

Women of the Word, 4
2017 Women's Seminar
By Judy Seligman

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Grace and Truth Church of Washington PA
12 East Pike Street
Houston, PA 15342

Website: www.gandtchurch.com
Online Sermons: www.sermonaudio.com/swarne

Okay, ladies, this is our last of our seminar weeks in September and you can tell it's the last one because when we started, it was kind of light when we started at 7:30 and now it's dark out, the difference between summer and now it's autumn.

Let's begin with prayer.

Heavenly Father, we just thank you for your word. We just thank you for this year's seminar and I just ask that you would use these teachings as a catalyst to fill us with your Holy Spirit, that we would be women of the word and we would just grow in grace and the seeds that are planted through your word would grow into much fruit. We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.

This is our concluding message and we're going to do a real brief summary of the first three messages since they each build upon the other. So we're going to start with the five gifts of creation because that's what we started with, and the first gift was creation itself, and what I mean by that is it being a gift is that everything that man needed to be sustained physically and the beauty of it all were created before man was born, before man was created. So all his provisions were before he came into existence so it's a grace gift. He didn't have to work to attain to these things, God just gave them all to him, and the same is true for us in our spiritual life because in 2 Peter 1:3 it says that everything we need for our spiritual life is already there, all we have to do is walk in it. All the promises are in place. All the provisions to be spiritual, everything is finished. Jesus Christ said, "It is finished," and it truly was and we can just walk in the grace provisions and walk as spiritual women in a very carnal world.

The second gift of creation was dominion in Genesis 1:26 where it says, "Let Us make man in Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over everything that God made." I think that this whole seminar, the key words to this whole seminar are "over" and "under." The things over our head govern us, and the things under us we govern, and we have to find our place in the order of God's things. I remember when I was first saved, I was about 24, and the first thing I asked God was, "Where is my place in your order?" I just realized there was such an order to creation and everything that God had made and I asked him, "Where is my place?" What a strange

question and he's spent the last 45 years teaching me where my place was. "I'm going to put you in your place."

Anyways, in Genesis in Scripture where man was given dominion, he says they're going to rule over the sea, over the birds, over everything God had made. Man would be over creation so he would have dominion. Now, the sovereignty of God, it speaks of it in Daniel 4:17 which says, "The Most High rules over the kingdoms of men," and I like that. Even just the simple word "Most High," we have high, people with high places, people in high places in politics, in world government, but there's the Most High. He's above all men that rule and he rules over, God rules over the kingdoms of men.

Now God allows men and women to rule but the dominion has been corrupted by the fall, so that's why the sovereignty of God reigning over men is such a comfort to us, that even though men have power, they can't determine the outcome. You can make a decision but who knows what's going to happen. But God when he makes a decision, he determines the outcome with a decision. Proverbs 16:9, "The mind of man plans his way but the Lord directs his steps." Men have plans but God's directing those steps to his perfect will.

The third gift of creation is free will and we know that in the midst of the garden was the tree of the knowledge of good and evil which Adam and Eve were commanded not to eat. And why the tree? It gave them the opportunity to walk by faith because Hebrews 11:6, without faith you can't please God, and they had a choice not to eat from the tree or to eat from the tree but to believe what God said about the tree or not to believe. It's always about faith, it's not about works, and they had a choice to walk by faith and we're challenged all the time, are we going to walk by what we see or are we going to walk by the word of God and by faith?

The fourth gift of creation was marriage. We know it says that God made the man from the dust, breathed on him the breath of life and the man became a living being. Now, we know in Genesis 1 when God created, he said, "Let there be light." Then he said, "Let the earth sprout forth vegetation. Let the waters team with living things." He just spoke a word and it was but it wasn't so with man, with man he said God shaped the man from the dirt. He got his hands in there and in lovingkindness he shaped the man. It was an intimate creation, not like the vast creation. It was very intimate.

