

# Introduction

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Preacher: Willard Lyons

[ 0 : 00 ] This is going to be a different type of study through the book of Esther.

! We're not necessarily going to go verse by verse through the book.! We're going to use this. Notice I've given the title, Conquering the Dilemma of Christian Living. And we'll see what that dilemma is tonight. But it's the battle for the control of the believer's life. It's a study of the book of Esther. I see that through the study of the book of Esther. So next week we'll get more in depth about what all that's going to be. All of us realize that some great things took place in our lives whenever we place faith and trust in the Lord Jesus. We had the forgiveness of sins given to us. And then we've also had the penalty of sin forgiven as well.

[ 1 : 13 ] All right? So forgiveness of sins is kind of a twofold thing. When Jesus died on the cross of Calvary, realize, he paid our penalty for sin. God had established and said the wages of sin is death.

Not just physical, but more so spiritual death. Spiritual separation from him. And so when Jesus died, he paid that penalty for us.

For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have everlasting or eternal life.

And so that's the tremendous picture that we have there. But realize, not only did he pay for the penalty of our sins, but he paid for the guilt as well. All right?

And we're going to see in a little bit that is really what justification is all about in part. If we were not freed from the guilt of sin as well, salvation would not be complete.

[ 2 : 15 ] Would not be a complete salvation. We would be... I'm going to say this. We would probably live eternally because the penalty has been paid.

But we would live as guilty sinners. All right? It's one thing to be free from the penalty, but it's another thing to be freed from the guilt.

Without the freedom from the guilt, I say salvation could not be complete because we would not receive the righteousness of Christ. So justification by definition is the freedom from the penalty and the guilt of sin and the bestowal of a positive righteousness upon the believing sinner.

All right? So, that's quite a picture we have. Christ provided for us freedom from the penalty of sin, freedom from its guilt, and a righteousness that is the righteousness of Christ.

And that righteousness is what is necessary for us to have that eternal life into the presence of God the Father.

[ 3 : 24 ] So, the Spirit takes up His residence within us as the righteousness of Christ. And then He also is there doing His work within our lives. We see that in John 7, verses 37 through 39, and 1 Corinthians 12, verse 13.

Now, the Spirit of God not only just gives us that righteousness, but He's there doing the work. He has what we call the offices of the Spirit of God within the believer's life.

He guides us, He empowers us to accomplish the purposes and the will of God for our lives. Now, also recognize here, when we talk about the purpose and the will of God, there are some commonalities in that, that God has for every believer.

But there are some individual things through individual believers that God has to do and wants to accomplish. All right? So, that gives us the power and the ability, by the guidance of the Spirit of God, to accomplish those purposes.

And that, of course, produces the graces of Christ in our life, as we see in Galatians chapter 5.

Now, I jumped the gun a little bit, because what I want to do here is borrow from Lee's, leaves a really long study in the book of Galatians.

[ 4 : 56 ] Because it's been a long time since we were in chapter 2 of Galatians. All right? But remember, Galatians chapter 2, verse 20. I am crucified with Christ.

Nevertheless, I live. But what? It's not I that live, but it's Christ that liveth in me. All right? So that's where we're coming from here in the study tonight. So I'm crucified with Christ. Nevertheless, I live. Yet not I, but Christ lives in me.

And the life I now live in the flesh. I live by the faith of the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me. All right? Now, in Galatians 5, which we'll get to after a while, we see that in the work of the Spirit of God within us, it's his office and his purpose, one of his purposes, is to develop those graces of Christ within us that we see in Galatians 5, which we'll see after a while.

So, it's literally Jesus living his life in the believer's life, or the believer's body, if you will. Now, stop and think about that just a moment.

[ 6 : 11 ] That should boggle our minds. Christ Jesus, when he was in his earthly ministry, did some tremendous things. All right?

He was crucified, buried, resurrected, but then he arose back to heaven to the Father to await the Father sending him to receive his bride.

So now, the life that he lived while on earth, he now lives within you and me. Now, not to put a lot of stress upon you all, but that's a great responsibility.

