

The Lord of the Law

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[0 : 00] Alright, if you have your Bible, open up to the Gospel of Mark chapter 7. Mark chapter 7. We are going to be covering a lot of verses this morning, or at least it's a lot for me to cover.

Maybe it doesn't seem like a lot for you. We're going to be covering 23 verses this morning because these verses all hang together and they lead into one another and I want us to see where Christ is taking us as He teaches us here.

So Mark chapter 7, we're going to read verses 1 through 23 and I want to ask you, we like to stand as we read God's Word together in honor of His Word. Mark chapter 7 verse 1.

Now when the Pharisees gathered to Him with some of the scribes who had come from Jerusalem, they saw that some of His disciples ate with hands that were defiled, that is, unwashed.

For the Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless they wash their hands, holding to the tradition of the elders. And when they come from the marketplace, they do not eat unless they wash. And there are many other traditions that they observe, such as the washing of cups and pots and copper vessels and dining couches.

[1 : 09] And the Pharisees and the scribes asked Him, Why do your disciples not walk according to the tradition of the elders, but eat with defiled hands? And He said to them, Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites.

As it is written, This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. In vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.

You leave the commandment of God and hold to the tradition of men. And He said to them, You have a fine way of rejecting the commandment of God in order to establish your tradition. For Moses said, Honor your father and your mother, and whoever reviles father or mother must surely die.

But you say, If a man tells his father or mother, Whatever you would have gained from me is korban that is given to God, then you no longer permit him to do anything for his father or mother, thus making void the word of God by your tradition that you have handed down.

And many such things you do. And He called the people to Him again and said to them, Hear me all of you and understand, There is nothing outside a person that by going into him can defile him, but the things that come out of a person are what defile him.

[2 : 22] And when He had entered the house and left the people, His disciples asked Him about the parable. And He said to them, Then are you also without understanding? Do you not see that whatever goes into a person from outside cannot defile him, since it enters not his heart but his stomach and is expelled?

Thus He declares all foods clean. And He said, What comes out of a person is what defiles him. For from within, out of the heart of man, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, coveting, wickedness, deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride, and foolishness.

All of these evil things come from within and they defile a person. Father, I ask you now to give us understanding of your word. Help us to see it clearly and be transformed by it.

I ask this in Jesus' name. Amen. Y'all can be seated. You know, you have to sort of admit, if you read through the Bible, that there are some strange passages in the Bible.

In fact, there are some things that seem very strange to us, especially as we read the Old Testament. Things that God required Israel to do or things that He did not permit Israel to do.

[3 : 41] There are all sorts of laws in the Old Testament, particularly in the books of Exodus and Leviticus and Deuteronomy. There are all sorts of laws about ritual purity, about cleanliness, about the ways that the priests were supposed to conduct themselves in their services at the temple.

And some of those rituals and some of those laws are very elaborate. And some of them, you can tell, would have made certain things more difficult.

It would have required some effort to go to the temple and offer a sacrifice. Not simply because you had to travel there, but because you had to go through all sorts of Old Testament requirements, all sorts of legal requirements in order to be able to even offer your sacrifice there in the temple.

So that we can read some of those passages and we think, that's just strange. Why would God require something like that? Why would God command something like that? Sometimes I think the temptation for us is to say, well, that's just the Old Testament.

You know, the Old Testament is full of all sorts of commands and the Old Testament tells us to do things and doesn't allow us to do things. But the New Testament, the New Testament is about all those sorts of things.

[4 : 56] So we don't have to worry about all those rules and regulations. And there is a sense in which that is true. We are freed from being under the law. We are freed from the thought that we might have to obey the law in order to be right with God.

But that was true of Old Testament saints. Even under the Old Covenant, people didn't obey the law so that they could earn heaven in some sort of way. Because when Paul teaches us how we get saved, how we come into a right relationship with God, he always uses Old Testament figures as examples.

He says, take a look at Abraham. Abraham was justified by faith. He says, take a look at David. David spoke of God's blessing not to the one who obeys, but to the one who believes. So there is a sense in which we can say, well, there are some things in the Old Testament that maybe don't carry over to today.

But the basic heart, the basic heart behind those things carry over. The New Testament is filled with all sorts of commands. The New Testament a lot of times repeats some of the commands. We see one of the Ten Commandments repeated in this very passage.