He was creating a masterpiece from dirt and that's what he's doing with us because now we say we're all made out of the same thing, we're all made out of dirt, and God is shaping us and he's molding us. He's molding our dirt, our personal dirt, and there are a lot of things that we go through and we know that it's dirty but God works it all for the good and he said, God said, "It's not good for man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him." The man, it wasn't good for him to be alone and I really think that loneliness could be defined as having no one to love or no one to respond to your love. That's what true loneliness is. It's not just being alone because there are a lot of people that are very very lonely amongst a lot of people. They may have a lot of friends but do they have someone that they can love and that person actually responds to their love?

Well, that's what Eve's purpose was, to fill that gap in Adam, that he could love her and she would respond to him.

She was also, God said, a helper to him and as we said in this study in the past weeks, that the word "helper" is the same word that is attributed to God when David said, "You are my helper." The same Hebrew word. Where it says that God is the helper of Israel. So the word "helper" isn't a demeaning term unless you feel that the helper of David and the helper of Israel was someone to look down on. People think because the woman was made to be a helper, that that was a low place but it's not, it's a very high place because her ability to help her husband to achieve his purpose in life was empowered and enabled by God. She had a great power of influence with the man and God empowered that so she could help him. So it was perfect, the perfect marriage.

The last and final gift is the Sabbath rest. Now as we said before, there are two accounts of creation. The first one begins in Genesis 1:1 and then it's in Genesis 2:3 and it ends with the phrase, "the heavens and earth were complete. God completed his work which he has done and rested on the seventh day from all his work which he has done." Now the second account begins in the next verse and what it does, it says that God creates the heavens and the earth, then he created man from the dirt and then he took the woman out of the side of man, and then Satan came and tempted the woman, and she ate from the fruit she wasn't supposed to, and she gave it to him, and they were thrown out of the garden, and then they had kids, Cain and Abel, and then the earth was corrupt, and then came Noah, and then came Abraham, and then they multiplied and ended up in Egypt, and then came Moses, and then came the kings, and then the prophets, and then Jesus. Do you know what happened? What we don't see here in the second account that we saw in the first, the first talks about the six days of creation and then it says, "on the seventh day God rested." In the second account of creation, it goes to the sixth day but never mentions the seventh day because we're in the sixth day. God has left the sixth day and it says he's resting but he's the Most High God and I think if you could imagine a timeline, the beginning in Genesis all the way through Revelation, and that's the sixth day but God's above that, above space and time, and in his mind this is all complete. The whole work is complete and he's resting in the seventh day. It's not like he's watching the progression of time, it's complete.

He knows the beginning from the end as if it already happened. It's like I was talking to my son about it and he said it was like, what if you wanted to watch a football game but you couldn't so you recorded it and you were going to watch it the next day, but you already know the Steelers won? When you're watching it the second day and you're watching it play by play, are you going to get upset because they fumbled the ball? No, because you know they already won. Are you going to get upset because the quarterback got sacked? No, because you know at the end we won. Well, this is how we have to look at our lives, from God's point of view. It's been recorded. It's all done and we win at the end and he's in heaven in heavenly places.

The really wonderful thing about this is that we're invited in Hebrews 4, and if you have the time to read chapter 3 and 4 of Hebrews, because isn't invitation there for all believers

to enter God's rest? Chapter 4, verse 1 of Hebrews says, "The promise remains of entering his rest. Chapter 4, verse 3, "We who believe enter that rest." Now this rest has been offered to the people of God in both the Old and New Testament. Do you know this place? Do you know how to enter his rest? I'm sorry to say a lot of people that are believers don't even know that it exists. They live in time and space and they don't realize that God's finished and that we can go to that place where God is and be at perfect peace.

Now I have to say that because I was writing this and really contemplating a lot about it. I was challenged so many times this week with thoughts and anxious thoughts and, you know, what's going to happen or should you do something, should you say something, all the things that, you know, you do in your head, and each time I thought, "I'm not going there. I'm going to go to the place of rest. I'm going to go and say, 'God, it's all done. I don't have to be anxious for anything. You've won.'"

