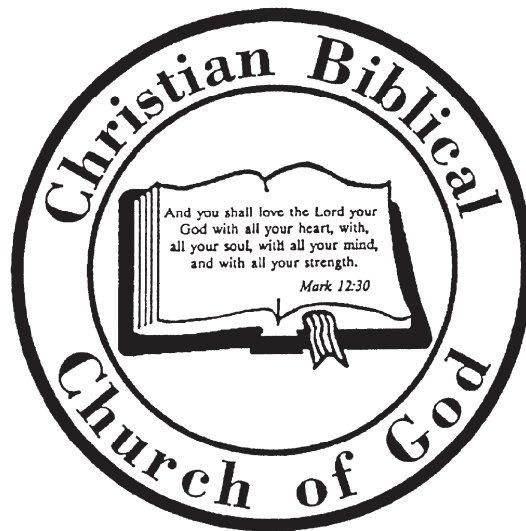


Study Package Four

Christian Living



Transcript Book

By Fred R. Coulter

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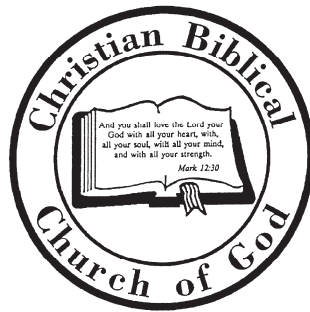
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Study Package Four

Series of 29 sermons by Fred R. Coulter



Signature

Date

☐ How to Use God's Holy Spirit I	Date completed _____
☐ How to Use God's Holy Spirit II	Date completed _____
☐ How to Use God's Holy Spirit III	Date completed _____
☐ How the Holy Spirit Works	Date completed _____
☐ Be Strong in the Lord I	Date completed _____
☐ Be Strong in the Lord II	Date completed _____
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☐ Be Strong in the Lord IV	Date completed _____
☐ Be Strong in the Lord V	Date completed _____
☐ Healing	Date completed _____
☐ God's Love Toward Us	Date completed _____
☐ Love Toward Neighbor	Date completed _____
☐ Love Toward Brethren	Date completed _____
☐ How to Worship in Spirit & Truth I	Date completed _____
☐ How to Worship in Spirit & Truth II	Date completed _____
☐ Spirit of God—Power of God I	Date completed _____
☐ Spirit of God—Power of God II	Date completed _____
☐ Judge Righteous Judgment I	Date completed _____
☐ Judge Righteous Judgment II	Date completed _____
☐ Judge Righteous Judgment III	Date completed _____
☐ What is the Mystery of Godliness?	Date completed _____
☐ Law and the New Covenant	Date completed _____
☐ Table of the Lord vs Table of Demons	Date completed _____
☐ God's Love Never Fails	Date completed _____
☐ So You Think You Have Suffered I	Date completed _____
☐ So You Think You Have Suffered II	Date completed _____
☐ To Return to God	Date completed _____
☐ True Fellowship	Date completed _____
☐ Will of God vs Will of Man	Date completed _____

Contents

Study Package Four Transcript Book

	PAGE
How to Use God's Holy Spirit I -----	1 – 10
How to Use God's Holy Spirit II -----	11 – 20
How to Use God's Holy Spirit III -----	21 – 31
How the Holy Spirit Works -----	32 – 42
Be Strong in the Lord I -----	43 – 54
Be Strong in the Lord II-----	55 – 65
Be Strong in the Lord III -----	66 – 74
Be Strong in the Lord IV-----	75 – 86
Be Strong in the Lord V-----	87 – 96
Healing -----	97 – 99
God's Love Toward Us-----	100-109
Love Toward Neighbor -----	110-116
Love Toward Brethren -----	117-128
How to Worship God in Spirit and in Truth I -----	129-140
How to Worship God in Spirit and in Truth II-----	141-149
Spirit of God—Power of God I-----	150-158
Spirit of God—Power of God II-----	159-169
Judge Righteous Judgment I-----	170-182
Judge Righteous Judgment II -----	183-194
Judge Righteous Judgment III -----	195-207
What is the Mystery of Godliness? -----	208-218
Love and the New Covenant -----	219-228
The Table of the Lord vs Table of Demons -----	229-239
God's Love Never Fails -----	240-249
So You Think You Have Suffered I -----	250-263
So You Think You Have Suffered II -----	264-275
To Return to God -----	276-287
True Fellowship -----	288-298
Will of God vs Will of Man -----	299-313