Amen? Amen? To see to it that the Spirit of God is allowed to produce that within our lives. So, as a result, we are commanded then to allow the Spirit of God to control our life.

You know the verse well. Ephesians 5, 18. Be not drunk with wine wherein is excess, but be filled with the Spirit. The word excess there is a word that means unsavedness.

[ 7 : 18 ] It has no saving value at all. All right? But he says, be filled with the Spirit. And that is a summary command, too, by the way, that we are to be filled with the Spirit.

Being filled with the Spirit, of course, simply means to let the Spirit of God control our hearts, our minds, our life. Then James 5.

Do you think that the Scripture saith in vain, the Spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy? Now, put this up here in Kenneth Wiest's expanded translation out of the Greek.

He said, Or do you think that the Scripture says in an empty manner and to no purpose, the Spirit, that is the Holy Spirit, who has been caused to make his permanent residence, or permanent home in us, has a passionate desire to control us to the point of envy or of any control of the indwelling sin that it may have over us.

Now, take notice of that, if you will. We know that God has a desire for the Spirit to control our lives. But we see here the intensity of that desire.

[ 8 : 28 ] It drives him to the point of envy. Has anybody here ever been envious of anything or anybody? Especially the guys, right?

When somebody, you know, it's always amusing to me. In fact, if you look out in the parking lot here at Highland Park, see how many people are driving Hyundais. Amen?

I'm getting the picture that years ago, somebody bought a brand new Hyundai, drove it to work, and everybody said, Oh, I want to see it. Yeah? The biggest mistake you could take, or could do, is to get inside that new vehicle and smell it.

Amen? What do you do? You go down to the Hyundai place and buy one for yourself. Amen?

Because we're envious, right? Oh, I envy that.

That's such a good ride, good vehicle. The Spirit of God is so driven by envy that He does everything that He possibly can do to battle the natural man within us, to keep Him, the natural man, from taking control.

[ 9 : 46 ] All right? Now, you and I play a great responsibility in that, and we'll see that after a bit. So, Jesus didn't simply die that we might be saved from a bad conscience or remove the stigma of past failures.

Romans 5.10 shows us that, if you will. Now, salvation is in three parts. Justification, that's what we talked about just a moment ago.

It's the removal of guilt and penalty of sin and the bestowal of a righteousness and righteous standing in Christ. All right? Now, there's sanctification then.

Now, remember, sanctification is twofold. You have positional sanctification. You have progressive sanctification. Sanctification simply means to be set apart.

All right? Positional sanctification comes at the moment that we're saved. God sets us apart from the world unto Himself.

[ 10 : 54 ] Scripture says He takes us from the kingdom of darkness into His light. All right? So, that's the picture of positional sanctification. Once you're there, you never lose that.

Then there's progressive sanctification, which is the work of the Spirit of God that's progressive within us. It is the Spirit of God shaping us and molding us more and more into the image of Christ. All right? And that comes along as we yield to the Spirit of God to do His work within us. So, then there's glorification.

This is what we really long for and look for. That is when we go to be with the Lord when He comes for His church in the rapture. He will change this, what the Scripture says, vile body.

Amen? How many of you realize you've got vile bodies? Amen? Yeah. Yeah. And we'll fashion it like unto His glorious body.

[ 11 : 58 ] A tremendous thing for us to recognize and to look forward to. Amen? To see what that's going to be.

And there's so much that pertains to that, but we'll not take the time to get into that right now. So, we see the two aspects of the work of the Lord Jesus here. He reconciles us to Himself, or to God, by His death.

And then, He saves us by His life. In His righteousness, the only option God has is to find us guilty because of the sin that we're born with, that sin nature.

Being dead, as Paul said, in trespasses and sins. And so, as a result, He passes upon us the sentence of death. The wages of sin is death.

But, Christ Jesus stepped into a body of flesh died our death, died the sinner's death, and thus extending His nail-pierced hands as an offer of forgiveness of sins and eternal salvation.

[ 13 : 09 ] That's the picture that we find, of course, in the Scripture. 1 Peter 3.18, Now, Titus 3.5-7 says, Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy, He saved us by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which He shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior, that being justified, there's that word again, justified by His grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

All right? Now, notice the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit. Renewing of the Holy Spirit is simply the grace that renews the heart and enables us to live spiritually.