Honor your father and your mother. There are commands all through the New Testament as well. And so one of the things that we have to ask ourselves is, what do we do with all of these commands? In particular, what do we do with all of these Old Testament rituals?

[6 : 17] What do we do with all of these laws about cleanliness and purity and all sorts of... What do we do with those things that seem so strange and so foreign to us? And that's what this passage can help us to do.

This passage can help us to steer a course between legalism on the one hand, where we begin to do things so that we can earn God's approval and then licentiousness, where we just sort of...

We go off on our own and say, well, if it doesn't depend upon my works, then I'll just do whatever I want to do and God's gracious and He'll forgive me and it doesn't matter. We're going to try to steer between those two errors as we look at this passage.

And I really see three things that Jesus warns us against in our attitude toward God's law and really toward God's Word as a whole in this passage. That if we get these three things right or if we can avoid the dangers that Jesus points out in this passage, it's going to help us to steer that middle course.

So the first danger that I see Jesus pointing to that the Pharisees utterly fail in here in this passage is the danger of exalting your traditions above the Word of God.

[7 : 32] Let's take a look and see that. Beginning in verse 1, we're told that some of the Pharisees, that when the Pharisees gathered to Him along with some of the scribes who had come from Jerusalem, it says that they saw that His disciples were eating their food with unwashed hands.

So they hadn't gone through a kind of ritual cleansing that Mark goes on to explain for those of us Gentiles who don't really understand all these things. Mark goes on to explain that the Pharisees had all sorts of rules for cleanliness before you would eat.

They would wash their hands before they would eat anything. If they had been into the marketplace, there's the possibility that they may, in the marketplace, say, at the local mall, they may have come into contact with a sinner.

It could be. There could be some Romans or some Greeks there saying they could have come into contact and oh, now they feel dirty and defiled and so now they've got to go through this cleansing before they're willing to eat because they don't want that defilement on their food and so they have all, the Pharisees have developed all of these rules in order to maintain their own sort of sense of purity.

Those rules are not found in the Old Testament. Now the Old Testament regulates the kind of food, certain foods that they're not supposed to eat. You know, they're not supposed to, the Jews were not allowed to eat pork.

[8 : 50] They were, you know, not allowed to eat certain shellfish. They were not allowed to eat a number of things. The Old Testament did have rules on how the food was to be prepared at times and all those sorts of things. But there's not a great list of rules about the washing of hands and all these utensils and all the things that they would do.

They had added that on top. They had added that as a security measure. We saw this several weeks ago when we were looking at the story of the woman who had the flow of blood for years and she touched the hem of Jesus' robe and we saw that she was an outcast not merely because she had that sickness which would have made her unclean but because the rules of the day meant that you had to announce your uncleanness and you had to avoid people because the Pharisees and other men of that day would not go around, would not even get near anyone who was considered unclean lest they be tainted.

In fact, I told you that sometimes the Pharisees were so insistent on these sorts of things that many of them wouldn't have anything to do with any women. Just in case that woman was unclean they wouldn't touch women.

They would keep a distance from women. Just all women that they came across because they built these rules so that they would never come close to violating one of the actual commandments of God.

And we do that sort of thing as well. We see clearly that God has a commandment in place. He has a rule in place like do not steal or do not lie or do not covet.

[10 : 24] And so we want to obey the command but we know that we are weak in and of ourselves and so we build rules and layers of rules so that we can try to keep ourselves from ever coming close to crossing the line.

That's what the Pharisees did. Not a terrible motive to begin with really. It's not a terrible motive at all. But over time you forget the purpose of those rules that you've put in place around the commandment.

Over time you forget about the commandment itself and you become obsessed with obeying the rules that are actually not in the word of God at all that you've created yourself and then you begin to judge other people when they don't obey the rules that you've set up that are not in here.

It's a dangerous thing to take your traditions and exalt them above the word of God. There's nothing really wrong with traditions.

We have a lot of traditions. Now we might feel like we're really not all that traditional as a church because we meet in a country club for one thing and so I now have to avoid telling people the church is not a country club because I sound a little bit hypocritical there but that's still a true statement.