The Old Testament calls this in Psalm 91, the secret place of the Most High. We already talked about the Most High, he's high above everything. He calls it the secret place. That's what David called it. Psalm 32:7 calls it a hiding place. It's a place we run to when this world gets too tough and it does get tough. Psalm 31:20, it's called a secret place of his presence and we can go there.

You know, I think of when Jesus was asleep in the boat in Mark 4:38, he was asleep in the midst of a storm and he wants us to have that kind of faith, that we can rest, enter the Sabbath rest with him in the midst of the storm. You know, he said to his apostles, "O you of little faith." They thought they were going to drown. "Don't you care enough to save us?" And he stopped and he said to the wind and the rain and the storm to be still. We want him to stop the storm but he wants us to enter his rest and sleep in the boat. Let the storm happen. They don't have to be stopped. We can rest because there's this place we can go to because God loves us and he orchestrates all the storms and this is why 1 Thessalonians 5:18, another one of my favorite life verses is, "in everything give thanks." We can thank God when things are bad. We can thank God for the storms because we know we won. There is this Sabbath rest that we can enter into when life gets tough.

So that's the final, I'm sure there are more gifts but that's the five I saw. Now we came to the fall. We found out that Satan desired creation and the dominion over it so he used God's gift of marriage and free will to steal the dominion from the man and the woman and it's very obvious by this that Satan's a thief because he doesn't own anything, he can't create anything, he has to steal it. Ephesians 2:2, it says he's the prince of the air. That's all he has to work with is air. The earth's the Lord's and the fullness thereof. He doesn't own the earth, all he owns is air, and he knew that if he could get Adam and Eve to obey him, go under him, that he would be ruling over them and whatever they ruled, he would rule and he would have dominion. And we know the story. He was successful. Adam and Eve sinned. God asked them what happened and Adam said, "The woman you gave me, she made me do it." And Eve said, "I was deceived. The serpent made me do it."

Now the next portion in Genesis 3:14 and 15 is called by theologians the Protevangelium which is the first, which is proto which means first, an announcement of good news. An

announcement of good news is evangelium. So this is the first time that the good news of the Gospel was preached, very early in the Scriptures in Genesis 3:14-15 and it's interesting to note that this good news wasn't preached to, wasn't spoken to Adam and Eve but to the serpent and it wasn't good news to him. But I like the idea that Adam and Eve were there to listen because they just...he said, "She made me." They're standing there in fig leaves still. They're upset. They failed horrifically. They're facing their God in nakedness knowing how guilty they are, and he's talking to the serpent and they hear the plan for victory. They didn't have to live in guilt for just until God calls them forth and they admitted their sin, at that point, no more guilt. They're hearing from God the plan for victory. It's always listen. Even if our blunders are horrific, God has a plan for victory. He works all these things for the good, even our failures, so just keep your ears open and they had their ears open and I just love the idea that he would speak this in their hearing to the serpent.

In Genesis 3:14 and 15, this is the Protoevangelium, "The Lord God said to the serpent, 'Because you have done this, cursed are you more than any other cattle, more than every beast of the field, on your belly you will go and eat dust all the days of your life.'" Instead of him being above, he was below. Dan always uses this phrase, he says, "I feel lower than a snake in a wagon wheel rut," and that's what, he's going to be low. He wanted to be high and God declared that he would be low and he also said, "I will put enmity between you and the woman, between your seed and her seed, and he," which is Jesus Christ, "shall crush you on the head and you shall bruise him on the heel." He wanted to be high and he exalted himself, Satan did, but he's going to be crushed under the foot of our Savior. The dominion would be legally won back.