So, it's the gradual conforming of the man more and the woman, by the way. The man, there's a generic term. The gradual conforming of the man more and more to that new spiritual world into which He has been introduced and in which He now lives and moves.

It's the restoration of the divine image. Now, that's what God is doing in the life of the believer. It goes back to the Garden of Eden prior to the fall and that's what God wants to remake us in Christ. And so, it's a gradual, remember, gradual conformity to that once we've been saved. Recognize that from the prior to the time of your salvation, you and I were sinners by nature.

[ 15 : 07 ] All right? Now, the character of our life and our lives no doubt were different. That varies. Okay? But we were still sinners by nature and according to the Apostle Paul in the book of Ephesians, we were controlled by the spirit of this world.

All right? Through the influences that came to our spirit by Satan and the world, demons and all of those things. So, whatever, whatever that influence was and however we yielded to that characterized what our life was prior to salvation.

and so, some of y'all were rascals, I know. But some of us were pretty good. Amen? But still, sinners by nature.

All right? And that's the thing that we have to recognize as God now is in process of restoring us to that divine image that was ours or man's before the fall.

Now, which or with whom is, is he shed on us and it's the spirit of God that he shed on us abundantly and that is in copious measure.

[ 16 : 23 ] If you want to know what the word copious is, Rocky, that means a bunch. Okay? I just got to thinking, Ted's not here.

Ted would either sit right there or he wouldn't sit there when I, he would sometimes sit over there and I'd be able to get on him about that. Amen? So I'm going to have to find somebody entirely new to do that.

I don't know who it's, ah, Matt, all right. Very good. Get ready. I just want to thank you for explaining to me what copious meant. It means a lot.

Okay. Thank you. Thank you. I am in a copious quality glad to do that. Now, the Apostle Paul expresses the truth of all of this in our scripture text.

I am crucified with Christ. Nevertheless, I live, but it's not I that live, but Christ that lives in me. Now, in the previous verse, in verse number 19, he says, or he gives us the principle of the fact that as a result of that, the law of Moses no longer has any claim to his life.

[ 17 : 42 ] For though, for I through the law that's under the operation of the curse of the law have in Christ's death for me, I have myself died to the law and all the law's demands upon me so that I may henceforth live to and for God.

So that's a bold statement that he makes there. That the law of God given to Moses or given to Israel through Moses no longer has any hold or claim on him.

Now, the strength of that comes from realizing who Paul was prior to his conversion. I've called him many times the poster board or the poster boy of Judaism.

there wasn't anybody alive in his day that met the qualifications of a righteous Jew according to the law than he.

All right? But now he says the law after he gets saved and comes to some conclusions. It's no wonder God took him to the desert for two and a half years.

[ 18 : 51 ] Amen? He had so much stuff to unlearn and learn how it all fits together in Christ. Now, so, the law has now no more claim upon him.

So, the basis of Paul's claim when he says I'm crucified with Christ is this reality. Jesus was born under the law. He lived in obedience to the law.

He was a Jew. All right? And he died under the law's penalty and condemnation. Now, I thought about that more this afternoon and I got to thinking in reality that's in a two-fold sense.

He died under the law's penalty and condemnation. First of all, well, let me ask you, how did he, how did he die under the law? Oh, I know he's crucified but what I'm saying is how did the law bring him to death?

All right? Yeah, the blasphemy. Yeah. Now, the people of Israel, the hierarchy of Judaism and persuading the multitudes felt that Jesus blasphemed claiming to be Messiah, the Christ.

[ 20 : 08 ] And so, blasphemy under the law is worthy of death. And so, he died under the law in that realm.

What would be the second one? When we think about Jesus dying, why do we say he died? For our sins.

Yeah. Simple. Don't think, don't make it hard. Okay? Yeah. Yeah. Because I ask questions like a child. No.

No. He died for our sins. He bore the sins of the entire world. Literally, he became a sin offering for the entire world so that the world could be freed from their sin through faith and trust in Christ Jesus as Lord and Savior.

