

6554U

VICTORIA STUDY WEEKEND - 2004

THIS IS ETERNAL LIFE - THAT I MIGHT KNOW HIM

Speaker: Brother Ted Sleeper

Study #2: This is Eternal Life (Part 2)

Reading:

I have found this very helpful, in trying to grasp and to put in some kind of tangible, real terms, this idea of 'getting to know God and His Son', to picture this as a **journey**. Now that's not foreign to the bible as you well know. The Lord Jesus Christ as we were reminded in the last talk, talked about the **two ways**; a broad way and a narrow way and they have outcomes, and that, in fact, is Jesus' motif, if you like, for describing two ways of life, two ways of living. So that idea of taking a journey, of the **life's journey**, I think we're all familiar with but it is something indeed which the bible itself uses to describe our life, whatever life it is that we live.

I'd like you to turn with me to the Old Testament to Micah 6 and we want to take a look at one verse and within that one verse we want to focus on just a small set of words, which evoke this sense of a journey. Then during this particular talk, we're going to reflect upon this whole concept; in verse 8, if you like, we can begin at verse 6. Micah the prophet asks God, 'With what shall I come before the LORD? and bow myself before the high God? Shall I come before Him with burnt offerings, with calves a year old, will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams or 10,000 rivers of oil; shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, and the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? He has shown you, O man, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you? but to do justly, and to love mercy, and **to walk humbly** (or to humble yourself) **to walk with your God?**' Walk with God, isn't this what we're talking about when we're thinking of a journey? **walk with God** in those three words I believe, is summed up, our whole relationship with God and His Son in this present life. They do speak of a journey, and your minds could jump immediately, if you're thinking in the book of Genesis; you know that Abraham took a journey, didn't he? he took a journey from Ur of the Chaldees and across the lands of those days and down into a land that God said I'm going to give to you and your seed after you forever. So Abraham took a journey and it was indeed, a journey that involved his whole life! and he was buried in that place that God had promised, and we know that there's still more to this story and still more to that journey. Just as a side note, I always liked the words when after Lot goes down into the area of the plain of Sodom, I always like the words that are used in scripture, God says to him, now who has graciously said, 'well, you take that part of the land' and God graciously says to him, 'Come, Abram, lift up your eyes and look northward, southward, eastward (to where Lot had just gone) and westward; and all the land that you can see, I will give

to you and your seed after you'. Then He says, 'arise, **walk through the length and breadth of the land** (and this is the imagery that comes to my mind when I read those words, where ever the foot of Abram trod that was his inheritance! So you think about the journey of his life up and down through that land , all of that journeying is about his ultimate inheritance of that place, it was his life's journey! We think also of the exodus, the wilderness wanderings (that's a motif for me which I've found very helpful just in my life), trying to understand part of this or most of this class actually will share with you that motif, that imagery of the journeying in the wilderness, so that certainly was a journey, and all of these, I believe, are there in scripture to instruct us about what it means to walk with God.

So, let's think about this idea of '**journeying**'. Now when you think about a journey, this idea just helps to put into perspective a lot of questions that we have as young people, as Christadelphians struggling with the issues of faith; and some of these for example, of that struggle is, 'how much do I need to know before I can undertake this journey, so to speak? or 'how much knowledge should I have? how much is enough in terms of this? and what does God want from me?' and we struggle with this, how much? We try to quantify it, we try to make lists about it and we try to grasp with these issues; but if you put it into the context of a **journey**, watch how some of these answers, kind of fall out! You ask, 'well, what about knowledge, how much? Well, think about this, on a journey you start somewhere, don't you? No, you don't start somewhere, **you leave somewhere** on a journey, it has a beginning but that beginning is a place that you're leaving to go to somewhere else! Now if you don't understand why you left that place, you're constantly going to be thinking to yourself, 'well, maybe it's alright? why did I take this journey?' Well, think about this in the context now of the faith that's presented in the scriptures, you're asked to leave the place where sin (and it's not that mystical word, sin is talking about our own innate desire to do our own thing). So we're saying, we're **leaving** a world where everybody did their own thing, and all there was in that world is selfish men and women doing their own thing; and that's a lot of what I see today as a teacher. I see in the multi-media around me, everyone trying to teach the message, 'take care of yourself, do the things that are good for you! you're number one, take care of #1'. Well, that might have an aspect of good to it, but it has a lot of stuff over here of this world that says, 'take care of only those things that concern you'.