[11 : 41] But here we are in a country club meeting and there's I think brunch and Father's Day lunch going to be served out here in a few minutes. A couple of months ago there was a poker tournament going on out here while we were in here.

So we feel like we're not traditional but let me point out some ways in which we are extremely traditional. You're sitting in rows staring at me right? They didn't do that in Jesus' day.

They didn't sit in chairs. They sat on the floor in little circles in little groups and Jesus would have sat on the floor as well and that would have been how they would have had their synagogue meetings would have been that way and I would be sitting down as well and I might stand as I read the word but then I would sit back down and so what you're doing right now sitting there staring at me trying your best to pay attention that's a very traditional thing in the Christian subculture.

That's what we do. Alright? A more recent tradition are screens for about the last 25 years. We have a screen up there and I am perfectly capable well Brian is perfectly capable of printing out the words of the songs that we're going to sing and handing those out to you every week but this is a little bit easier and I know that probably 90% of the people that come here that's what they're used to some sort of screen that has the words on it.

Alright? So that's a tradition tradition that we follow. The fact that we did you notice here's what we did and we do something like this every week. Came in, Brian sang a song I got up I said hi you guys talk to each other and visit for a few minutes and then we sang a couple more songs we had a scripture reading we did another song and we had some prayer and sermon we've pretty much

done that every week that we've been meeting on Sunday mornings we kind of have developed that as our own little tradition and some of that is part of a broader tradition that song a welcome some more songs and then you preach and take an offering and everybody goes home right?

[13 : 38] That's a tradition and there's nothing wrong with that tradition it facilitates our worship allows us to feel organized and we know what to expect and we know there's nothing wrong with tradition itself so long as tradition remains with a small lower case t anytime you attach a capital T to tradition and it becomes its own sort of source of authority and you begin to cling to the tradition rather than to the word which led you to establish those traditions that's when you go off when you exalt your tradition above the word of God and that's a danger that we all face so one example that we could talk about would be an issue with say alcohol we know the scriptures are very clear that you're not to get drunk on wine that you're not to lose control of your senses at all those sorts of things but we also know that Jesus and the apostles would drink occasionally we know that those things are realities we also know that the scriptures say we don't want to do anything to cause a weaker brother to stumble so we want to be very if you drink

I don't drink but if you drink you want to be very careful that you don't drink around someone that's going to cause them to stumble and that's true and those are good biblical principles but then sometimes we build in rules that are not bad at all around those things some of us might choose for some of those reasons to say you know what I'm just not going to drink that's a fine rule if that's a rule you want to set up I don't but that's not a scriptural rule that's a hedge that you build around biblical principles so that you never get too close to those principles where you go wrong is when you begin to impose that tradition that you've established for yourself and that rule that you've made on everyone else so that when you see someone out having a drink all of a sudden you think that they're a sinful terrible person because they violated your rule but they haven't violated the scriptures in any way we do these sorts of things all the time we all have ways in which we try to guard ourselves and protect ourselves from disobeying the word of God but sometimes those means that we use become the ends themselves and we exalt our own rules we exalt our own traditions above the word and we displease God we become exactly like the Pharisees and notice what Jesus said to the Pharisees he cut them no slack in this manner when they ask him in verse 5 why do your disciples not walk according to the tradition of the elders that's an important question they didn't say why do your disciples disregard the word of God or disobey

God's law why don't they walk according to the tradition of the elders other rabbis before these Pharisees who had passed down these traditions he says but they eat with defiled hands and Jesus said to them well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites as it is written this people honors me with their lips but their heart is far from me in vain do they worship me teaching as doctrines the commandments of men now when when Isaiah originally spoke these words to the people of God when God spoke these words through Isaiah to his people you can find these in Isaiah chapter 29 he was speaking to the whole nation of Israel and God is about to send judgment upon Israel for their waywardness because Israel had a habit even at this late stage in their history in the Old Testament they had a habit of straying so that they would worship false gods and then they would repent and they would come back and they would renew all of their vows to God and they would begin to do all the right things in the temple and God comes to them and says