All right? So, he was born under the law. He lived in obedience to the law. He died under the law's penalty and condemnation. So, he died. But, praise God, he didn't stay dead.

[ 21 : 17 ] Amen? He rose again. He was resurrected. So, as a result, having died to the law's penalty and condemnation, being resurrected, he has no, the law has no more claim on the Lord Jesus.

Amen? Now, what did it mean when Paul said, I am crucified with Christ? All right? There's the basis of Paul's claim.

Because of his association with Christ Jesus through faith and trust in him, he can say, I'm dead to the law as well.

Amen? Now, you and I are as well. Now, I'm glad Paul realized a lot of things through his ordeals. So, the law's demands were satisfied by Christ's death and therefore has no more hold on Paul. So, he said, nevertheless, I live. When Paul died with Christ, it was the old Pharisee Paul that died.

[ 22 : 26 ] what he was and did up to that time passed away so far as he was concerned. Always remember Romans chapter 6.

Everything we were in the old man, in the old Adam, in that old sin nature prior to Christ, everything we were as a sinner was nailed to the cross with Christ.

Alright? That's how he bore our sins. Now, so, everything that Paul did up to that time passed away.

Likewise, the same with us. Saul was buried and the old life with him. So, the dominating control of the Adamic nature had its power over him broken.

Now, yet not I, but Christ lives in me. Saul, the self-righteous Pharisee, died, but Paul, the great apostle, lives.

[ 23 : 32 ] So, it's no longer a self-centered life that he lives, but a Christ-centered one. And that, not just an outward form, religious form, but new life, inwardly as well as outwardly.

Paul in Romans chapter 12, I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, wholly acceptable unto God, which is your rational service, and stop being conformed to the world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.

That's the picture of transformation. Conformity, in the Greek text, in all of that, is the idea of the believer expressing outwardly from his life something opposite of what the true nature within is.

For the believer, the true nature is the Spirit of God. It's a divine nature. Conformity to the world is the idea though you're saved, you're outwardly portraying the world.

So he said, be transformed. Turn that around. Transformation here is the idea of the outward reality, or the outward display of the life matches the true inward nature.

[ 24 : 49 ] Okay? And that is by the renewing of the mind, learning to think the way God thinks, and that can only come through knowing the Word of God. All right. Now, Paul's new life as a person, and that is the Lord Jesus living in Paul.

Through the ministry of the Spirit of God, the Lord Jesus is manifest then in his life. So the new life no longer depends upon his own efforts in attempting to draw near to God.

Boy, that ought to be a relief to us if we ever get that down in our heart and mind. Amen? We don't have to make that happen. Though we try time and time again, we let the Spirit of God direct us, empower us, as we yield to him, then we satisfy the will of God and draw nearer to him.

So, the new life is a person within a person, living out his life in that person. So instead of attempting to live his life in obedience to a set of rules under the Mosaic law, Paul now yields to the indwelling Holy Spirit and cooperates with him to produce a life pleasing to God, energized by the divine life resident in him through the regenerating work of the Spirit of God.

Boy, you know, when you look at it in that frame, it seems simple, doesn't it? All right. We're just going to cooperate with God and his Spirit so that he can live his life through us, work out his purpose and will for us, and that will please God and it would please us as well.

[ 26 : 35 ] All right? Sounds good. But that's where the dilemma of Christian living comes in. It's the how to do that. So, it's now the saint living his life on a new principle, and that principle is that of the indwelling Holy Spirit and becoming totally dependent upon the life of Christ within us.

So thus, we become free from the bondage of circumstances and self-effort, which we so often find totally inadequate. All right? He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood dwelleth in me and I in him.

Now, of course, there, what Jesus is speaking about is his death, burial, and resurrection, and our identification in that with him.

As the living Father hath sent me and I live by the Father, so he that eateth me and he, even he, shall live by me, is the idea. Verily, verily, I say unto you, the Son of Man can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do.

For what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise. That's John 5, 19. All right. You know, it's a good thing for us to consider just a moment.

[ 27 : 54 ] When we start our day and we commune with the Father, what do we say? What does our prayer life with Jesus, with the Father, encompass us when we first arise in the morning, start the day?