Now God gave the dominion to the man and the woman and the gifts of God are without recall, which means that once he gives a gift, that's it. So he gave them dominion. So he just couldn't take it back. He had to win it back and he's going to win it back through Jesus Christ becoming the God-man. It's so important that he's a God-man because the promise of dominion was given to man. So a man has to sit on the throne of the universe because that's who it was originally given to. So Jesus Christ who has finished, be that man on that throne and he promises to share that throne with believing mankind.

Now he got this victory for us through death. We know that. When Jesus died for our sins, he erased Satan's claim on the human race. Because we sinned, we became a slave to Satan but if you take away the sin, we're no longer slaves. I like 1 Corinthians 6:20 for it says, "We were bought for a price," and the word "bought" there means "from the marketplace," and the only thing, the only people you buy in the marketplace are slaves. So we've been bought for a price from this slave market of sin. Satan owned us but Jesus bought us.

He canceled in Colossians 2:14 the certificate of debt that was against us. You see, Satan owned us. He had a certificate that said, "See? I own this one." Jesus took that certificate and nailed it to his cross and paid the debt so we can be free. Colossians 2:15, he disarmed principalities and powers and made a show of them, openly triumphing over them. Do you see, we've got that under and over. If you would go through this when you

read the Scriptures, I'm sure you all read it all the time cover to cover, check out and underline every time it says over and under and see who's over and see who's under, and I bet you'll see who wins all the time.

Now all the sins of mankind, this is important because there are some doctrines that teach differently but this is so important, all the sins of mankind, all of them, had to be gathered and included in the cross. The full price of all sins had to be paid for in order to annul Satan's claim. If Jesus just died for the elect, then Satan still has his claim through the unbelieving of dominion on the earth. So he had to die for every sin, past, present and future. They all had to be gathered up so what the first Adam lost, Jesus Christ can legally win back completely by paying for the sins of all men. He won completely. Hallelujah. Now we're no longer under the dominion of Satan but we are under the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

There is a prophetic picture throughout the Scripture and this is another thing, once you start thinking about these things, you're going to see this over and over and over again. I pulled out a few Scriptures that show this victory of Jesus Christ but as you read, you're going to see it. It's like a thread that's just woven within all the books of the Bible. It's everywhere.

In Psalm 8:6, he talks of Jesus Christ and he said, "You made him to rule over the works of your hand, you have put all under his feet." Who has dominion over all now? Jesus. Who is crushed under Satan's feet? Satan.

Psalm 110:1 says, "The Lord said to my Lord, 'Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet.'" So Jesus is seated and under him are all his enemies. He's over. He has rule. He has dominion.

Hebrews 2:8 says, "You have put all things in subjection," under his feet, "for in subjecting all things to him, he left nothing not subject to him but we do not yet see all things subject to him." No, we have this great victory but do we see everything subject to Jesus? Not yet.

Now to me, "not yet" are powerful words of faith. I have to say what "not yet" is the time of the promise and the time of the fulfillment. In between is the valley of "not yet." It's a valley. I remember when I started to believe God for Dan's conversion and 1 Peter 3:1 said, "Wives, submit to your husband and your husband who obeys not the word will be won by your behavior," and I was really excited because I got this promise, but I didn't see the fulfillment right away. And when I would tell people, "Oh, Dan's going to be fine," and they'd look at him and say...I think they wanted not to be mean to me or to take away from my faith, I think they were trying to like prepare me so that I wouldn't be hurt for believing such a fallacy and they'd say, "Judy, he's not any better. He's actually worse." I said, "He's not better yet. Not yet." And this is where I learned about the valley of "not yet," and when I read this, I just read this Scripture recently and I never saw those little words in there that said, "but we do not yet see things subject to him." I think they're powerful words. Powerful words.

We do not yet see it but they will be subject to him. We heard the promise. We're going to see them fulfilled but unfortunately, many believers die in the valley of "not yet." I've had women come to me over the years and say, "Pray for my husband, he's just so lost. Pray for his salvation. Pray for his repentance." And I would pray and I say, "You pray and believe God that he's going to do it." Get a promise from God. But before their husband reached repentance, they divorced them in their valley of "not yet." They didn't wait. There are so many things we're going through and God gave promises and we don't see their fulfillment and we're in this valley but this valley is a time where we grow.