I'm tired of your wavering your worship at the temple means nothing to me because you only do it to try to curry my favor and stave off judgment but you're going to keep returning to these idols and so I know that the heart of your worship is wrong and so I'm sending judgment and he did send judgment and the people were exiled for many years now when we arrive at the New Testament and the ministry of Jesus they have now moved past that judgment by roughly a little over 400 years they are fairly well removed from the totality of that judgment they're 700 years removed from the original judgment a little over 700 but now they're 400 years removed from some of the effects of that judgment they've been living in the land for quite a while now they have been they have avoided idolatry for centuries now on the whole they don't have they haven't put any idols in the temple sometimes the foreign rulers would do those things to them but they at this point in time they feel as if they have they have advanced beyond those stages where they go back and forth between idolatry and true worship they feel that especially especially the Pharisees and so they would never read

Isaiah chapter 29 and and believe that those words could be spoken against them because they're not guilty of idolatry they haven't gone after false gods they've been very very careful to protect right

worship they have been very careful to make sure that they they dot all the i's and cross all the t's and they do everything correctly so that they never again return to the days of idolatry they've been very careful about all of this they would never read Isaiah 29 and think that's directed at me because we truly honor God we're not idolaters and Jesus says to them these these are spoken about you because yeah you you do the right things externally you make the pilgrimages to Jerusalem and you do your sacrifices and you take care of all of those things but your heart is not in it because you have exalted your traditions above the word of God and you now teach as if it is absolutely true you teach your own commandments he says the commandments of men is what Isaiah says you teach those things as true doctrine and you neglect the scriptures themselves it's a dangerous dangerous thing in fact

[20 : 08] Jesus says that this exaltation of tradition above the word of God ultimately leads not simply to to a downplaying of the importance of the word of God but Jesus says that it leads to disobedience to the word of God so that's the second danger I think that Jesus is telling us to avoid here avoid the danger of exalting your tradition above the scriptures but you need to also avoid the danger of disobeying the word of God take a look at what he says in verse 8 because of their exaltation of their traditions he says you leave the commandment of God and hold to the tradition of men ultimately this results in disobedience to God's word so don't think that in this passage Jesus is trying to tell us it's not important for you to obey the commands of God that's not at all what he's saying because one of the things that he targets the Pharisees for is their disobedience to the word of God he goes on in verse 9 and says you have a fine way of rejecting the commandment of God in order to establish your tradition and then he gives a great example of this he quotes from the ten commandments law says honor your father and your mother and who and then one chapter after the ten commandments whoever reviles father or mother must surely die that's what he says that's what

God says God says honor your father and mother that's what God says here's what you say though if a man tells his father or mother whatever you would have gained from me is korban that is given to God so here's what would happen all right rather than care for their parents in their old age rather than take care of them as they advanced and were unable to provide for themselves anymore if you wanted to be able to do that without feeling bad about yourselves they had developed this tradition where you could say listen mom and dad I know that it appears as though I have enough money to care for you but all of that money that you see that I have I have dedicated to God so I can't spend that on you I've given that over to the Lord and it's not mine to use to take care of you that sounds very pious doesn't it it really does and it didn't really matter in the end if that money actually was ever used to do any work for the

Lord it was that they had told they made a proclamation that this amount of money is korban it's set apart it's given over to service to God so I can't use it to take care of you on the surface that sounds good I would imagine that a rule like that probably developed in order to protect people from wasting their money on other things don't spend your money frivolously take some of it and set it aside and devote it to God and you can't touch it and you can't do anything else with it you'll avoid spending your money away but it became a means by which they and Jesus says to them for the sake of your tradition you violate the word your rules and regulations have now become the means by which you enable yourselves without feeling guilty to outright disobey the word of God he says in verse 13 that by doing this they are making void the word of God by your tradition that you have handed down and then he says many such things you do don't think that I'm limiting myself to this one commandment Jesus could walk through the commandments and show them how their traditions were making void the word of God itself that's a great danger it moves beyond simply exalting your tradition it moves to the point to where you're not even paying!

attention to what the scriptures actually tell you to do so often we become so focused on the things that we elevate to a place of importance the things that we feel like will make us holy or the things that we feel like will really set us apart from everyone else around us or from the culture around us and we do such a good job at protecting ourselves from looking bad in the eyes of other people and yet all along we may be violating the scriptures so that we may do a very good job of saying you know what I need to be very careful that I don't become unduly influenced by people who live ungodly lifestyles and I want to be careful about that so I am going to be very careful about who I associate with about who I allow my children to be around I'm going to be very careful about that but then at the end of the day for the sake of our own holiness and the protection of our own family

we fail to fulfill the great commission because we never go to anyone to tell them the gospel because they're not the kind of people we want to be around and the mission that we've been given under the new covenant is dismissed ignored command of