Then there's a world that we're living in and people are dying and not only that, people do things, as Jesus has put it, that are deserving of death; that's the world that we **start in**, and God says, 'Come out from that world', and if we understand what this world is that we were born into, then when we undertake this journey, we won't half way through this journey think, 'oh, it was so much nicer back then when I didn't have all those responsibilities and other issues that I'm worrying about, the leeks and the cucumbers of my former life. You see, if we really know and understand where we've come from on this journey, why we left? then that whole sense of the hopefulness of the life and the journey that we're on will make a lot of sense. We also have to have a clear idea of where we're going, you know, you don't just take up and say, well, I'm going to be baptized into Christ and I'm going to follow after where are you going? Well, I've

got a vague idea, I guess, the kingdom or something, I don't know!' But if you don't really understand your destination and your heart is really not at that destination then say, 'I want to be **there!**' Now I don't know how you answer this question of 'why you want to be in the kingdom of God on this earth?' I'll tell you the answer that I've thought a lot about: I don't want to be there because God says you'll live for ever; I want to be there because of the kind of life that will be lived forever. I don't want to be like I am now, I want to be like the Lord Jesus Christ, because that's a life that doesn't harm, it doesn't destroy other people. My life does, my flesh, my ways of thinking and the things I do naturally do; so if you understand the hope of the kingdom, your life, your whole vision is going to be focussed on moving in that direction through your life. You see, when you have a vision, when you understand where you're going, you don't end up going around in the wilderness of your life wandering aimlessly, thinking, where am I going? You see, if you know where you're going you're going to follow the appropriate path to get there, you won't make the foolish decisions and the compromises that we can so easily do with the inhabitants of that wilderness.

In your mind, think of the imagery of Israel going through the wilderness, and you say, 'ah, there's lessons there', finally if we think about this, this again is doctrinal implications, if you like, of this whole metaphor of **journeying**. You've got to understand the journey in between; you've got to understand the requirements for undertaking this journey. So in those that are looking at baptism into Christ, you don't just blindly say, 'well, I'm going to do this', there's some sense of what that journey will involve. You know, Jesus told the parable, in fact, it was a double parable about one man who built a tower, it was about this journey of being a disciple of Jesus, and He talks about one man who was going to go out and He said, if you don't sit down and think through the building of this tower', and this man didn't and he got halfway done and, of course, he looked like a fool because he couldn't complete it. The Lord said, that kind of discipleship doesn't work! well, the problem was it wasn't about building your own tower when you follow Christ! But on the other hand was the guy who said, 'I'm not sure I'm ready for baptism!' and Jesus told a second parable about that, (and this is Luke 14, if you want to see it later on) He told a second little parable about men going out to war; He said, you know if you go out with 10,000 men against a man with 20,000, you say to yourself, I don't think this is a very good idea, I think I better surrender now so I don't get decimated', now that made sense and Jesus was saying that was a decision about discipleship too, those who hold back and say, gee, I don't know if I'm worthy or if I'm ready? Are you ready to face God? because His Son is coming and He's going to judge the world in righteousness! I mean, there's an aspect to this, there's 20,000 coming and you're going to do what? So there's a sense that Jesus is trying to structure a different way to look at discipleship; you've got to know something about the journey and it is a wilderness, b&s!

You read in the Old Testament about what the wilderness was like; it was not a fun place! Of course, the thing that always amazes me is, you know it was only an 11 days' journey through that wilderness, and I don't know what it would be like to live 40 years in it, but it wasn't meant to be a long journey; they chose a long journey because they

lacked either an understanding of where they had come from, or a heart set in where they were going, or knowledge of what was in between. So they failed in the wilderness and they became ensnared in the wilderness and they grew faint and weary, but if we know the way that's in between we have a sense of what this journey is about, what discipleship of Christ will call for us, and we undertake the journey joyfully. We'll see as we move through these considerations today, because we're now going to take a look at three lessons that come from thinking about the journey in the wilderness of life, so to speak! and I think we'll see at the end of this, hopefully, that this is a journey that we'd be foolish not to undertake! All of its hazards and other problems that may occur, this journey is the best journey that anyone could ever undertake. Let's take a look and see how!