It was so important in my spiritual life through the valley of "not yet" because that's when I learned God's faithfulness towards me. My husband wasn't faithful towards me but Jesus was. This is where I learned how to live by every word of God, while I was waiting for the fulfillment. God had so much work to do in me. I needed the valley.

But people die in that valley and they give up. You know, whether it's finances or someone's salvation or deliverance from sin, just because it doesn't happen, they quit believing and I say the only way you can lose in the spiritual life is to quit. When we quit, you know it says, Jesus said, "When I come back on the earth, will I find faith?" I think he has the answer. I know one woman was praying for her husband and she divorced him and then another guy, they got married and guess what happened? Her husband got saved but she wasn't there for him. When Jesus comes back, will he find faith on the earth? Will he find a place in your heart for the promises he's promised you? Or have you given up on them? Don't give up on his promises just because you're in a valley. He's going to fulfill it. Don't give up. It's the only way you can lose.

Now I want you to look at the promise that we're waiting to be fulfilled. I think this Scripture is just so exciting. It's on page six of your booklet. It's Daniel 7:26. I'll wait until you turn there. This Scripture is so great. This is the promise that we don't see yet but that's going to be fulfilled. This is it. This is exciting. You know how bad and mixed up this world is, so listen to this. It says, "But the court will sit for judgment and his domain," that's Satan's, "will be taken away, annihilated and destroyed forever." This hold that Satan has on the earth right now, it's going to be annihilated and destroyed forever. Isn't that exciting? "Then the sovereignty, the domain and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven will be given to the saints of the Highest One," the Highest One, Jesus. "His kingdom will be an everlasting domain and all domains will serve him."

That's the promise. That's the promise we're waiting for fulfillment of but we don't see it, not yet. But it's here so we will see it. I just thought that Scripture was so exciting and remember, waiting is good for us. Waiting builds patience in us. Patience is a good thing because it makes us whole and complete, lacking nothing, as James said. And there's always a time it seems between the promise and the fulfillment and it's necessary.

Look at Joseph. He had a dream that his brothers would bow down and worship him. Remember when we went through Joseph's life? All that stuff happened to him and he

didn't see the fulfillment until 20 years later almost. So he had to go through the valley of "not yet."

You know, David was anointed king by Samuel but he wasn't made king for another, what, 13, 15 years. He had the promise and the fulfillment but he had to go through the valley. And do you know what? We're glad he did. Do you know what he did when he was in that valley most of the time? He wrote Psalms. We wouldn't have the Psalms if Samuel anointed him and he became king the next day. He knew, God knew that we were going to need David's Psalms, his encouragement, his story of his life. So he had to go through this valley and he didn't know it was for me that he was going through it, or for you, or for you. But he had to go through it because it was important for the plan of God to be fulfilled.

How about Moses? He had to wait 40 years before he could deliver his people. I mean, I think by the time I was 80, pretty soon, that's my big stop-over, but I would think God was done with me. But God didn't start working with Moses until he was 80. Who knows what God has for us.

So we're waiting for the fulfillment of Daniel 7:26. Let's read it again. I like it so much. "And the court will sit for judgment and his domain will be taken away, annihilated and destroyed forever." What Adam and Eve lost, Jesus Christ is going to win back. "Then the sovereignty, the domain and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven will be given to the people of the saints of the Highest One and his kingdom will be an everlasting domain and all the domains will serve him."

I just can't wait to see that but right now, guess what? There are three different realms that we live in. We should live in two but we actually fall into the third. The first realm is the visible realm, the things on the earth, everything we see and come in contact with our senses. Most people only live in that realm. They don't know that there are two other realms that exist. The next realm in Colossians 1:13 is called the domain of darkness. It's ruled by Satan through those who obey him. So he still has a remnant of the dominion that he stole from Adam and Eve because people still obey him. Then we have the invisible kingdom of God where authority from the throne of God flows down to the earth through believers that we actually rule now.

