered [correctly]: [He said, Go do it!] This do, and [you shall] live. (KJV)*

And in verse 29:

Luke 10:29. *But he [the lawyer], willing to justify himself, (KJV)*

The Greek word for "justify" means "to render innocent." In other words, he wasn't totally convinced about what he was hearing and he wanted to ask a question to make sure that what he had been doing in the past he was innocent from sin. And he said unto Jesus, willing to justify himself, he says, "Well, who's my neighbor?" because he obviously had a problem that he would love certain people but not other people.

Verse 30, now Christ is answering the question "Who is my neighbor?" So Jesus said, as He typically would, He taught by a parable. And this parable teaches the lesson in many, many ways. It's a marvelous teaching tool. So He said:

Luke 10:30. *A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, (KJV)*

He said, "He went down." That's literally true because from Jerusalem to Jericho is seventeen miles and you drop thirty-three hundred feet in altitude. Jericho's below sea level. And so that's a big climb if you're going up to Jerusalem. And going down, it's a bit easier, but it was a very narrow, winding, rocky road as you're going down the side of this mountain.

Luke 10:30b. ...and [he] fell among thieves, (KJV)

Well, obviously, there were places along that road where thieves could hide and then jump on somebody. He said:

Luke 10:30 continued. ...[they] stripped him of his [garments], [they] wounded him, [they left him] half dead. (KJV)

Meaning, he was lying on the side of the road and could have been perceived as dead.

Verse 31:

Luke 10:31. And by chance there came down [coming down the mountain] a certain priest... (KJV)

Now, since he was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, Jericho was a Levitical city and there were thousands of Levites and priests that lived in Jericho. So he obviously had finished his duties at the temple and he was going home to Jericho. And so, as he was walking down, he came across this guy laying there, maybe moaning, maybe rolling over or maybe just out cold.

Luke 10:31. [And He said] a certain priest [came] that way: and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. (KJV)

Now, some have said, "Well, yeah but he didn't want to go there because if it was a dead body and he touched the dead body, then he would be defiled and he couldn't do his priestly duties." The fact is he was going downhill, Jerusalem behind him. He had already finished his priestly duties. So that's not an issue.

So, he just went by on the other side, didn't even stop! Verse 32:

Luke 10:32. And likewise a Levite, (KJV)

Meaning: "likewise" going downhill, who had also finished his tour of duty at the Temple.

Luke 10:32b. ...when he was at the [same] place, came and looked on him, (KJV)

At least he walked over and looked at the guy! The priest didn't.

Luke 10:32 continued. ...and [he] passed by on the other side. (KJV)

He looked and then walked away and went on the other side of the road and went on his way.

Luke 10:33. *But a certain Samaritan, (KJV)*

Now this is important because it's interesting Christ chose to illustrate this with the name "Samaritan" and referring to a group of individuals that were brought in when the Northern Ten Tribes were taken captive by the Assyrians. They came in and they kept a form of the true religion at the time, but they incorporated all kinds of previously learned things and worship concepts from pagans all around them. It was a polluted form of religion. And so when you said "Samaritan" all the Jews would immediately know that you've got this guy that believes in a polluted, perverted form of the truth. And so it came to be a term of derision. It came to be somebody that the Jews would look down upon.

Today, if Christ were to give this parable today, He would probably instead of using the word "Samaritan," which we would know nothing about, would probably say, "Muslim." And everybody would immediately know what He was referring to—somebody that the average populace looked down upon or was antagonistic to or hostile to.

Luke 10:33. *[So,] a certain Samaritan [came down, and] as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion... (KJV)*

The only one to have compassion!

Luke 10:34. *And [he] went to him, [he] bound up his wounds [physical acts], [poured] in oil and wine, set him on his own [animal], brought him to an inn, and took care of him. (KJV)*

He could have bound up the wounds and then just left and gone on his way, but he went above and beyond. Put him on his own animal. Put him in his own car, we would say today. Drove him to a hospital or drove him to a hotel and took care of him and, then, spent the night there with him, probably delaying his trip home for a day, a night.

And then in the morning, verse 35, when he departed, he took out some money, gave it to the host and said to him:

Luke 10:35b. *Take care of him; and whatsoever [you spend] more, when I come again, I will repay [you]. (KJV)*

And then, Christ, I'm sure paused and turned to this young lawyer, and He says:

Luke 10:36. *[Tell me] Which [one] of these three, was [the] neighbor [to the man that was hurt by] the thieves? (KJV)*

Now notice what the lawyer said.

Luke 10:37. *And he [the lawyer] said, He that showed mercy on him.
(KJV)*

You notice he wouldn't even say the name "Samaritan!" You would normally say, "Well, the Samaritan." But they were so reviled that they wouldn't even speak their name. And then, notice what Jesus said. "Hey, go imitate the Samaritan. Go do what he did." Of course, that was a slap in the face! Christ was using an example. "This man that you hate or this group of people that you hate, this one individual did something righteous, you go imitate his behavior and understand who your neighbor is."