Micah said, 'Humble yourself to walk with God', I want that last word to ring in your ears, I want you to think about this! **walk with GOD**. Now if we're walking with God, that means there's a destination, it means **the path** and, in fact, it means the whole journey, is **God's journey**. It's not your journey and it's not my journey, it's God's journey and you've been invited to journey with Him. Now think about the implications of what this means! Turn over to Deuteronomy 8 and this should be a very familiar passage of scripture; Deuteronomy 8 verses 1 to 3 and think of this crucial lesson that God was trying to impress upon His own people, Israel, as they went through the wilderness. Here, they're at the end of their wilderness journey actually! verse 1, 'Every **commandment** which I command you today, you must be careful to observe that you may live, and multiply and go in and possess the Land which the LORD swore to your fathers'. Now mark those words, **every commandment I give to you**, I want you to observe them and keep them because it's going to be your life if you do this. Verse 2, 'And you shall remember that the LORD your God **lead you, all the way these 40 years** in the wilderness'; you see, it wasn't their journey even then, even though they chose the 40 years by their refusal to trust God. God said, this has been **My journey** that you have been taking for 40 years; He lead you all that way through the wilderness to humble you, to test you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commands or not! So, mark these words, **He humbled you, He allowed you to hunger, He fed you with manna**, which you did not know, nor your fathers knew; that He might make you know that man shall not live by bread alone; **but man lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the LORD**; by which he is saved. Not that food is good and bible study is better, but by which he is saved; that you can't just live by that manna that I provided, you need the words that I have given you from My mouth, it's by that you live; because if you keep what I've asked of you, if this is what you do, you will live.

Verse 4, 'Your garments did not wear out on you, neither did your foot swell these 40 years, so you should know in your heart that as a man chastens his son, so the LORD your God chastens you'. You see, our journey to the Land that God has promised, is God's journey, it's not ours; the path that is chosen that we experience in our lives is the path that He has chosen. The directions that we may turn here and there, all of these are at His hand and prepared by Him! you see, 'I've suffered you to hunger, I've fed

you', alright? God is trying to teach us, b&s and young people, He's trying to teach us one of the most difficult lessons for us to learn and something we struggle, I struggle (I'll be very honest, I struggle and have struggled throughout my life) to learn this lesson and that is this, **that the wilderness does not give, and the wilderness does not take away what I have**; it does neither give nor deprive, **but God does!** You see, this journey with God is all about what God is doing; I can't blame my boss, I can't blame chance and fortune (I've had this terrible misfortune), we can't even blame some mystical being doing all this, the message of scripture which is the hardest message of all to get across is that **all things, the good events and the evil events are in God's hands**. That journey of our lives as disciples of Christ that God is guiding us through, everything that we experience, the good or the evil is prepared by God as part of our journey and our instruction at His hand! That's tough stuff, I understand it's tough stuff, because we wrestle with, 'but God why?' But God really says to us, 'I know you can't see why, you need to **trust Me**'. Just recently in our meeting, a young sister lost her child that she was carrying, and she was very torn up about this, but I actually didn't know about this and on that Sunday she was in my Sunday school class, I was talking about these issues. We're doing Genesis, we're actually just starting the first verse of Genesis, you may think this is weird, but in the first verse of Genesis, this lesson which I've just said to you comes out very loud and clear (the first 2 verses actually). So I was talking about this, unbeknownst to me as I'm talking to her and the rest about the good event and the evil event being in God's hands to use for our good; she was suffering, she actually left class in tears, not because of anything I said was wrong, but rather because it had hit her so deeply that these experiences as painful as they were, were still a part of God's care for her! Now what He was bringing her through was part of His instruction for her; that's this wonderful thing, this is walking with God and it's Peter who says, 'Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, passing all your care upon Him, for He cares for you'. So you can see, b&s, if we grumble, if we complain, if we're constantly saying, 'I don't want to deal with this any longer, let me get out of this whole circumstance and run away from the life of Christ', we are departing from the shelter and the care of a God who is choosing these circumstances. He's simply saying to us, 'trust Me, I know what I'm doing; I made heaven and earth, I know what I'm doing with you. You've got **to trust Me**', and that's what it means, 'humble yourself, submit to the hand of God that He might set you on and complete this journey with you, so that He can rejoice and be glad with you when you are rejoicing in the gifts and the blessings in that journey. That's what it is all about! That's the first lesson!