You know what a good thing would be? I know we pray for people. That's good to do. We're supposed to do that. You know, if we in one setting pray for everything we're supposed to pray for, we'd never get out of bed or never get out of the bedroom.

We're home wherever we pray. A good thing for us to remember, I think, is it. I think one of the best things we could do if we're not doing it is sit down, give praise to the Father and say, all right, Lord, what have we got going today?

Amen? Yeah. What have we got going today? What do you want to purpose in and through my life? Now, he might show us that at that point, but you know what we really need to do is say, Lord, whatever that may be, you enable me, give me the grace to be sensitive to the Spirit of God today

so that I'll know what his direction for my life is today and I can yield to him and accomplish that purpose that you have for me at that moment.

That's really and truly what the focus of our daily life ought to be. Now, that's the principle we're to live by, yielded, totally surrendered, totally dependent.

[ 29 : 29 ] Now, we know that up here, don't we? But the question is, to what degree is it a reality in our lives?

That's really where the rubber meets the road, if you will. To what degree is that really at work within our lives? Galatians 5, 17 says, for the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, the Spirit against the flesh, these are contrary to one to the other, so that you cannot do the things that you would.

So, the flesh opposes the Spirit in an effort to prevent the believer from obeying the Spirit of God, and the purpose of each is to prevent the believer from doing what the other moves him to do.

And we'll talk, we'll look through our study in Esther, we'll see the idea of the influence upon the mind. So, the choice lies with the believer. He's got to develop the habit of keeping his eyes fixed on the Lord Jesus, and his trust in the Holy Spirit to do his work.

The more we say no to sin, the easier it is to say no, until it becomes a natural part of our life.

Likewise, the more we say yes to the Lord Jesus, the easier it is to say yes to him, and that becomes the norm for our very living.

[ 30 : 54 ] So, that's the dilemma of Christian living expressed by the Apostle Paul over in Romans chapter 7. Turn over there just a moment, you remember this, but let's turn over there anyway.

Romans chapter 7. Pick up in verse number 15. A little conundrum that Paul finds himself in here.

verse number For that which I do, I allow not. But what I would, that do I not. But what I hate, that do I.

If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good. Now then, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. For I know that in me that is in my flesh dwells no good thing, for to will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good, I find not.

That's the conundrum. That's the battle that we're looking at here. Alright? That's the dilemma of Christian living.

[ 32 : 03 ] For the good that I would, I do not. But the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that, I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.

So, look at verse 21. Paul discovered something here. For I find a law. Now that's a law not written down, but that's a law as an operating principle.

Alright? I find a law that when I would do good, evil is present with me. Alright? Still got that nature of sin.

Now, for I delight in the law of God after the inward man, sin. But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.

There's the struggle. That's the struggle that every one of us have recognized in our own lives from time to time. Alright? And so the question is, how do we deal with that?

[ 33 : 08 ] And that's what our study is going to be about in the book of Esther. O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? Now, I like verse 25 though.

I'm glad that's there. Amen? Paul had that conundrum but he didn't leave it there. God gave him the solution. He said, I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord so that with the law of my mind I serve the law of God but with the flesh the law of sin.

Now look at verse 1 of chapter 8 because it goes hand in hand. Therefore, as a result of that, there's now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus.

Alright? Who walk, now that's not where it stops. Who walk, not after the flesh but after the spirit.

Now that's not in the original but he gives us that idea later on down the road here.

Alright? Look at verse 14. Well, look at verse 2. The law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.

[ 34 : 14 ] Again, when he nailed those nails to the hands and feet of Jesus, he nailed our sins with them. Amen? Yeah. That's freedom that he gives to us here.

Now, for what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own son in the likeness of sinful flesh for sin condemned sin in the flesh that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh but walk after the spirit.

And he continues on and talks about walking in the spirit. Now, look over real quick to Hebrews chapter 12. Hebrews chapter 12.

