**The Facet of the Capacity to Love, No. 1 – BD14-01**

We have been considering the matter of being a spiritually mature Christian. We’ve indicated that we’re thinking about this in terms of a five-sided edification structure in our souls—a pentagon of defense. We have thus far studied three facets of this pentagon. We began with grace orientation, and explored the fact that God’s way of dealing with us in this age is on the basis of what He can do for us, and not on the basis of what we can do for ourselves or for Him. We studied the facet of the mastery of the details of life in which we learned that the number one thing in every Christian’s life must always be doctrine so that it is “the Word, and the Word, and the Word.” Everything else, details which, essential or non-essential as they may be, are nevertheless details in respect to the supreme calling of the study of the Word of God.

And then we have been pursuing in some detail the facet of a relaxed mental attitude—a mind free of bitterness and all other mental attitude sins. A mind which expresses itself toward God by the practice of the faith rest technique—the fact that we walk not by sight but by faith on the basis of what God has promised us, on the basis of what God had explained to us in doctrine, His ways of operating, on the basis on what God has told us is coming ahead in history in the prophetic word. Now this whole building is structure upon the foundation of doctrine in the human spirit.

This morning we take another step and we are now going to look at another facet which we’ll call the capacity to love. We’ll be looking at this in some detail. This capacity will be explored in three ways: love toward God, love toward the opposite sex, and love toward friends. No Christian can view himself as a spiritually mature believer until he has grown to where there is within his being a capacity to love God, to love your own particular man or woman, and to love your friends. This is not a natural quality or inclination within us. This is something which has to be developed.

If you will notice the fourth verse of the hymn we sang this morning went, “Were the whole realm of nature mine, that were a present far too small. Love so amazing, so divine, demands my soul, my life, my all.” Now that’s pretty well put. Love so amazing, as God has exercised toward us, does demand in response the total love of our soul. And there lies the rub because it is not within the normal natural capacities of people to love God with all their heart, with all their mind, and with all their soul.

So we have a very very important subject to be looking at, in the matter of what is love all about. It’s a very confused issue. There’s a lot of (nonsense) that is put out even by Christians on the subject of love. There’s a lot of ridiculous kind of practices that are carried on among Christians under the name of love.

It would be well therefore to begin with the meaning of the word “love.” We use it of course in a very casual way, very carelessly in a variety of applications. Someone may come up to you this morning and say, “I love your dress.” “I love that song we sang.” “I love this item of food.” “I love this fun.” “I love that book.” We sing hymns with expressions of love in them. We mistakenly equate with sex. The dictionary defines it as “a strong feeling of affection,” but biblically it is much more than any of these.

Let’s review for a minute what we have already looked at in the way of the word “love” in its New Testament use. The nature of love is to be determined by the meaning of these words. When God speaks of love, He uses a word to describe it that explains it to us. Archbishop Trent was a very great linguist. He in his studies of languages discovered a relationship on the part of the Latin church fathers, particularly a man named Jerome who lived at the end of the fourth century and who translated the Bible from Greek into Latin—the Latin Vulgate version which is the basic translation of the Roman Catholic church. He noticed in the study of the Latin writers that there was a relationship between certain Latin words whose meaning was clear, and certain Greek words which were used to equate with those Latin words.

He noticed that there was the Latin word “diligo.” And he noticed that “diligo” in Latin was the word for love which was based upon the mental esteem of the object. It was a word which was a mental expression and a non-emotional expression. It had no emotional qualities implied. It simply meant: When a person came up to you and said, “I love you,” and he said, “diligo,” it meant, “I esteem you as a being with my mentality. And I bear you no ill will. I bear toward you a spirit of good will and of blessing that I would impose upon you and wish upon you.”