So Christ though was saying to us today, "What about those other two people, the priest and the Levite, well-respected in the Jewish community? What did they do?" Christ was saying, "They sinned by something they did not do." They should have showed compassion. They should have stopped. They should have helped. They should have paid some money to make this man right, but they didn't. And, therefore, they were not justified. They were not in right standing with God because of something they did not do. They had the opportunity to do something, but they chose not to.

And, we have to ask, of course, ourselves, "Would I stop and help today? Would I do that? If I didn't, then that would be a sin of omission on my part."

And in this case, the sin was not in what they did, but rather what they did not do.

Now, I'm not saying—just so people don't misunderstand—I'm not seeing you see some guy waving at you at the side of the road. You've got to be very careful that you're not set up to get robbed also. So, we have to use wisdom, but the fact is that we also are required, because of the love of God, godly love in us, to show mercy and compassion.

And in this case, these men, the Levite and the Priest were criticized by Christ because they didn't. They sinned by something they did not do—sinned by not doing specific things that God tells us that we should be doing. And that's something that maybe it would be good between now and the Passover we look at ourselves and say, "Have I sinned not just on what I've done, but have I sinned on things that maybe I haven't done that I should have done."

So, we're going to spend the rest of the time in the sermon asking the question: What are some typical sins of omission? We can probably sit and think of dozens and dozens, but we're going to cover seven of them. The first one ties in with John's sermonette.

I. We can sin by not praying or not studying.

And, as I mentioned last time in "Preparing for the Passover," I mentioned that our lives are so complicated these days. Satan wants to crowd out every minute of time with frivolous, irrelevant stuff so that we don't have time to do what is right, to do what God wants us to do. And time becomes a problem. And the

physical can crowd out the spiritual—the television set, the internet, and on and on and on. All physical things can crowd out the spiritual things.

Let's go to James 5 and verse 16. John quoted that in his sermonette. We'll read it because it's very important that we can sin by not praying as we should. James 5 and verse 16, we are told:

James 5:16. *Confess your [sins or your] faults one to another, (KJV)*

Don't be afraid because we're all human. We all sin. We all make mistakes. He says:

James 5:16b. *...and pray one for another, that [you] may be healed. (KJV)*

Then he says:

James 5:16 continued. *The effectual [or very effective] fervent prayer of a righteous [person avails] much. (KJV)*

So, let me ask the question: We have people on the updates that some are healed fairly quickly and some are still suffering. We have a number that are still suffering—a number with cancers or pain or whatever. Let's ask the question: Is God waiting to heal one of those people because He's waiting for me personally to pray for them? And I haven't or I haven't done it enough. Or they're not enough on my mind and so God is saying, "I'm going to withhold healing until enough of My people get down on their knees and pray for this person and then I will heal them." It has nothing to do with faith. It has nothing to do with the individual that's sick. God is using that sickness to stir us up where He is saying, "When enough of My people get concerned enough and pray enough, then I will heal."

It's a question we need to ask ourselves, because sometimes we get so busy with things that we just forget about people. And, as we say, they slip between the cracks and we don't pray for them. And I believe—I'm not saying I have no idea of the percentage on it—I believe sometimes God says, "I'll heal when you respond. I'll heal when you can get on your knees and ask Me for one of your brothers or sisters to be healed. Then I'll heal."

Let's go to Matthew chapter 5 talking about prayer. We'll read verses 43 through 45, Matthew 5 verses 43 through 45. Christ was reorienting their thinking and doing this on His very first sermon. He says:

Matthew 5:43. *[You've] heard that [it's] been said, [You shall] love [your] neighbor, and hate [your] enemy.*

44) But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless [those] that curse you, do good to [those] that hate you, and pray for [those] which [spitefully] use you, and persecute you;

45) That... (KJV)

In other words, if you do that—pray for those that count you as an enemy:

Matthew 5:43. *That [you] may be the children of your Father [who] is in heaven: for he [makes] his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and [sends] rain on the just and on the unjust. (KJV)*

So, again, we ask the question: Could God allow us to be spitefully used and persecuted—unjustly even—to see if after the event occurs and we're persecuted unjustly to see if we will pray for those who persecute us as a trial and test for us? Because, when we're persecuted, especially unjustly, we whine and moan and cry, "Why me?" and "How can this be?" and "Why are You doing this to me, God?" And God could be saying to us, "Look, I'm allowing this to happen because I want to see what you do with it afterward. I want to see if you will get down on your knees and pray for your enemies. And I'm going to give you an opportunity to do that."

So we can sin by withholding the prayer for our enemy. We can sin by withholding the prayer for somebody who is suffering. And only God knows.

Now, we won't turn there, but 2 Timothy 2:15 we know that by heart. It says, "Study to show yourself approved of God." And that word "approved" is a derivative of the Greek word *dokimos*, which means to be legitimate. And if we don't study, it makes us not legitimate, not dokimos. Because God says, "I want you to study to show Me that you can be a legitimate Christian. That you are a legitimate Christian because if you're a legitimate Christian, you want to learn about Me. Therefore, you want to study, but if I see that you are not studying, that tells Me that you don't want to be a legitimate Christian. It's not that big a deal to you." And so sin can make us not dokimos or not approved or not legitimate.