[25 : 31] Christ is disobeyed all for the sake not of really maintaining our purity but for the sake of maintaining our traditions it's a dangerous dangerous thing so we have to avoid the danger of exalting our tradition above the scriptures we have to avoid the danger of disobeying the scriptures in order to adhere to our traditions and then the last danger and I think this is the key I think this is the foundation of it all that Jesus warns us against in talking to his disciples we need to avoid the danger of mis interpreting the word of God let me show you what I mean in verse 14 after Jesus confrontation with the Pharisees he calls the people to himself and he says to them this is what I want you to understand he says hear me all of you and understand so he wants them to get this there's nothing outside of a person that by going into him can defile him but the things that come out of a person are what defile him now that is a shocking statement!

Jesus has now taken a controversy about the traditions of the Pharisees and he's turned it into a controversy about how to rightly understand the word because the law itself now we're getting into what the word of God actually says so for instance the law commands people not to eat the Jews not to eat pork because it will make them unclean the law says if you eat this Jesus says there's nothing outside of you that can go into you and make you unclean he appears to be contradicting the word of God itself and so his disciples understandably are confused by this now don't think that his disciples come to him confused that they're confused about what he wants them to do remember they're the ones who kicked off this controversy in the first place the Pharisees! it never says the Pharisees so his disciples are not a slave to all of these Pharisee traditions his disciples are not slaves to all these rules and regulations so that's not the issue here the issue is they can see pretty clearly at this point Jesus what do you mean when you say that because it sounds like now you're moving a step further and telling us that God's word is wrong what do you mean by that they're confused and rightly so I think but then he says to them are you still without understanding and he repeats himself do you not see that whatever goes into a person from outside cannot defile him since and here this is the key since it enters not his heart but his stomach and is expelled Jesus says it is not about what goes into your stomach it is about your heart and what the disciples failed to understand was not what the law says what they failed to understand was who has the right to interpret the law for them what they failed to understand was that Jesus had come to do two things Jesus had come to interpret the law and as God himself he has the right to do that he is the divine law giver and he has the right to tell us what the law means and then secondly as the Christ he has the right the power and the responsibility of ushering in the age of the new covenant the age in which Ezekiel tells us that God will cleanse us himself! no longer will we be dependent upon all these rules of ritual purity God will cleanse us himself and he will do it by giving us a new heart Isaiah spoke about the same new covenant and God says through Isaiah that God is going to write his law upon our hearts it is a heart issue and the old covenant was designed to help us to see!

[30 : 00] fall short! we are unclean people and what we need is not a list of rules and regulations to make us clean the rules and regulations help us to see how unclean we are what we need is for God to come in and supernaturally cleanse us and that's what God says he's going to do under the new covenant and Jesus is telling his disciples don't you understand that I've come to bring about that new age and I have come to usher in the age in which it's about the heart and not all the external things and in case we miss the point Mark helps us to see it in most of your Bibles this will be in parentheses and if you're reading in a red letter Bible the translators have put it in black for us so that we know that Mark is explaining what Jesus is saying so that at the end of verse 19 Mark gives us a little comment thus he declared all foods clean and just in case you missed the point that Jesus is making to his disciples Mark is going to make sure you catch on thus Jesus declared all the foods that the Old Testament said were unclean Jesus declared them clean don't miss the big point here Jesus brings in the age of the new covenant in which the role of the law shifts from being a fence around the people of God to protect them the role of the law shifts from that to being not a fence anymore but a teaching tool by which we look back to all those laws and we recognize just how far we are from God on our own and how desperately we need him to give us a new heart and put a new spirit within us and Jesus helps us to see how bad our situation is in verse 20 he begins to list all the things that defile us he says what comes out of a person is what defiles him from within

out of the heart of man come evil thoughts sexual immorality theft murder adultery coveting wickedness deceit sensuality envy slander pride fools notice how many of those things really are truly internal all the way through so evil thoughts that's an internal issue alright coveting in verse 22 coveting is an internal issue wickedness deceit envy!