Then there was another word for love, “amo.” This word had a distinctive meaning, and this was the meaning of a word that was (in contrast to “diligo” which was mental), this was emotional. “Amo” was an emotional expression. One line quoted from Cicero, one of the Latin writers, very clearly distinguishes the use of these two words. He was talking to one friend about another friend. Cicero says, “I do not esteem,” and he used the word “diligo.” “I do not merely esteem the man, but I love (“amo”) him.” That is, there is something of a passionate warmth of affection and a feeling with which I regard him. Cicero said of his friend, “I not only value this man in my mind and esteem as a friend, but I have a certain emotional affection and attachment toward him.”

Jerome followed the use in the Latin Vulgate because he understood the meaning of Greek words. Whenever he came to a certain Greek word for “love,” he knew which of these Latin words to express it because he know which Latin word expressed what the Greek word meant. Which is the clue which is so strategic to us today to interpreting what the Bible means when it talks about love.

What he discovered was this: Whenever the Bible speaks of “agapao” love, it was comparable to the Latin “diligo.” So that “agapao” is a mental attitude. “Agapao” has no emotional implications. You can be in a position of mentality toward an individual where you bear him absolutely no ill will, where you bid him nothing but the best. You wish him nothing but the greatest. And yet you have no emotional attachment toward him. You wouldn’t want to go out to dinner with him. You wouldn’t want to go off on a camping trip. You wouldn’t want to become comraderies and buddies in some social way. But you don’t dislike him. You don’t hate him. You don’t have any bitterness toward him. You don’t have any antagonism. You’re not competitive with him. You have no mental attitude sins toward him. You just plain “agapao” him.

Now it was also discovered that when it came to using the other Greek word “phileo” in the Greek language that this was comparable to “amo” in the Latin, because “phileo” conveys the idea of emotion. This has an emotional quality within love in contrast to the mental quality of the other. So mental love is “agape.” This word connotes a relaxed mental attitude free of any ill will in the form of any jealousy, bitterness, vindictiveness, hatred, unforgiving spirit, a guilt complex, or competition. It connotes love which is founded on an admiration, a veneration, or an esteem, rather than an emotion. It means a mind which is kindly disposed toward someone. And you are concerned for his welfare.

For this reason, Christians are told to “agape” their enemies. In Matthew 5:44, when the Lord says, “Love your enemies,” this is the word that is used. And you can immediately see why God could not tell us to “phileo” our enemies because you cannot command your emotions. You cannot go to a person, “I want to direct your emotions to have a certain feeling.” But you can tell a Christian, “You should have a certain attitude of mind which is free of ill will.” In John 21 you have an interesting relationship of these two words. John 21, beginning at verse 15. The incident where the Lord is asking Peter as to whether he loves Him. John 21, beginning at verse 15, “So when they had dined, Jesus said to Simon Peter, ‘Simon son of Jonah, lovest thou me more than these?’” Now here the word that Jesus used is the word for mental esteem, “agapao.” “Do you love me with a mental attitude free of any bitterness and ill will, Peter, more than these others?”

And Peter says unto Him, “Yea Lord thou knowest I love thee.” Ahh, but Pete pulls a switch. Pete doesn’t use “agapao.” He says, “Lord, you know I ‘phileo’ you. You know I’ve got a real affection of emotional warmth toward you.” Now apparently, following that disastrous denial on the part of confident Peter, where he simply turned against the Lord right in the face of their enemies, it was hard for Peter to say, “I’ve got this supreme quality of mental good will toward you Jesus.” Because there was something else about “agapao” love, and that is it is not a human production. It is something that only God can produce in us by means of the filling of the Holy Spirit. It’s part of the fruit of the spirit. This is the word that is used when it says that, “… the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace,” and so on.

So it seems that Peter just could not rise, after such a devastating defeat, to say, “Lord, I love you with that kind of love.” So Jesus comes to him a second time, and he says, “Simon, Son of Jonah, lovest thou me?” And Jesus says, “… though ‘agapao’ thou me?” And Peter again says, “Yes, Lord, I ‘phileo’ you.” The third time, in verse 17, Jesus comes down and talks to Peter on his level, because here in the Greek, Jesus says, “Simon, Son of Jonah, do you ‘phileo’ me?” And Peter says, “Yes, I ‘phileo’ you.” And that was the extent to which Peter could rise on this occasion to declare his love for the Lord.