And, of course, in our prayer life and in our study life, basically only God knows. That's between us and God. None of us in the room knows what the other person's prayer life or study life is actually like, but God does. So, we can sin by withholding prayer. We can sin by not studying. And we need to evaluate ourselves at this time of year to see if that's indeed the case.

That was the First One. Second:

II. We can sin by withholding love, I mean godly love, *agape* love.

Husbands and wives can withhold affection as punishment or frankly vengeance. Somebody steps on somebody else's toes and they get their feelings hurt. And, then, all of a sudden, there's ice in the room. And there's no affection. There's no love. And one turns the back on the other and they're signaling their displeasure by withholding love and affection. And we can sin by doing that.

Family and friends not speaking to each other—holding a grudge! Sometimes for years, sometimes for decades holding grudges, not speaking, not associating; neighbors the same way.

Mr. Armstrong said for years; he had it and we didn't realize it. He said "Godly love, *agape* love is outgoing concern for the other person." He said that how many times! And he said, "I'll stop preaching it when you start getting it." And we didn't get it! Because godly love is always looking out for the benefit of the other! Whether it's a mate, a friend, a neighbor, somebody in the grocery store, it's always looking for the benefit of the other. And we can sin by withholding that love, not expressing that love.

Look at 1 Corinthians 13 and verse 5—what we call the "Love Chapter." Notice what it says. Mr. Armstrong understood this very clearly. 1 Corinthians 13 and verse 5, notice what he says. Paul is telling us, talking about love. Verse 5, 1 Corinthians 13, it says:

1 Corinthians 13:5. [Love] does not behave itself unseemly, [seeks] not her own, (KJV)

Love always seeks the benefit of the other person. It is outgoing concern for others.

Now that was in the Bible from the beginning. Let's go to Proverbs 17 and verse 17 and see about friends, how friends should treat one another. Proverbs 17 and verse 17, I quoted this several weeks ago on a sermon about friendship. Proverbs 17 verse 17, it says:

Proverbs 17:17. A friend [loves] at all times, (KJV)

Now that's telling us—it's not saying, "Well, a friend loves when it's convenient." Or "a friend loves when the friend gets something in return." No. It says, "A friend loves always, all times"—a true friend.

And then we are told that we should not just above and beyond friendship—Let's go to Philippians 2 and verse 3 and see something astounding that sometimes we forget. Philippians 2 and verse 3, Paul is trying to keep people from having conflict in the Churches and he's giving us some advice. He says in Philippians 2 and verse 3:

Philippians 2:3. Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; (KJV)

Because we want to call attention to ourselves or we want to puff up ourselves. In other words, he's saying, "But let everything be done:"

Philippians 2:3b. ...in lowliness of mind [and] let each esteem [the] other better than [ourselves]. (KJV)

And if we don't do that, we're withholding love. If we could take an action that shows somebody that we esteem them better than ourselves and we refuse to do it, then we can sin by not doing something is my point.

We can sin by not calling to see if somebody is well, because we're so selfish and wrapped up in ourselves. We can sin by not making the visit, not making the

telephone call, not sending the card and, as in Point Number One, not making the prayer. So, we can sin when Paul tells us we have to esteem others better than ourselves. If we say, "No, I don't have the time," or "I want to watch this TV show," or "I want to go out and do this or do that," then what we're doing is we're esteeming ourselves better than them. And Paul says, "You can't do that." And that's a sin. And so, let's understand that we can sin by withholding love from family members, church members, and our neighbors, by not doing something we should be doing.

The Third Area is that:

III. We can sin by withholding help and support.

Look at the example of the Samaritan and the priest and the Levite. The priest and the Levite, the two allegedly religious ones, withheld support, withheld help. It was not convenient. They wanted to get home or they hadn't seen their family in a while. Or didn't want to get involved in this, they didn't want to spend the money. They didn't want to take the time.

So, we can sin by withholding love and support. And in Ephesians 4 and verse 32—let's go there—Paul tells us to do just the opposite. Just the opposite! This is a demonstration of godly love. Ephesians 4 and verse 32, he said:

Ephesians 4:32. *And be [you] kind one to another, (KJV)*

Christ said to the lawyer, "Which was the kindest one? Who exhibited the kindness here?" He says, "Be kind to one another, be tenderhearted." The man lying in the ditch bleeding, your heart goes out to him or the heart turns cold and you walk around on the other side of the road.

He says:

Ephesians 4:32b. *... [be] tenderhearted, forgiving one another, (KJV)*

When somebody hurts you or offends you, godly love is easy to forgive. There's another Scripture that says, "Be easily entreated." If somebody comes to you and said, "You hurt me." And then you, rather than getting out your sword and started hacking away, you say, "Well how? What did I do? I don't want to do that. Tell me so I can change. I can repent."