Verses 1 and 2. Wherefore, seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses. Now, what he's talking about there is this. Remember over in chapter 11, he gives the whole roll call of the faithful, those that have proved that the life of faith in the coming Christ works. All right? He said, since we have those that bear testimony or witness to us, some people have the idea that they're in an arena looking over the rail of that arena and seeing us and watching us.

[ 35 : 37 ] That's not the idea. The idea is we see them. They bear testimony to us about what the life of faith does and is.

So he said, since we have that testimony of witnesses, let us then lay aside every weight and the sin which doth easily beset us and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, who is the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despised the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. Now, lay aside the weight and the sin, two different things. I've shown some of you have heard this before. Two different things he talks about here.

We know what sin is. We label sin anything that's outside of the will of God, contrary to the word of God. So what is weight? The original Greek word that's translated weight there.

Believe it or not, if you want to write this definition down, you can. It is, oh, you'll just probably remember it, a swelling superfluous flesh. Amen? That's the definition.

[ 36 : 56 ] It's something that all of us from time to time, except for Lee, have struggled with. How do you stay so skinny? You don't eat, right?

I cry over all the comments you make about my studies. Oh, I've got to remember, he's got a quick wit. You realize the analogy here is that of a runner.

Let's lay aside the weight and the sin and let us run with patience. The race sits before us. You ever seen a fat runner? I'm talking about a serious runner.

Oscar has got more weight now than he's ever had. Amen? Why? Because he's not running. When he was younger, man, he was skinny as a rail.

Did a lot of running. Went a lot of medals, didn't you? Yeah. Now, what he's saying is this.

[ 37 : 59 ] Weight to a runner is an encumbrance. It hinders. All right? Hinders him running the race. Likewise for us spiritually, the sin that invades our life, put it away, the weight is simply all those things that in and of themselves are not sin, but they're cluttering up our life.

We allow them into our life, whether it's activity, things, whatever. People, yeah, they clutter our life. They take up so much time and space in our life that it hinders us from following the will of God and satisfying his will.

So he said, lay that aside, run with patience the race that is set before us, doing what? Looking unto Jesus, who is the author and finisher of our faith.

in the Greek text, the word look has the definition of the idea of a tunnel vision. All right? Just remember when you were a kid, you might still do this.

I don't know. These round tubes that you'd get, maybe wrap, you know, Christmas wrapping paper and stuff, you know, you use that up.

[ 39 : 25 ] You got this cardboard tube, looking at it. I did that in school one time when I was a kid. And where was it?

Probably California somewhere. I was bored. It was raining outside. Teacher was trying to teach something. And I had my jacket on the back of my chair.

And I was thinking that whole time, knowing the rain was just pouring down. There was a big ditch out by the road. in the playground. And my sister and I usually go across that ditch to go home. Well, it was going to be full of water. And so I started daydreaming about being a soldier. And we're going to go out there and we're going to trudge through that water, the river, to get to the other side. And so I had my sleeve of my jacket there, and I just went like this, looking through the sleeve of that jacket, looking for the enemy and see if it's going to be clear to forge the river.

[ 40 : 37 ] And all of a sudden the enemy was there. It was the teacher. She saw me and she caught me and, oops, what are you doing?

Oh, I'm just trying to see if my jacket smells okay. Before I put it back on. No, but anyway, it's having a tunnel vision, looking unto Jesus, keeping our focus on Him as we run that race.

That's what we're going to do, and that's what we are. All right, let's pray. Father, again, thank you for your loving kindness today, and Father, thank you for who you are.

we praise you for that. And Lord, we praise you for the things that you have set in motion for us, that we might know you, know you as thoroughly as we can know you as human beings in this life, but also to be used of you to accomplish whatever the purposes are that you have designed for us to accomplish.

And so, Father, I thank you for that, and thank you for the privilege now of looking together in your word to see what those things are, and see how to conquer that dilemma of wondering how we make it all possible.

[ 42 : 05 ] And so, Father, thank you for these that are here, that love you, love your word, and pray, God, that you will just open our heart and minds to what you show us in all of this, that we might just not only continue to rejoice more and more in you, but be used of you, and draw in a closer relationship with you, through what you show us, and we'll thank you for it, pray for it, in Jesus' name, amen.

God bless y'all.