Now it’s very revealing in Scripture when you know the difference in the meaning of these words. It shows something very dramatic about Peter and about his condition right at this time following his great defeat. This man was gun shy. In John 11, if you’ll turn there for a moment, you have both of these words used. This is the incident describing the death of Lazarus. John 11:3 says, “Therefore his sisters (the sisters of Lazarus, Mary and Martha) sent unto Him saying, ‘Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick.” The word “love” here is “phileo.” “He for whom you have an emotional friendship, your friend Lazarus, is sick.”

Verse 5 says, “Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus.” Here it uses the word “agapao.” The mental attitude good will toward the members of this family, toward Lazarus and toward his two sisters. This explains (in verse 5) the delay before verses 6 and 7, that Jesus heard that His friend was sick, but he waited two days in the same place, and then after that He said to His disciples, “Let’s go to Judea again,” where Lazarus was. He delayed. Now the delay would seem a little heartless and unkind on the part of the Lord, but verse 5 makes it clear that Jesus didn’t have any mental ill will against this family. There was a reason for his delay, and the reason was in verse 4. “This sickness,” Jesus said, “is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified by it.” The sickness had to go to death so that Jesus could demonstrate the power of God that resided in Him, to the glory of God, by raising Lazarus from the dead.

So the Scriptures use the words necessary to make clear that Jesus had an emotional attachment for his friend Lazarus, but he bore no mental ill will toward the family as might be interpreted because of his delay. But it was the result of His waiting so that God could be glorified. Verse 35 says that “Jesus wept.” And verse 36, in viewing this again, says, “Behold how He loved him,” and here they used the emotional word “phileo.”

Now this is the basic meaning of these words, and you should have the two clearly in mind. Jesus said, “I give you a new commandment, to love one another.” He is calling upon you to do something you can do. He is not telling you to have an emotional attachment to members of the congregation.

There might me some people in this splendid Berean congregation that you don’t give particular care to be comradery with. You don’t strike it off particularly. You don’t have anything against them, but your temperaments are not such, and your interests are not such, or your state of life is not such that you might find occasion to be thrown together. It doesn’t mean you don’t like them, but God says, “You’d better love them. You better see to it that you have a mental quality that is free of any ill will.” So don’t go around trying to do in one of your brethren. Don’t go around trying to undermine somebody. Don’t go around trying to do anything that reflects a bitterness on your part because that is a failure for which you can be held accountable.

**Callouses**

Now it’s going to be necessary for us, in pursuing this subject of love, to review something else. If you’ll turn to Ephesians chapter 4. We’re going to have to have an examination this morning of the soul in order for us to understand how the quality of love operates. In Ephesians chapter 4 beginning at verse 17, you have the Scripture which explains to us how callouses (insensitivity) can develop in your soul.

**Soul**

Now let’s take a look here. Here is the soul. The soul has a mind. It has emotions. And it has will. The mind has an expression in the way of self-awareness. The mind also has an expression in the form of conscience in which we have our values and our standards. Now this is the soul. This is the real you. This is what leaves you when you die. This is the person that all of us really know in its particular expression.

Now I want you to notice what can happen within your soul and to your soul. What can happen within your soul that destroys your capacity to love? The facet we’re studying is how to be able to love: God, the opposite sex, and your friends. Now I’m going to show you how to destroy the capacity to love any of those. Verse 17 says, “This I say therefore and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind.”

First we begin with vanity. The word “vanity” means “emptiness.” It is the Greek word “mataiotes.” This means and emptiness. Now this is the key word to describe the first step in developing spiritual insensitivity in the soul to God or any expression toward God in love. The unsaved have an emptiness in the mind of the soul. They have no divine truth there. A Christian can come to the same state of soul emptiness. How does he do it? He does it when he sits and listens to the Word of God being explained, and he goes negative. Any reservations in your mind toward something that you are taught from the Word of God, if what you are taught is indeed the truth of God, if you have the slightest bit of reservation or neutrality, you have gone negative. And when you go negative, there arises (God says) in your mind a certain emptiness. There is a low pressure system that develops in the mentality of your soul.