And he says, "Do these things because:

Ephesians 4:32 continued. *...Christ's [has] forgiven you. (KJV)*

"And if Christ has forgiven us of the heinous things we've done," Paul is saying, "shouldn't we forgive our neighbor who has done far less to us?" And, so, we can sin by withholding tenderheartedness, withholding forgiveness, withholding kindness. And when we do that, it's not like a blatant sin. It's not something like a foul word or an outburst of temper. It's just something we don't do, could have done it, would have done it, should have done it, but didn't. And that's harder to

recognize. It's harder to go back in our life and say, "Okay, what could I have done that I didn't do?"

Look at Proverbs 3 and verse 27. People say, "Ah, the Old Testament! It's done away with, shouldn't read it. Don't pay any attention to it," but themes run between the Old and the New. This is a perfect example. Proverbs 3 and verse 27, we're told:

Proverbs 3:27. Withhold not good from them to whom it is due, (KJV)

Now the guy bleeding in the ditch, do you think it was due him some good to help him out of his situation? Well, of course! And so, even the Proverbs say "Don't withhold good when somebody needs good." He says:

Proverbs 3:27. [Don't] withhold good from them to whom it is due, when it is in the power of [your] hand to do it. (KJV)

And all three had the power to do it. They had the time. They had the energy. Probably had the money, and they could have done it, but two of them chose not to. And they sinned in choosing not to.

Now, let's go to chapter 21, Proverbs 21. We're going to read verse 13 and then jump to verse 25 and 26. Proverbs 21, notice what we're told.

Proverbs 21:13. Whoso [stops] his ears at the cry of the poor, (KJV)

When the poor are crying because of hunger and we put our hands over our ears because we don't want to hear it, "It's inconvenient. I've got other things I need to do," he said:

Proverbs 21:13. Whoso [stops] his ears at the cry of the poor, he also shall cry himself, but shall not be heard. (KJV)

What we're being told here is you reap what you sow. We don't help others; there will come a day when we need help and somebody's not going to help us.

Jumping to verse 25:

Proverbs 21:25. The desire of the slothful [the lazy person kills] him; for his hands refuse to labor. (KJV)

The lazy person wouldn't bend over in the ditch and help this guy there because he's lazy. He's slothful. He just doesn't want to be bothered by it.

Verse 26:

Proverbs 21:26. He [that covets] greedily all the day long: but the righteous [gives] and [spares] not. (KJV)

And the Samaritan didn't spare a thing. He could have stopped at any point. He could have bandaged the wounds and then left. He could have put him on a donkey and then took him to an innkeeper and said, "He's your problem now," but he didn't. He spent the night with him—didn't have to do that. And then the next day, he could have just left, cut out, not worried about it, but he gave the innkeeper money. And then he could have cut out figuring that "Well, if it's going to cost more than this, but that's not my problem." He said, "No, the next time I come back, if you spend anymore, I will reimburse you," as though it was his responsibility.

In God's eyes it is our responsibility!

So, here in the Third Point, we can sin by withholding help and support. The onus is on us that we must care enough to know who needs help. We've got to have enough concern for others and be good enough friends that we know who needs help and then we can give that help. And what Christ is trying to tell us is we can sin by not giving the help—the sin of omission.

Point Four:

V. We can sin by withholding encouragement and comfort.

All of us go through times when we need to be encouraged and we need to be comforted. We're humans. There are times when Dorothy and I, given what's happened over the last two or three years, I can't tell you the number of times a phone call would come at just the right time or a card would arrive in the mail that just said the right thing. And you treasure those all your life! You remember them for the rest of your life because it happened at the right time and you were given the encouragement that you needed or the help or the support that you needed.

And you see God comforts us in so many ways. Shouldn't we, therefore, do that to others?

Let's go to 2 Corinthians chapter 1 and verse 4. Remember in 1 Corinthians Paul was dealing with this dysfunctional Church, and one of the things he did was to have a man kicked out of the Church who was sexually immoral. And then the congregation went all the other extreme. They were allowing it and putting up with it, but then in 2 Corinthians Paul found out that the man had repented, wanted to come back. And in their self-righteousness, they wouldn't let him! And so, he's trying to correct the situation. 2 Corinthians 1 and verse 4, he's saying, referring to God:

2 Corinthians 1:4. *Who [comforts] us in all our [trials], (KJV)*

And there's a reason for it.

2 Corinthians 1:4b. *...that we may be able to comfort them [who are going through trials] which are in any trouble, [and we do so] by the comfort [the same comfort] we ourselves [were] comforted of God. (KJV)*

So what we do is we take the comfort that God shed upon us through His holy spirit and we realize what a wonderful thing that was and how it encouraged us and comforted us! And then we take that same comfort and shed it out to other people who are going through difficult trials. And it's all done by God's holy spirit. It's not our righteousness. It's done by God's holy spirit.

So, for example, we've had eight, maybe ten widows and widowers created over the last couple of years in the Church. And sometimes after the crisis is over, we can kind of forget about that. There are many widows we have now. And so maybe, we should just call a widow. Just out of the clear blue!

What did James—we won't turn there—James 1 verse 27, we know what that says. Pure religion—what is pure religion? To visit the fatherless and the widows in their affliction. And there's nothing as helpless as a fatherless child or a widow. And in both cases, it's not just when the father dies and leaves the child fatherless, it's not just at that occasion. Or when the husband dies and leaves his wife a widow, just that occasion, but you see it goes on for years afterwards! The loss is still there. The sorrow is still there. The loneliness is still there. And that's why we're told here that pure religion is to look after those who are less fortunate than us and that have needs.