Now turn back to Deuteronomy 2, this is utterly astonishing, this verse is unbelievable. Chapter 2 verse 7, 'For the LORD your God has blessed you in all the work of your hand; He knows you're trudging through this great wilderness. These 40 years, the LORD your God has been with you and you have lacked nothing'. Now those are just nice words, but you know, the lesson is coming from the second little word in our three words 'God **with** us!' we're talking about **with us**; do you see what He says? this is incredible He says, 'He **knows your trudging, your journeying through** this great wilderness, **because the LORD your God has been with you**! Can you imagine what

that is saying? this is just not God looking down from heaven and He sees His people! You know, you see those photographs, you know, and when you're looking at the satellites and you're looking down on the earth which you see from airplanes, at all the little people down there on the earth. Have you ever done that when you're in an airplane and you kind of think to yourself, 'what are those people doing and thinking down there? with those little houses and the cars? and it's because you seem so far away! But you see, that's not where God was! What we're being told in this incredible passage of scripture is, that God is doing this; every single day and night while they went through those experiences, all of the trials, all of the agony of that wilderness life, God says **I was walking with you**, therefore, **I know your journeys through this wilderness**. What did we say last class about getting to know to know you (you know, I almost sing the song, actually when I was preparing this talk, I was thinking, 'getting to know you!') but you think about it in this sense that God was getting to know His people because He was with them every day. What they experienced, He experienced, what they went through, He went through; remember it's His journey but He was with them every step of the way! This is absolutely a phenomenal thought!

Come over to Exodus 2 because you need to see just how powerful a theme this is in scripture. This is not just a made up thing based upon one rather surprising verse in Deuteronomy. Take a look at this in Exodus 2 verse 23, again, let your eyes roam over the context; when you look at the headings, Moses is born, my bible says, Moses flees to Midian; you know what this is, this is Moses about ready to come back to be the deliverer for the children of Israel. So you come down to verse 23, 'Now it happened in the process of time, that the king of Egypt died: then the children of Israel groaned because of the bondage and they cried, and their cry came up to God because of the bondage. So God heard their groaning and God remembered His covenant with Abraham, Isaac and with Jacob: And God looked upon the children of Israel; and God (actual translation) God **knew them**'. Yes, God had heard their groaning, yes, He had remembered the covenant that He had made with them; He'd looked upon them, but the idea (KJV again) I think it says, 'took knowledge of them or had respect to'; the idea is that God **took knowledge of them**, but we're not being told that He somehow had this clinical idea of them, like the person looking out of the airplane down on the earth and saying, 'I see what's happening, they're having a pretty tough time down there; yeah, I kind of hear them, it's a little far up here, but I kind of hear them calling out and crying out, and there's a lot of them crying out now, so maybe I need to do something'. You see, it's not that He observed them, and therefore, He was going to act but it's rather God had **understood and felt what they were feeling!** He was having His own sympathy and concern for them, being aroused, because He knew with what they were going through, He knew not just the circumstances, b&s, but He understood their heart, and so He was deeply moved and we know that because if we look over in verse 7 and 8 of chapter 3, 'The LORD said, I have truly seen the oppression of My people who are in Egypt and have heard their cry because of their task masters, **and I know their sorrows**'. I have a deep understanding of what they're experiencing; I'm concerned about them, it's pulling on My heart because I feel their heart. I know it because I shared their experiences, I know what is going on and therefore God says, 'I have come

down to deliver them and to bring them into this good land'.

Let's take a look at another passage of scripture, Psalm 31, look at verse 7, 'I will be glad and rejoice in your mercy, because you have considered my trouble; you **have known** my soul in adversities'. That's David speaking, you have known my soul, my life, what's happened to me, you have known it! There's been a connection that David's acknowledging, you've understood me, you've cared about me, and David having experienced this care of God, knows that God will now hear him as he cries out in this particular prayer. You know, b&s, if we personally can know the heart of a stranger (if we've ever been a stranger in a foreign land) if we can learn the heart of a stranger because we've experienced what a stranger experienced, then how much more can God get to know us, by sharing in the experiences of our life! This is an awesome concept, I don't know how you react to this, but just so you don't think that this is just some wild fantasizing on my part, turn over to Isaiah 63 and just listen to these words. Verses 7 through 9 and it says, 'I will mention the loving-kindnesses of the LORD, and the praises of the LORD, according to all that the LORD hath bestowed on us, and the great goodness toward the house of Israel, which He hath bestowed on them according to His mercies, according the multitude of His loving-kindnesses. For He said, Surely they are My people, children who will not lie: so He became their Saviour. In **all their afflictions, He was afflicted**, and the angel of His presence saved them: in His love and in His pity He redeemed them; and He bore them and carried them!' You see, God's knowledge of us is not academic, it's not a list of things that He happens to see from His throne in heaven; God's knowledge of us exists because of His involvement **with each one of your personal lives**, b&s. 'In **all their affliction**, He was afflicted, in all of your or mine affliction He is afflicted. It's a way of expressing the closeness, our God is with us in this wilderness wandering. This is not a theological abstract statement that I make! God walks side by side in that sense, in all our afflictions and in all our circumstances of our life, God is there as a part of it! So that His knowing of us encompasses more than just that external knowledge of our lives, it encompasses our emotions, our feelings, **'I know their sorrow'**. Tomorrow morning in Sunday School, we're going to come back to consider that particular phrase, but for now we'll just leave it there.