Now your understanding of this is going to be difficult because I don’t know the condition of all of your minds this morning. It may be that there are some people here whose minds have become so hardened with layer upon layer upon layer of callous already developed that you’re going to have a hard time even paying attention to get hold of this that will explain what’s taking place inside of you. You’re going to be wondering around in your mentality all over the place even though your eyes may be glued up here to the front. And we’re going to show you in a little bit why, having come to the point of developing callouses on your soul has set you upon a very very difficult uphill fight from which you may never recover. So if you haven’t gone too far, listen carefully because there is a point where it is almost impossible to return from a hardened status of soul.

Alright, here’s vanity. Because of negative volition there’s an emptiness in the mind. A vacuum is created at the emotions and at the will. What happens? Well a low pressure area always wants to equalize itself and it sucks something else in in order to stabilize. And when you are not drawing in doctrine because you have gone negative and you are not exposing yourself to doctrine on a daily basis, either through attending church services, listening to tapes on the Word, studying books on the Word, and reading the Word if you have enough background to study it on your own, if you’re not daily taking in the Word because you have gone negative, you’re going to take in something else.

You’re going to take in falsehood from the world. You’re going to suck in here human viewpoint. You’re going to suck in slavery to the details of life. You’re going to suck in mental attitude sins of one kind or another. You’re going to suck in social concepts. A lot of the things that are destroying the nation today as being the things that we should do socially and that are the rights of people that we should pursue that come from disorientation of mind. You are going to be having guilt complexes. You’re going to have negative dispositions. And in general all the way down through your being, your mind, your emotions, and your will, you will have set up a vacuum and you’re going to be drawing in what is the mind of guess who? Satan.

Satan is interested in giving you his thinking. Now just get that straight. This is a subject we have to go into in more detail, but Satan is constantly preoccupied in giving you his thinking. He will never disturb you as long as you are psyched into him. As long as you are phased in to his thinking, he will not bother you. He never bothers a church where people are phased into him. And he will take your closest Christian friends and he will become the agent through them as you see what happens here in the story, you can see why your Christian friends, and why those good Christian workers that you’ve known for so long can come to a position where Satan is using them to bring discouragement to your own service and to your own life.

Do you remember when Peter came up to the Lord and rebuked Him, and Jesus was telling was telling him about what was ahead for Him in dying on the cross? And the Lord turns to this godly man Peter, and says, “Get thee behind me Satan.” You obviously can understand that Satan is not going to come to you through someone who is a distant unrelated personality.

Do you know how Satan is going to discourage you? He’s going to get somebody who’s an old comrade of arms to go over to the traitor’s camp, to be a deserted, to be a disappointment to you. That’s the person. Someone that’s close enough to you that you want to throw your hands up and say, “Oh, boy.” And if you are disoriented in your soul, you will say, “Oh, boy.” But if you are not disoriented, you will pity the person who has gone to the rebel camp, and you will understand that the person has become wormy in his soul, as hard as that may be for you to say. It’s pretty hard for the Lord to turn to Peter that he esteems so highly, and say, “Peter, you are wormy in your soul. Get thee behind me.” Satan is functioning through you.

Now Satan wants to bring his thinking into your being. He wants to bring his emotions into your soul. He wants to bring his will into your soul. And the minute you go negative toward the Word of God, you have set up the condition and he’s got you. You will set up the condition for a low pressure system. That’s what it means here. “Do not walk as the other Gentiles in the emptiness of their minds.” Why? Because, verse 18, “… having the understanding darkened.” You go from vanity to a condition of darkness, and the word is “skotizo.” This means an intensive blackout of your soul from the stuff that has been sucked into it when you went negative toward the Word of God.