Now we're going to look back at Genesis again in Genesis 3:16 because this is the beginning of the rule of God. Genesis 3:16, the Lord said to the woman, "I will greatly multiply your pain in childbirth, in pain you shall bring forth children yet your desire shall be for your husband but he shall rule over you." Now where do women stand in God's order? Under their husbands, and God put the woman under there for two, maybe three purposes. 1. To keep her from being deceived again. The second one is to protect the family.

Now, when I was considering that because a woman is under this covering and the children are under her and they're protected, since women have decided that this is old fashioned and it shouldn't be anymore, what's one of the first things we see that's falling

apart in our country? Our families. Children are lost. My sister-in-law works at a funeral home and she was saying that they get at least two, sometimes three overdose deaths in one funeral home every week, and do you know what made me stop and think when I was doing this? Those are just the overdoses. That's a small percentage of the young people out there that are on drugs. Why is it so bad? Why is everyone so immoral? I really believe it's because the women have stepped out from the covering that God has ordained for them and Satan is having a free-for-all.

You know, it says in 1 Corinthians 11:3 that the head of every man is Christ and the head of the woman is the man, which means, let's go back to the domain again, God said right in the beginning, God's going to rule the family through the husband to the woman, then to the woman and then the children are under her. So this is a place of, it's a seat of government that God established very very early on in the Scriptures, actually the first one. So he has a place. Now it says he has dominion but when it comes to the man and the family, God's ruling it in just that small part. So it's a whole world nobody else believes. We believe. God can rule in our little families. If you're single, you belong to a church and you have the word of God and God can rule in your life.

So it was designed to protect and give God a seat of government on the earth, but soon God found another point of dominion on the earth and it was through the nation of Israel which began with Abraham. Now Genesis 15:6 it says that, "Abraham believed in the Lord and he reckoned it to him as righteousness." Okay, Abraham was freed from Satan's domain the same way that we are. He believed God and it was reckoned to him as righteousness. He was declared righteous. His sins were washed away. Abraham was not enslaved to Satan so God could govern through Abraham just like he can govern through us because we're not under the domain of Satan. Are you getting this? Okay.

It says that, "He who knew no sin became sin on our behalf that we might become the righteousness of God." Are you righteous? Yes, I am through no merit of my own. I became righteous because Jesus took all my sins and we made this exchange, he said, "Give me all your sins and I'll give you all my righteousness." I said, "Fair enough." So I'm no longer under the domain of Satan because he has no claim on me through sin because Jesus took my sins when he died and he paid the price for them. I mean, this is a no-brainer. I mean, who wouldn't trade your sins in for the righteousness of God? We can do it every day of our lives.

Sometimes we say that Abraham looks to the future to the cross and that's where he got his imputed righteousness, and we look at the historical cross. But I think it's bigger than that. I think it's that God looked down from his faith rest and he gathered all the sins, not past and present and future, just outside of time. He gathered all the sins from Adam and Eve and, you know, some day there will be the last sin ever committed on the earth and God's going to take that sin and he'll gather them all and put them on his Son. The Lord, Isaiah 53:6, caused the iniquity of all of us to fall on him. All of us.

So back to Abraham. Abraham believed God and was declared righteous. He was removed from Satan's domain and now God had a point of government on the earth. He

can rule the earth now because of Abraham. God's will can flow from heaven through Abraham because Abraham is no longer under the domain of Satan and the first, God told Abraham concerning the land of Canaan which became the land of Israel, "Arise, walk the land through its length and breadth for I will give it to you." Do you get the picture there? He's walking, where is it? Under his feet. He has dominion over all this land. God has this new point of government on the earth and it's Israel and the first mention of Abraham exercising his dominion was through prayer and I want to say that the Old Testament saints and the New Testament saints exercise our dominion on the earth through prayer just like Abraham did.