So, when we're talking here in the Fourth Point about withholding comfort and withholding encouragement, it might be good just to make a list of all the widows and or fatherless kids and give them a call or send them a card every once in a while.

Or when you come into church, sometimes you can look at somebody and they're just not their old selves. Something's happened during the week. They're just down and off by themselves or just not as happy and joyous. And walk over and put your arm around them and say, "Hey! How was your week?" And see what happens. See what response you get. And show some concern and try to encourage.

Look at 1 John 3 and verse 17: This is a condemnation for those who would withhold encouragement and support and comfort. 1 John 3 and verse 17, it says, John says:

1 John 3:17. But whoso [has] this world's [goods], (KJV)

And we all do. Compared to the rest of the world, we all live like kings.

1 John 3:17b. ...and [sees] his brother [or could be sister] have [a] need [Not a want, but a need.], and [shuts] up his bowels of compassion from him, [He asks the question: If somebody does that,] how [on earth dwells] the love of God in [a person like that]? (KJV)

The answer is: It doesn't! It just doesn't at that moment. In other words, if somebody sees someone in need and then, because of selfishness or "I don't have the time, I just don't feel like it, by the way I want to watch TV tonight" or

whatever, "There's a ballgame on I really want to see," and shuts up compassion against that person, what we're saying then is "I'm not allowing God's spirit to lead me at that moment. Maybe I have God's spirit, but I'm not allowing God's spirit to lead me." And then we can sin by not showing love and compassion, not showing encouragement and comfort. So that's the Fourth Point.

The Fifth—and this you wouldn't commonly think of because, frankly, it's so difficult—is:

V. We can sin by withholding correction.

What on earth do we mean by that? Well, look at our children. Now, most of us are old enough to have grandchildren or great-grandchildren, but we have many people in God's Church that have young children. What if we just let them run wild, because we don't have the time—absentee moms, absentee dads, latchkey kids and all of that. There's no training. There's no discipline. There's no correction.

Look at Proverbs chapter 13 and verse 24. If we withhold correction from our children, shame on us! Proverbs 13 and verse 24, this is pretty blatant, pretty blunt.

Proverbs 13:24. He that [spares] his rod [hates] his son: (KJV)

Now the world does not believe that. The world believes that you can't touch your kid. You can't spank your kid. Teachers can't spank kids because if you spank them, you hate them. No. It's just the opposite. If you don't spank them, you hate them. If you don't discipline or correct them, you hate them.

Proverbs 13:24b. ...but he that [loves] him [chastens] him [often]. (KJV)

It says.

And the Hebrew word for "chasten" means to discipline or to correct. And we don't have time—this is a whole sermon in itself—but other Scriptures in Proverbs in talking about correction, the Hebrew word means to "choke down" or "to narrow down."

That means you have boundaries. You limit their options. There are some things that are off limits. And you just choke down to a narrow path what they can do. And if they step aside, they are disciplined. They are chastened just as we are with Christ. There is a narrow path that leads to righteousness. And Christ will chasten us if we get off that path.

And so, we can sin by withholding correction from our children. Now when Dorothy and I first came into the Church back in the sixties, the pendulum was way over here. Every problem you spanked for, including three and four month old babies. And spanking solved all problems. And I think we've learned, but the pendulum today has gone completely in the other direction where the world and the society and the school system and, frankly in the Church, people just let their

kids run wild. They let their kids run wild. They let their kids get away with anything. And then they wring their hands because it's not working out.

And so, we can actually sin by withholding correction from our children.

Well, okay that's our children, but what about each other? What about brothers and sisters in God's Church? Now, back in the fifties and sixties, we used to have the truth police that would go around and examine people's homes and check for leavening in the cupboard during the days of unleavened bread and all of that kind of stuff. I'm not talking about that. But if we have true love for each other, what if you have somebody that you dearly love in the Church and you see them going off track? What do you do? Do you say, "Well, that's not my problem"?

Well, that's not what the Bible says. Let's go to Galatians 6 and verse 1. Galatians 6 and verse 1, Paul is saying to the Church, he's addressing the Church when he says, "Brethren," in the letter to Galatia. He says:

Galatians 6:1. ...if a man [or it could be a woman, either one] be overtaken in a fault [overcome by a sin], [he says, you who] are spiritual, (KJV)

And we've had people, even in this area twenty years ago. We had a fellow that went around and took it upon himself to correct everybody in Church during the week. And he would go around and visit people and tell them all their sins the previous Sabbath. And the reason he had the time to do so is he didn't work and his wife supported him, which is a problem in and of itself.