And what is it that is darkened? “Having the understanding,” which is the word “dianoia.” This “noia” is from the word for mind—“noos,” the thinking part of our mentality. “Dia” is a preposition meaning “through.” So what this word means is that the thinking part of the mind is darkened. You come to the point where you cannot think through straight. You can’t think straight. You can’t think straight about God. You can’t feel straight in your emotions toward God. You can’t choose straight in your emotions toward God because all areas of your soul are hit. And you cannot express yourself through any facet of a capacity of your soul toward God because there is now upon your soul a darkness. You are literally blacked out.

Now you’re insensitive to anything that God has to say to you. For this reason, you can’t love God. When you have the blackout, you can’t love God. You can’t love your particular man or particular woman. You can’t love your friends. You simply cannot have the capacity for love when this condition exists in your soul. So what do you do? You make a substitute (pseudo) love. And our churches are full of Christians who are going around with their mouthful-of-teeth smile, and it’s loathsome in every direction. Sweetness and light. Smiles and words. And pretense of one fake personality with the other fake personality. Because they’re incapable of loving.

If your soul is calloused, you will not love and you will not have happiness. I don’t care how much you stand up and sing, “Oh, how I live Jesus.” It’ll destroy all of the other capacities of the facets of your soul, of your spiritual maturity structure. You will not be able to master the details of your life. Nor will you be able to have a relaxed mental attitude, and you will not be oriented to grace. Why? Because you’re calloused in your soul, and you’re sitting in a room of pitch black darkness. What direction do you have? How do you know where to move? You’re stumbling around like some blind idiot. So you make moves that you think are in the right direction, and you think you’re perfectly in command.

Ahh, but you see, Satan always comes looking like you. That’s his disguise. Therefore it doesn’t bother you when you look in the mirror and see yourself, and there’s the devil telling you to do something. It’s OK with you. You like yourself and you think it’s your idea. Or else he comes through some close Christian and gets to you that way.

Now the result of all this: Vanity is a low pressure area. It darkens the thinking through part of our mind being alienated from the light of God. Now we are alienated. And the Greek word is “apallotrioo.” It’s in the perfect tense which means “estrangement.” It means that the estrangement (because it’s perfect tense) happened in the past at the point when you went negative toward doctrine and now it (the condition) continues. It is something that is just passive. It will happen to you if you go negative. You don’t have to do anything more about it. It’s a thing that you will experience.

So here you are. You are estranged from God your heavenly father. And that’s horrifying to contemplate. You started with vanity in your mind that developed a darkness over your thinking, over your understanding. That resulted in an alienation from God your father, and the life which it says is the life of God, which is our walk by means of filling with the Holy Spirit.

And the next thing is that the reason for this is why you’re in this condition. Why are you alienated from God? Because of the ignorance that has now developed in you. The “agnoia.” This is the ignorance, the incapacity to learn. As a matter of fact, this is a preposition that is used in such a way with the accusative that it means “through.” Through the ignorance that is in you. Now how did this ignorance come there? Well the only real protection you and I have is Bible doctrine in our soul which we get from positive volition. It’s the only protection for a young person. It’s the only protection for that young kid you send off to college in reference to sex and everything else. And if he is ignorant in doctrine, he’s in a bad way because here’s what we’re leading up to.

The final stage is … the blindness of their heart. Now the word “blindness” is not really blindness. It should say “hardening.” And “heart” is the soul. Because of the hardening. The Greek says “porosis.” The hardening of your heart. The hardening of the soul. Spiritual ignorance. Why are you spiritually ignorant? Because you are in darkness. Why are you in darkness stumbling around in your soul incapable of having capacity to love? Because there is a hardening that entered your soul. And when did the hardening come in? At the point that you were resistant to the Word of God.

So here is your soul. Here is your mind. There develops upon it a callous. Here is your emotion and there develops a callous. Here’s your will and there develops a callous that grows and grows and grows and grows. And gradually you are less sensitive and less sensitive and less sensitive in all phases of your soul when it comes to expressing yourself. On the one hand toward, and on the other hand toward man because you express yourself in your soul toward God and toward man.