I'll give you a little background. Abraham, you know, I think most of us know the story but we'll repeat it. Abraham's wife Sarah was very beautiful so he had her, they went in cahoots since he said to her, "Tell everybody you're my sister because if they know you're my wife, they'll kill me to get you." So she went along with him. "I'm his sister." So the king Abimelech saw Sarah and since it was his sister, he took her. So Abraham got to go free but Sarah's in this harem, but that night Abimelech has a dream and God says to him, "You touch that woman and you're a dead man." And in his dream, Abimelech said, what did he say? He said, "I did this in the integrity of my heart. I thought it was his sister. He didn't tell me." And he said, "Well, I'll tell you what," God said to Abimelech, "I'll have Abraham pray for you and you will live." Now why didn't God say to Abimelech, "Pray for forgiveness and I'll forgive you"? Because he wasn't a believer. He didn't have righteousness. He was in the domain of Satan. He had no power with God. He couldn't pray.

So God had to have his man pray for Abimelech and Abraham did so, and this is the first mention of intercessory prayer in the Bible. I think it's very interesting that it comes after God gave him righteousness, Abraham, it was imputed to him, his righteousness, and he gave him the land to rule from. So we see God's dominion coming down on the earth to Israel through the first Israelite, Abraham. So we see the principle.

Now Abraham's offspring became the nation of Israel and it says in Hebrews 1:1 that God in times past ruled through the prophets. Now didn't you always think in the land of Israel the kings ruled? Not so. The prophets ruled and the good kings listened to what the prophets had to say and they were blessed. So the government of God came through the prophets to the king. The bad kings who did what was right in their own eyes brought judgment down on Israel and guess what? Because Israel was ordained by God through Abraham and it was a gift, that's still a seat of government for God, it's not a home now. The promise was made, we don't see the fulfillment until Jesus Christ comes back. In Revelation the new Jerusalem is going to be in Israel which was ordained to be God's place to rule from the earth. So the man, Christ Jesus, is going to rule. His throne will be in Israel but right now Abraham's kind of like it's "not yet" stage. That's a promise. Don't see the fulfillment yet.

Now in our day and age, God governs through the prayers of the saints and I want to stress this because our prayers are so important because if we don't pray, God doesn't govern because he's delegated it to us. Do you ever get someone that delegates authority

and then tells you how to do it? Does it themselves and won't let you have it? God's not like that. When he gives you something, it's yours. You know, when he said to Adam, "You have rule over everything," it says that Adam named all the animals because he had dominion over them, and it says whatever he named them, it was so because his dominion was complete. God didn't say, "Hm, bad name. Don't call that a hippopotamus. No one can spell that." No God, whatever he said was so because when God gives something, he doesn't recall it.

So he has given dominion to the saints through prayer. Now I'll tell you what prayer isn't. Begging God to do something he doesn't want to do. It's not trying to change his mind and it's not asking him to give us something we think will make us happy. It's actually bringing the will of God from the heavens to the earth. That's what prayer is. That's why when the apostles said to Jesus, "Teach us to pray," he said, "Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." He's saying, "Use the dominion I gave you and call the will of God from heaven to the earth." That's how you pray.

John 15:17 says, "If you abide in me and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish and it will be done for you." If you abide in me and my words abide in you, this is how we find out what God's will is, through the word. We know what God's will is. It's black and white. So we read the word, we see the promises in the word, we see what God's will is and we pray the promises and the will of God into our little worlds. 1 John 5:14, "This is the confidence which we have before him, that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us," and if he hears us, he answers us. So we have to learn to pray according to his will.

Now some people say, "Why pray? Isn't God going to do what he's going to do anyway?" The answer is no. He's given domain to the church, dominion, and again and again we're commanded to pray God's will. Without our prayer and our faith, God's will is inoperative.