But I'm not talking about that. It says:

Galatians 6:1b. ...[you who] are spiritual, restore such a one in [a] spirit of... (KJV)

What? "I know better. I'm your boss. I'm your spiritual superior." No. He said:

Galatians 6:1 continued. ...in [a] spirit of meekness; [consider yourself], [unless you follow in this guy's footsteps]. (KJV)

And he says, "So, if you really love your brother and you see something that's not imagined—this is real—then, we should go to them in a spirit of meekness and say, "Look, I saw you do something," or "I saw you say something that really has me concerned about you. Can we sit down and talk about it?" Maybe you'll find out it wasn't a big deal. Maybe your perceptions were wrong. But on the other hand, you might talk and the guy might say, "You know I've got a problem. I haven't prayed or studied in months. And I'm heading in a wrong direction and I need some help." And that's happened too.

So we can sin by withholding that. By going to a brother and just saying, "Look, I'm concerned." Not condemning. The sword isn't out hacking away. Just say, "Hey! I'm concerned." Because notice Proverbs 9 and verse 8: If somebody

comes to us with concern about us, then we should have the conversion and the character and God's spirit to receive it in the way it was intended, to receive it as somebody trying to help us. And Proverbs 9 and verse 8 talks about that. We have to use wisdom, both for the person on the receiving end and the person on the giving end. Proverbs 9 and verse 8, it says:

Proverbs 9:8. Reprove not a scorner, (KJV)

And I've been put in a position as an elder to go and try to correct a scorner and it never works. They just kick you out of their house or they start yelling and screaming at you or they start trying to turn the tables and deflect what you're talking about. And you don't get anywhere. And so if there is a scorner, the Bible is telling us "Don't bother because it's going to end in failure." He says:

Proverbs 9:8. Reprove not a scorner, lest he hate [you]: (KJV)

"How dare you talk to me this way! How dare you say that!" And I've had that happen.

But he goes on to say:

Proverbs 9:8b. ...rebuke a wise man [or a woman], and he will love [you]. (KJV)

Why? Because you pointed out something that maybe, as I said in the very introduction, that's a secret fault, a hidden sin. Maybe the person's not even aware that they're behaving in this manner. And you come and show your concern very gently, very kindly with a spirit of humility. And the person just is aghast and says, "I didn't know I was behaving that way! I didn't know I came across that way." And then, that is a help. And then the person that's receiving the correction will love that person because that person could save them from the Lake of Fire. But done correctly, done in a loving way.

But for many it takes too much time, too much effort, and frankly, too much character because it's hard to go to your brother and say something like that. And in order to do that, we have to be on a pretty high spiritual level to do that.

That's the Fifth Point.

V. We can sin by withholding correction.

The Sixth Point is:

VI. We can sin by not making peace.

We can sin when we have the opportunity to make peace, but we choose not to do so. Let's go to 1 Corinthians 7 and verse 15. 1 Corinthians 7 is talking about marriage.

And 1 Corinthians 7 is in the context of a situation where one mate is in the Church and one mate isn't in the Church. And 1 Corinthians 7 makes it very plain that if the unconverted mate is pleased to dwell and treats the converted mate well as a husband or wife should, then you shouldn't divorce. But if the unconverted mate is not pleased to dwell and just persecutes the converted one, then that is a reason for separation and divorce.

Now, jumping into verse 15 into the context of that, he says:

1 Corinthians 7:15. *But if the unbelieving [mate departs], let him depart. (KJV)*

Let him go. If he is—in this case a "he"—if he just makes your life miserable, you can't follow God. You can't spiritually— You can't study. You can't pray. And it's just dragging you down spiritually. He said, "If he departs, then let him depart. Don't wring your hands about him." He says:

1 Corinthians 7:15b. *A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases: (KJV)*

Meaning: the marriage can be dissolved. He says:

1 Corinthians 7:15 continued. *...but God [has] called us to peace. (KJV)*

And so, we're in a specific subject but the general principle is that God has called us to peace. In a marriage, in a friendship, in a neighborhood, within the Church, God's called us to peace. That's why God says, "Cast out a scorner," because you're not going to have peace. You'll never have peace if you have a scorner around.

And so, let's understand that we have an obligation to make peace within God's Church. It is a priority for us.

Now, obviously, we don't have "Peace at any price" as the Prime Minister of England Chamberlain did prior to the start of WW II. He met with Hitler and Hitler signed a piece of paper that he said five minutes later is "Nothing but a piece of paper." And Chamberlain came back and waved it—it was in the news reels of the day—waved it and said, "We have peace in our time." And then, Hitler went and invaded Poland and WW II started. But that was appeasement. That was "Peace at any price." You'll give up anything to have peace. I'm not talking about that.

We don't compromise God's Law just to have peace. Within God's Law, it should be one of our first priorities to have peace in a marriage, in a family, in a Church, in our neighborhood, on the job, because what did God say? We won't turn there. You know the Scripture by heart, Matthew 5 and verse 9.

Matthew 5:9. *Blessed are the peacemakers: (KJV)*

And what happens to them?

Matthew 5:9b. ...they shall be called the children of God. (KJV)

And we all want to be there. "Blessed are the peacemakers."

So the question, then, becomes: How do we make peace? Now that is a series of sermons in and of itself, but I think we know the answer. We won't turn there, but Matthew 5 talks about if we're at the altar giving our gift—meaning if we're on our knees praying—and we know somebody has a grudge against us or there's something wrong in this relationship, we drop what we're doing and we go talk. We have a chat. Again, in the same spirit again of Galatians 6 and verse 1, with humility, we go and talk to try to resolve it.