Now how are you going to express anything toward God when you’re insensitive? How are you going to express anything toward man when you’re insensitive? Our subject is love. What the world needs is love, sweet love. And it’s the thing it knows least about because it all starts here in the soul. And if you don’t understand this, you don’t understand anything about how you work. And until you get hold of this and until you can read Ephesians 4:17-18 and follow through and understand step-by-step what’s happening, you’ll never grasp how you’re structured.

Now we’re not going to go into the verses which follow which tell how we express this insensitivity … , giving ourselves over to lasciviousness to work all uncleanness with greediness and so on. That’s something more. The soul begins with negative volition for doctrine that you hear and your mind rejects. Negative volition creates an emptiness in your soul which acts as a vacuum. This vacuum sucks in false doctrine and human viewpoint into the facets of your soul. These false concepts cause a blackout upon your soul so that you become spiritually ignorant and thus you become alienated from the life which God has for you and you cannot express spiritual life. And all this spiritual ignorance is caused because you let callouses develop in the first place.

Now we’re interested in talking about the capacity to love. On the basis of this background let’s take a look at our friends the Jews once more of the Exodus generation. The spiritual condition of these Jews, as you will recall, is that they had spent one year coming out of Egypt and they are wondering in the wilderness. During that year they had received training from God to prepare them to faith rest to go into the land and take it. Now apparently they had been taught doctrine during this year by Moses and taught promises and taught prophecy. And they had the experience of great needs and crises such as the need for water and passing through the Red Sea and so on, that God provided for them so they had before their physical eyes the same evidence that doctrine, promises, and prophecies were confirming for the eyes of their soul. Later the performance of these people revealed that most of the congregation had gone negative toward the Word of God and had gone negative toward what they had seen, and so they had developed this condition that we have here of callouses on the facets of their soul.

This was the picture of Israel after a year of training. They were insensitive to God because the only way your soul can function with God is that you let it breathe. From God, through the means that He has put up, inhale doctrine. And then you let it on the other side exhale doctrine. Now that’s a useful way of thinking about it. This exhale will be toward God and it will be toward man. But you inhale the Word of God.

I’ve been very interested to observe how much resistance there is at the point of how we inhale the Word of God. I talked to a lady this week again. She’s kind of one of those forceful Christian personalities. In the course of our conversation I had indicated that part of the problems of the very thing we were talking about in that conversation were due to the fact that people were not being taught the Word of God, and that the breakdown is within the churches themselves. People are substituting all kinds of psychological devices in order to try to get their lives straightened out.

And she said, “Oh, do you mean that I have to learn from a pastor-teacher if I’m going to learn anything about the Word of God?” I said that’s the basic procedure until you come to the point where you have enough doctrinal background that you can go it alone, and you won’t go too far alone even then. God’s order is to have a pastor-teacher under whose instructions you sit and learn. “Oh,” she said, “you’re limiting the Word of God.”

And I thought now that is about the most stupid asinine statement anybody could make. But because I’m a gentleman, I didn’t tell it to her. I just thought it. Here is the very thing I’m talking about. It is to enter into the Word of God which is forceful and powerful and quick and living. And this inane woman is saying, “You’re limiting the Word of God,” because I was telling her that she can’t sit around with her … other ladies, and sit around and chit-chat with each other about their miserable no-good bum husbands that they have at home so that they can pray for each other. And have their little Bible studies with women teaching women, and all the other trite that goes with it. And she could see immediately that if she had to be responsive to the direction of an authority within a church that it was really closing in on her little playhouse life. And so she was coming up with some sweet little cliché like “limiting the power of God,” and she didn’t know the first thing about how the power of God was to be released. The only way the power of God can work through the Word of God is to know the Word. And that’s something more than reading on the page.

She says, “Well, do you mean that somebody can read the gospel and not be saved?” I said, “Oh, yeah, people can read the gospel out of the Bible and they can be saved, but,” I said, “I notice that isn’t always the case.” The Ethiopian eunuch, when Phillip asked him, “Do you understand the gospel that you just read?” He said, “How can I unless somebody explains it to me?” I could see that she hadn’t thought of that. So you need people explain the gospel to you too.