Isn't this a staggering thought? Have you ever conceptualized your life in Christ as having this kind of personal involvement with God? I hear brethren who talk about , 'well, God - I don't need to talk about the personal issues of my life because God doesn't know about those things, or He's too far off! there's just too much of my life that is random, things happen to me, you know, I make it that way! Sometimes I do stupid stuff and bad things happen to me and that's just the way it is!' Do you know what is amazing, the answer (and actually two weeks later, I was able to say to this sister), in Romans 8, **'all things'**, now that word **'all'** is very big, 'all things work together for good, for those that love God'. Now brethren and sisters and young people, this is the journey that we've been invited on, this long journey; you know, I've said things that I've experienced now that I'm so much older, but on all of that journey is the knowledge that every thing that I had experienced, He had prepared before hand for my good!

There's a lot of it I don't understand and there's stuff that I complained about, just like we all complain about, but the knowledge is there that it's for my good, everything that I've experienced, and in all of those experiences, God has been there. He knows when I cry out in my prayers (now this is a little side piece, I've got the time so I get to do this) in Romans 8 there is a passage that is rather confusing, let's just have a look at it and then we'll get into the 3rd lesson in just a moment!

In Romans 8 from which, by the way, I just made this quote about **all things**, Paul says in verse 26, 'likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses; for we do not know what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit itself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered'. That's kind of a bizarre statement and I don't know if you've tried to make sense of those words, because later on it is very clear that Jesus Christ is the One who provides intercession, and here it's talking about the Spirit, which I suggest to you is the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus of verse 1 and 2. Here's how it works, b&s, sometimes in our lives when things are going really bad and we're really, really struggling (and those of you who are older will know what I mean), there are times in your life when you can't even pray! All there exists is a groan within your heart, as you struggle with it and you want to talk to God but you can't because maybe you feel hurt or there's a lot of things that go into this; but the wonderful thing is that we're generating that feeling inside of you because you want to be someone different, and you've failed. Now what we're being promised in Romans 8, is God hears that groaning as our prayer, and it intercedes, it comes before His throne of grace and He hears it! Do you know why? because He's walking with us and He knows what we're going through. You see, that thought about Jesus at the right hand of God, telling God what it's all about, what it's like to be a human being, isn't biblical at all! **God knows what we go through and what we feel!**

That brings us to lesson 3, **walk WITH God**. I just talked about God walking with us, Emmanuel, God with us, right? But the passage says, 'Humble yourself to walk WITH God.

If God has condescended to share our journey of our lives, what are you doing, b&s, to share His journey and His life? because you've been invited and I've been invited, all of us have been invited **to go on His journey, not yours!** So how are you sharing in His life? Look over in 1 Samuel, this is a negative, but I will try by creating a contrast, I hope you'll begin to appreciate what I'm talking about in this final point. In 1 Samuel 2 verses 12 through 17, you have this passage about the sons of Eli who were corrupt (notice what it says in verse 12), 'they did not know the LORD. And the priests' custom was' ... and I won't read all of this but as your eyes go down the passage you'll remember what the circumstances were that when they wanted to have food to eat to satisfy themselves, they just put in a big hook (well actually the servant would because they didn't want to get themselves dirty), they'd put in a big hook and they'd pull out a piece of meat; 'wait at least until the sacrifice is burnt' the people would say. 'No, no, no, I want it now', actually they said, 'I don't like it boiled, I like it fresh, I want to get my barbeque going out in my backyard, so give me a good chunk of this meat!' That's what the men were doing, so in verse 16 he says, 'If a man said to him, 'burn the fat', they would say 'no', therefore in verse 17 it says, 'wherefore the sin of the young men was

very great before the LORD: for the men abhorred the offering of the LORD'. But it says they did this because **they did not know the LORD**; do you not think that these men understood who God was? you don't think they had a good academic knowledge, you know, that they hadn't been tutored in the things of the Law at some level by Eli, their father? and they understood what sacrifices they were suppose to do and when and how they were to prepare all the sacrifices? You don't think they didn't know that? the only thing they didn't know was what the Law required of them? I think they knew; if they didn't know, the people certainly knew and they told them what they were supposed to be doing, and they said they didn't want to do it! That was the problem! So what does it mean that they did not know the LORD? they didn't know the LORD because they didn't care about Him? They hadn't entered into God's life and experienced the things that God had experienced. They were more concerned about things that concerned them.