And then in Matthew 18, if somebody has offended us—Matthew 5 is when we've offended somebody else—Matthew 18 is when somebody offends us. What do we do? You go to them alone and you have a talk. That takes character. It takes time. It takes prayer. It sometimes takes fasting. It takes energy. It is difficult to do. And it is easy to ignore! "I just don't want to deal with it." But we must deal with it because we are called to peace as Paul said to the Corinthian Church.

So before the Passover, this is the time to reach out to people that maybe we've offended, or people, frankly, who have offended us. We need to reach out to them and try to mend fences.

Now it takes two to reconcile. And so, we should try, but if the other person doesn't respond, then, we just kind of put it on the shelf and wait longer till maybe they're ready to reconcile or ready to listen. And then we come back at another time.

So let's understand that we can sin by not making the effort to have peace.

Seventh and Final Point—and this is a big one now at this time of year.

VII. We can sin by not being thankful.

We can sin by not being thankful. And that is prophesied to happen. We're going to get into a Scripture that deals specifically with this in just a second as we conclude because unthankfulness is one of the characteristics of the last days. And we, as God's people, above all need to be thankful for what we have.

John and I deal with this. So does Greg. We get letters from people in Africa describing some of the conditions that they go through. And you see what the Libyans are going through. And you see what the Japanese are going through with the tsunami and the radiation and all of that.

And we have so much. We have so much to be thankful for! The poorest person in America lives like a king compared to most people in the world.

Notice Colossians 3 and verse 15. Paul is encouraging the Brethren to be thankful. This also deals with the previous point about making peace. Colossians 3 and verse 15, Paul says:

Colossians 3:15. *And let the peace of God... (KJV)*

Now notice what he says. It doesn't say "dwell in your heart." Does it? It says:

Colossians 3:15. *And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, (KJV)*

That is the same word you would use as if a king ruled his commonwealth or his people or his subjects. It says, "Let peace rule your heart." Meaning: have dominion over your heart, tell you what to do. If peace rules in our heart, then we will do everything to seek peace, back to Point Number Six.

And he says:

Colossians 3:15b. *...to the which also [you] are called in one body; (KJV)*

Meaning: peace. But notice what he says:

Colossians 3:15 continued. *...and be [you] thankful. (KJV)*

Thankful for everything! Where would we be today if we weren't called? I'd probably be dead. We would be miserable. We would be wretched morally. We would be doing who knows what out there if God hadn't called us and picked us out of the muck.

God's given us His very spirit! I mean think about that. We have the very spirit of God—the very nature of God in us!

And, then, what we're looking to at the time of the Passover is Christ died for us while we were sinners. Christ loved us when we were unlovable, when we were scoundrels, rats, slime balls! Christ loved us and died for us! How thankful should we be for that?

And, then, we're given an instruction book, God's Word. We have it! It's such comfort to open it up and read it every day. We have that.

And, then, living in the society most of God's people live in today in the modern world, the developed world, we have food; we have clothing; we have shelter. The food is a few steps away in the refrigerator for crying out loud. We have warm homes in the winter and cool homes in the summer. And we have nice soft beds to lie in when most people are lying on the ground.

And the list goes on and on and on! And we can sin by going through life and just think that we deserve all this because of our goodness and our greatness.

We can sin by going through life spoiled thinking that we are entitled to all of this! And then we get ticked if something is taken away. The TV breaks and we can't watch TV tonight. Some people go into low earth orbit just because they can't handle it. "My satellite dish is aimed in the wrong direction. What am I going to do?" People get all upset about it. Ryan Hall has to deal with that every day probably at the cable company! And we think it's an entitlement. And we don't go to God every day and thank Him for our blessings. Do we?

Because, let's notice James chapter 1 and verse 17.

This is what we have to realize: Everything we have is a gift. We didn't earn anything! We didn't earn our intelligence. We didn't earn our looks. We didn't earn this country that we have freedom in. We didn't learn God's calling. We didn't earn the Bible. We didn't earn God's holy spirit.

James 1 verse 17:

James 1:17. *Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, (KJV)*

Every good thing we have comes from God!

James 1:17b. *...[comes] down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. (KJV)*

We can sin by not being thankful every day for the blessings that we have. We need to do that.

And let's go to Philippians 4 and verse 6 as a final Scripture here under Point Number Seven. I'm going to read it out of the New King James—not the King James—because it's a good closing Scripture for this Seventh Point. Philippians 4 verse 6 says:

Philippians 4:6. *Be anxious for nothing, (NKJ)*

Don't worry for no good reason.

Philippians 4:6b. *...but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, (NKJ)*

He's saying, "Let your prayer be coupled with thanksgiving."

Philippians 4:6 continued. *...let your requests be made known to God; (NKJ)*

Because it's easy sometimes in a prayer, you look back on a prayer and nine-tenths of the prayer was "Gimme, gimme, gimme. I need this. I want that. Can You do this for me?" and so on. And then you look back and the whole prayer was not one word of being thankful for what God's already given us.