Get yourself straight on how you’re going to get doctrine. If you’re not able to sit and church where the Word of God is being taught—and it’s pretty hard to find a place where that’s being done. And I mean being done on a doctrinal explanatory basis. There are plenty of places … that have good doctrinal statements and that are preaching the Word, but they’re not blowing the smokescreen of your personality away from you so that you can see your true character. If you’re not able to sit there then you’d better get yourself on tapes. And if you’re a college student then you’d better wake up, that you can’t go week by week and have the areas of your soul open to drawing in all kinds of chaff and sustain yourself as a Christian, you’re going to be the biggest dummy and dope when it comes to what your university and college campuses have to shell out of anybody imaginable. You will have no point of orientation and of being able to evaluate and operate on divine viewpoint.

Well, the people of Israel were just in this very condition. Doctrine in our souls is the only thing that God uses through which we can understand and love Him. There were a few like Caleb and Joshua who did go positive and these were able to love God. Their souls were sensitive. They kept inhaling and exhaling the Word of God and so they could respond. But the typical Christian of today who talks about loving God has very little doctrine flowing through his being and he doesn’t love God at all. He has to substitute some fake experience and expression and he calls that loving God because Satan creates strong resistance toward any means that may come for you to secure a flow of doctrine through your being.

This is the picture here of the typical Christian. He is heavy with callouses on his soul. He’s out of touch with God and he doesn’t have any capacity to love God or people. And if we don’t inhale doctrine, we’ll inhale religion. (Christianity is a relationship.) We’ll inhale legalism, our doing instead of God’s doing. We’ll be slaves to details, our human viewpoint culture, and the whole bit.

Now the ten spies came back, you will remember, and they were negative. Obviously this was their soul right here, loaded with callouses. And so they saw the giants, and because they were dark in their souls, how did they respond? Caleb and Joshua saw the giants and they said, “Oh, boy, the bigger they are the harder the fall.” Caleb and Joshua saw the fortified cities and said, “Boy, that’s going to be a ball charging into there. Aren’t they going to be surprised when we come running around a right-end play right smack into the city on them.” Everything that Caleb and Joshua saw, they said, “Boy, this is really going to be an exciting campaign. This is unbelievable.

But the other dopes, because they were calloused, and wondering around in the darkness of their soul that their callousness had created saw the giants and they started crying. They said, “We can’t take it.” Just to give you a little clue as to how serious callousness toward spiritual things is, Numbers 14:37 tells us that even those men who did bring up the evil report upon the land died by the plague before the Lord. These ten men dropped dead right there in front of the congregation. And we’ll see a little later what effect this had on the congregation. It really wowed them because you remember that these were all number one boys. God had told Moses to pick the chief, the number one, the prime area leader from each tribe. Pick the guys with smarts. Don’t give me any of your second-rate mediocre men. So they were all people who were of capacity personalities. And there they dropped dead because of the callouses.

Judas was an unbeliever and he went negative to the gospel. He built callouses toward God. And that day when Jesus Christ finally handed the sop to him and identified and Jesus reached out and took that sop. At that moment, what little light was still filtering in his soul closed off. And Judas was dark. He went out and betrayed Jesus Christ. He then repented of what he did. He in effect confessed it. He took the money and made restitution. And here’s where we’re going to take the story up next week. The callouses were still there.

For you as a Christian, I want to tell you right now, that when you make your confession of sin, it doesn’t make any change to what has developed here. Now there is a way to make a change, and we’re going to tell you about that next week, but Judas could make no change, so he went out and he committed suicide. In that moment, John 13:30 says when he took that sop, in that moment, Satan moved in. He had the man under full control. Then it was the sin unto death. There was nothing further that could be done for him.

Once you permit a buildup of callouses on your soul to take place, it is very difficult, and it takes a lot of time, to remove the damage. We’re going to tell you next week how to remove the damage.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1971