So go over to Hosea 4, and we're going to look at a couple of references here and try and draw together what these references are saying; Hosea 4, Hosea talks a lot about 'knowing God' and 'knowledge of God', so let's just take a look at these and think about them for a

second. Chapter 4 verses 1 and 2, 'Hear the word of the LORD, ye children of Israel: for the LORD brings a charge against the inhabitants of the land, **there is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land.**' And the result? 'By swearing, and lying, and killing and stealing, and committing adultery, they break all restraints with bloodshed after bloodshed', because there was no knowledge of God. Chapter 4 verse 6, 'My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge because they have rejected knowledge, I will also reject you from being priests for me because you have forgotten the law of your God, I will also forget your children'. **Knowledge of God**, you tell me that these men, these people, didn't know about God and who Yahweh was? Yes, they did but something was missing! It wasn't the academics that they didn't have, something else was missing! Chapter 5 verse 4, 'They do not direct their deeds toward turning to their God for the spirit of harlotry is in their midst and they do **not** know the LORD'.

Now let that settle there in your mind, now go to chapter 6 verses 4 through 6, 'O Ephraim, God says, 'what shall I do to you? O Judah, what shall I do to you? for your faithfulness is like a morning cloud, and as like the morning dew (or your mercy, I think, as it should be), It's like an early dew, it goes away; and thereby have I hewn them by the prophets and slain them by the words of my mouth: and your judgments are like light that goes forth. For I desired mercy and not sacrifice; **and the knowledge of God** more than burnt offerings'. Well, how is this possible, how could these people profess to know, or at some level feel they knew God? In fact, I didn't go through all of this, but if you go through these, in fact, even later on it says, Ephraim says, 'but we know you, we brought our sacrifices to you, we did all the things that was required of us, we do the feast days, we're doing all of this wonderful stuff for you'. But God says, 'you don't know Me!. You don't understand Me, because if you did, you'd act like Me!' But they didn't act like God because they didn't share His life; oh, they did the technical religious stuff that

they were suppose to do, but you see, their hearts weren't there because they didn't do the things that God had asked them to do in His Law. They didn't behave in those ways and that's why God says in chapter 6 verse 6 that famous quote that comes up in the New Testament, 'I desire mercy (chesed) and not sacrifice (da'ath la Elohim)(#1847) the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings'. God wanted an intimate understanding of His heart, we here looked upon what they were doing to each other, God's heart was being ripped, and asked, 'why are you behaving this way? My life is not about tearing your brother apart, tearing your marriages apart, tearing each other apart; My life is about **'cheched' (2617)** the unfailing love of God that reaches out to His people in forgiveness and a desire to save and redeem them. That's what 'cheched' is in the bible, **mercy**, and it says in the bible that God's desire is to forgive and reach out and to save and to deliver; Jesus even said that His disciples once said, 'let's bring fire down from heaven on these Samaritans and get rid of them', and He said, 'you don't know what Spirit you are of'. This 'cheched' is the Spirit of God and they would have learned the 'cheched' of God, the mercy of God, **had they lived His life!** Had they lived the way He wanted them to live, and played or lived out their days (tape turned) Then is 1 John 1 verse 5, 'This is then the message which we have heard of Him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth; but if we walk or journey in the light, as He is in the light we have fellowship with one another and Jesus Christ His son, cleanses us from all sin.'

Therefore, brethren and sisters and young people **walk in the light of this life that is eternal. WALK WITH GOD AND HIS SON**, we're not being told that we're to be perfect in this; it's a journey and in that journey is where we're seeking to work out in our own lives, what we're being asked, what we see in Christ, what is there presented in His word. We now grow in God's way, we truly come to know God and His Son and we begin to share in their joys and in their sorrows, the things that move God and His Son, are the things that will move us. So as our response is to one another, or our response to circumstances in our life, it will be the Father's responses and that, b&s, truly is the life that is eternal!