slander pride foolishness all those have to do specifically with the attitudes of our heart and the few other things that are sprinkled in there are the things that flow out of these attitudes of our hearts so sexual immorality comes out of a heart of coveting for another person adultery comes out of a heart of coveting for another person murder comes out of the heart of someone who is filled with evil thoughts it's always about the heart and Jesus says the laws of the Old Testament were never intended to be a permanent list of rules for you to obey the laws of God in the old covenant were intended to be a thing to show you just how broken you are and how badly and desperately you need the spirit of God to come and cleanse you and give you a new heart our problem at the end of the day our problem is not that we are terrible at obeying commands that is true we are terrible at obeying rules alright

I'm terrible ok and so are you you all of you half of you probably sped on the way here this morning and all of you who drive probably sped this week we are really bad at obeying rules I bet there's at least one or two people in here who have an expired!

expired inspection sticker on your car you don't have to raise your hand but I'd be willing to bet more than ten drivers somebody's going to have an inspired we're terrible at obeying rules and we may be tempted to think that's our problem we need to buckle down we need a better system by which we can figure and Jesus says the good news is that now we have entered into an age in which God doesn't give us simply a list of rules so that we'll see how bad we are he gives us a list of rules and then he gives us something better he sends his spirit to begin to transform us to begin to change us so that those evil thoughts that we had they're not eradicated immediately but they begin to be replaced by desires for righteousness and there begins to be a battle within you Romans 7 Paul describes that battle within himself that we all face but that battle would not be present if all we had were external rules it wouldn't even be there so that the spirit comes in and he begins to work new life into you and new desires into you and no longer are your covetous thoughts normal no longer are those just the drive to succeed that our culture says it is our culture says that when you see something better and you want it that's a desire that's just your drive to succeed you're just a good

[35 : 39] American pursuing success scriptures say that's coveting and the spirit begins to work in us so that we no longer covet what people have we rejoice in the blessing that they've received you see it's the same thing envy falls along the same lines we begin to envy other people but when the spirit begins to work in us he begins to transform envy into rejoicing over others and God's blessing in their lives it's always always a hard issue because if it's a rule issue we're done if it's an issue of checking off the right boxes we're finished because we're not good at obeying rules but if it's a heart issue then the scriptures tell us that we are now living in the new covenant age in which he transforms the hearts of his people and the only real issue to deal with is whether or not you are one of his people that's it Jesus says

I have come to give you life I've come to give you life to the full I've come to put my spirit within you I've come to transform you so that you can offer up your body as a living sacrifice you can offer up your whole self as a sacrifice and I can use you and transform you but you must trust in me first you must believe in me and hold fast to me and trust in my ability to cleanse you from the guilt of all of these things first comes the cleansing of guilt and then comes the cleansing within don't get those backwards if you're waiting on God to remove all of these things before you come to Christ in faith you've got everything backwards spirit doesn't come and begin this work till you put your faith in Jesus Jesus has come to me all you who are weary in heaven what are you weary from the law makes you weary!

it wears you down and Jesus says come to me I will give you and that's called the Christian life so there are two challenges I would lay before you number one is to turn and look and examine yourself and say have I trusted in Christ or am I just still trying to reach and attain some goal of checking off a list am I here because church is on my list of things that I am supposed to do to be right with God if that's the case you need to drop the list and trust in Christ and then the other thing that I would say to you is if you've already done that then the question becomes how submissive are you to the work of the spirit in your life the spirit if you have trusted in Christ the spirit is within

you and he will work these things he will do these things but he will do it by certain means he will do it through the word the spirit works primarily through this book and he will transform you and he will work on your heart but he will do it through this and if you're wondering why the spirit has not automatically zapped you and gotten rid of that sinful tendency within your life the answer is probably you're not here often enough the spirit is ready and willing to work within you but the means are laying dusty on a shelf somewhere he uses the means of fellowship with other believers he uses the means of corporate worship he uses all of these means and he will do that it is a promised work that he will do but you must make use of the means you must be in the word you must be gathering together for the right reasons for worship on Sundays you must be spending time with other believers during the week you must be doing those things and if you if you make yourself open and available to the work of the spirit within you he will begin to work these things out of you it is a sure promise of the new covenant and he never breaks his promises let's pray