Now I want you to look at Matthew 9:36-38 because if you look at this, we're going to tear it apart a little bit and you'll see exactly what I mean where God has given man dominion to pray. Matthew 9:36-38. I don't think it's on the sheet. This study kept growing. I'll give you a second to get there. In Matthew 9:36-38, "But when He," Jesus, "saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd. Then He said to His disciples, 'The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest.'" Now we see Jesus here telling his disciples to pray. Pray to the Lord of the harvest to send workers into the harvest. Now if you don't have a clear understanding of prayer, this will present a few problems. The need was obviously there. Why wouldn't the Father just send workers? Why did Jesus say to pray? Because we were given dominion. That's why we have to pray. We have it. God just isn't going to send them, we have to use the dominion he has given us.

Now wouldn't Jesus pray and ask for workers? He apparently saw the need. But at that time, the dominion, during the church age, it's given to the church. Now I want to say Jesus does empower, he intercedes for us but he empowers our prayers. He directs our thoughts as to what we're supposed to pray when we're in union with him. I always say when it says in the Scriptures, "If any two agree on anything, then God will do it," it's not me and Suzy praying for something that will bring that fulfillment, it's me and the Holy Spirit of God. When the two of us are in agreement, God will do it. Not that group prayer isn't important, but the unity is between you and the Spirit of God, to know God's will so that we pray God's will. He will do it.

Now why wouldn't these shepherdless sheep ask for help themselves? Because they are shepherdless. They're not saved. If they were saved, he wouldn't say they were sheep without a shepherd because he would have been their Shepherd. So they have no power with God to pray because they're not the church. We're the church. We're the ones who have been delegated the power to pray.

This is why prayer is so important. It's the legal reasons why it is. The domain was lost through Satan but through faith in Christ and the imputed righteousness of Christ and Christ dying for all our sins, we regain the dominion that was lost and now we have authority to bring God's will to the earth. We're the only ones, the church, who has this authority. And prayer isn't about our petty wants and desires, it's a lot bigger than that.

Satan's power and domain is not over us. There is a direct access between us. We can go boldly to the throne of grace in time of need and we can pray God's will and comes to the earth through our prayer. So we have to know the word of God, that's how we know his will. We have to know the promises of God so we can take the promise and pray it to fulfillment. And we can pray like Jesus said, "Now your will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

Now I want to bring up one little interesting note about prayer. In the early church, the responsibility for prayer in 1 Timothy 5 was delegated to the widows which I thought was very interesting, not that everyone wasn't to pray but they were to pray night and day because they were widows, they had no husband, their children, they were older widows. It said they had to be at least 60 years old to be in this group of praying widows and they were delegated to pray and it was so important that these women were supported by the church just like the pastor was because prayer was that important and these women because they had no earthly responsibility, can be given entirely to prayer.

So prayer doesn't mean you have to be strong or successful or intelligent or anyone of importance. I think probably in those days and even today because by the time you are older, you're kind of like passed over. The youth, you know, is everything. You're not looked at as someone of value. You're like a drain on the system. But God saw these women as so valuable. The church saw them as so valuable. So if we're going to end up being old widows devoted to prayer, sitting in our rockers in the old age home, we can't wait until we're there to learn to pray. We have to start now. We have to use the dominion and the power given to us as women to become the women God wants us to be. Not

women of the world but women of the word that have the power of dominion through the word of God and the will of God to bring it down on the earth. Very powerful and important position. Amen?

Heavenly Father, I just thank you for this study. Lord, I ask you that it would take root in our hearts and that we would be so one with your Spirit that we would know what to pray, as we read the word, that you would formulate prayers in our mind for situations that we're involved with, for people we're involved with, for people we love and care for; that through our prayers would come repentance in people's hearts, salvation, deliverance, provisions, awakening. I just lift this to you, Father, and I ask you to empower us as women to be women of prayer, women of the word. We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.