And so, when we pray, we're being told here, man we've got to put thanksgiving in the prayer. Otherwise, it's just a selfish prayer—"I want more. I need this. I need that. I can't do without this. You've got to give it to me. After all look at me. Look at who I am. You need me." Unh uh, not at all! God says He can raise up stones to do whatever it is we do in our lives.

So, we can sin; the Seventh Point is we can sin by not being thankful.

Now, we want to summarize by going to two Scriptures.

The first one is we want to establish the fact that the sins of omission are prophesied to increase because of the nature of the times in which we live. Let's go to 2 Timothy 3. We're going to read the first five verses. We've read these before, but I want you to read them with the idea of applying them to the sins of omission. And how many of these characteristics that we read can be applied to the sins of omission? 2 Timothy chapter 3 verse 1:

2 Timothy 3:1. *Know this also, that in the last days... (KJV)*

We are definitely living in the last days as applied to us.

2 Timothy 3:1b. *...perilous times shall come. (KJV)*

Because men are going to what?

2 Timothy 3:2. *...[are going to] be lovers of their own selves, (KJV)*

You see if we're lovers of our own selves, then we will not show love to other people because we overshadow all of that. We are Number One. We pay attention to ourselves. We look out for ourselves. We put ourselves up as our own God.

"Men shall be lovers of their own selves," therefore, we don't have room to love other people or show compassion or kindness or goodness or gentleness or spend time with them. We don't have time to go to them and help them and all of that because we love our own selves.

You know in Revelation 3, "I have need of nothing" because I'm a god unto myself. I'm doing just fine."

Verse 2 going on:

2 Timothy 3:2. *For men shall be lovers of their of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, (KJV)*

That's a big one here. Point Number Seven

2 Timothy 3:2b. *...unthankful, (KJV)*

That's going to be a characteristic of the end days—not thankful. It's an entitlement. "I deserve it. I can't do without it. You must do this. I must have this."

2 Timothy 3:2 continued. ...*unthankful, unholy, (KJV)*

Notice!

2 Timothy 3:3. *Without natural affection, (KJV)*

Now the Levite and the priest, did they have natural affection? Did they have love and concern for this guy lying in the ditch? Of, course not! That's going to increase as we get closer to the end of the day.

2 Timothy 3:3b. *trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, (KJV)*

That means people without self-control.

2 Timothy 3:3 continued. ...*fierce, despisers of those that are good,*
4) *Traitors, heady, high-minded, (KJV)*

Notice this!

2 Timothy 3:4b. ...*lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; (KJV)*

If we love ourselves, we're not going to give to other people. Remember love is outgoing concern for the other person, putting the other person first. "Lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God."

So we see that we began our journey in God's Church by ceasing to do things, ceasing to have foul language, ceasing to break the Sabbath, ceasing to eat pork, ceasing to do many, many other things that we all stopped doing. But we found today that we can sin by not doing or omitting certain things. And it's a far more insidious sin.

Let's close with one final Scripture. Let's go to Revelation 21 and see something that verses 7 and 8 pertain to these sins of omission maybe in a way that we haven't thought of before. Revelation 21 verses 7 and 8. Verse 7 is incredibly encouraging. Verse 8 just lays it on the line. Revelation 21 verse 7, it says—this is what we learned when we came in the Church:

Revelation 21:7. *He that [overcomes] shall inherit all things; (KJV)*

Again, a gift from God, inherit eternal life, inherit all things, inherit being in God's Family, being near His throne! And He says:

Revelation 21:7b. ...*and I will be his God, and he [or she] shall be my son. (KJV)*

"My children," as we are now, but eternal children! So, if we overcome, this is our future.

But notice verse 8:

Revelation 21:8. *But the fearful, and unbelieving, (KJV)*

It is interesting that He uses fearful and unbelieving, because He goes on to say—we're going to come back to this—but He says:

Revelation 21:8b. *...the abominable, [the] murderers, [the] whoremongers, [the] sorcerers, [the] idolaters, and all [the] liars, [are going to] have their part in the lake which [burns] with fire and brimstone: ... the second death. (KJV)*

But why? You can see those, but why would He say "the fearful, and unbelieving"? Especially the fearful? The unbelieving we can understand. If you don't believe God's Word, if you reject God's Word, then you're an unbeliever. That we can understand, but the word "fearful," why would somebody go into the Lake of Fire who is fearful? That word in the Greek literally means "to be timid" or "to hold back." And what He's saying is, "Those who are timid, those who hold back, those who don't believe what I say and they don't go do what I say but hold back and sin by not doing something I say to do are going to go into the Lake of Fire." Those who hold back and don't believe what God says are not going to be His sons and are not going to inherit all things.

And so, let's understand the sins of omission are very insidious because it's just not out there in public. It's not there. It's not coming out of our mouth, but it can be a sin by something that we cease to do, don't do withhold from doing. And, therefore, it's harder to see and harder to deal with for us.

So, this Passover Season when we examine ourselves, let's make sure that we have a priority to examine ourselves and to overcome the sins of omission.