Study Package Four

Compact Disc 1

[When included]

- Tracks 1 & 2 How to Use God's Holy Spirit # I**
- Tracks 3 & 4 How to Use God's Holy Spirit # II**
- Tracks 5 & 6 How to Use God's Holy Spirit # III**
- Tracks 7 & 8 How the Holy Spirit Works**
- Tracks 9 & 10 Be Strong in the Lord # I**
- Tracks 11 & 12 Be Strong in the Lord # II**
- Tracks 13 & 14 Be Strong in the Lord # III**
- Tracks 15 & 16 Be Strong in the Lord # IV**
- Tracks 17 & 18 Be Strong in the Lord # V**
- Track 19 Healing**
- Tracks 20 & 21 God's Love Toward Us**
- Track 22 Love Toward Neighbor**
- Tracks 23 & 24 Love Toward Brethren**
- Tracks 25 & 26 How to Worship God in Spirit and in Truth I**
- Tracks 27 & 28 How to Worship God in Spirit and in Truth II**
- Tracks 29 & 30 Spirit of God—Power of God I**

Compact Disc 2

[When included]

- Tracks 1 & 2 Spirit of God—Power of God II**
- Tracks 3 & 4 Judge Righteous Judgment I**
- Tracks 5 & 6 Judge Righteous Judgment II**
- Tracks 7 & 8 Judge Righteous Judgment III**
- Tracks 9 & 10 What is the Mystery of Godliness?**
- Tracks 11&12 Love and the New Covenant**
- Tracks 13&14 The Table of the Lord vs Table of Demons**
- Tracks 15&16 God's Love Never Fails**
- Tracks 17&18 So You Think You Have Suffered I**
- Tracks 19&20 So You Think You Have Suffered II**
- Tracks 21&22 To Return to God**
- Tracks 23&24 True Fellowship**
- Tracks 25&26 Will of God vs Will of Man**

Study Package Four

Christian Living

Foreword

This fourth study package contains the transcripts of twenty-nine sermons delivered by Fred R. Coulter and is intended to teach some of the basics of the Bible regarding Christian Living.

The first four messages are about how the Bible teaches us to Use the Holy Spirit to grow in our relationship with God, and to walk in His light while living in the world filled with darkness of sin all around us. The next five messages are teaching us how to be Strong in the Lord.

There are four message from the Belief Series, including 1) Healing, 2) God's Love Toward Us, 3) Love Towards Our Neighbor, 4) Love Towards Brethren The messages on How to Worship God in Spirit and Truth as well as The Spirit of God—Power of God teach us to grow in the grace and knowledge of God. And the next three on Judge Righteous Judgment teach us that we are to be preparing to judge righteously in the kingdom of God. The Mystery of Godliness shows that God expects us to live in His righteousness now.

The sermon Love and the New Covenant and Table of the Lord vs. Table of Demons show that Jesus Christ taught that we are to love the Father and Jesus with our whole hearts, minds and being and not partake of the love of this world. The next very encouraging message is “Godly Love NEVER Fails.

There are three messages acknowledging the suffering that brethren have experienced and the need to return to God, and realize that the trials we have suffered do not even compare to what Christ and the early church went through, and then there is a message teaches us to seek True Fellowship with God the Father and Jesus Christ first and then we will learn to have right fellowship with the brethren. The final message in this Study Package teaches us to seek the Will of God in our Lives, rather than the Will of Men.

It is our hope that this very important collection of sermons will be a blessing to you and help you grow spiritually in your relationship with God and with the brethren and help prepare you as part of the firstfruits called ones.

Special thanks goes to Bonnie Orswell, Nancy Spaller, and Laila Patterson for transcribing the sermons.

How to Use God's Holy Spirit I

Fred R. Coulter

It's most important that we understand how to use God's Holy Spirit, and realize it, brethren, as we go forward, because today we are confronted with a great, great number of problems and difficulties. Life today is much more difficult and stressful to live than it was 20, 30, 40 years ago.

That's all marked by what we see in the educational system where years ago the main problems in school were chewing gum, talking in class and getting out of line when they were supposed to be in the lunch line. Today the greatest problems are murder, guns, drugs, fornication and illegitimacy. In the world there are a lot of pressing problems and difficulties that are coming in on everyone.

How many here, in what you are doing in your life, in your work or at home find an inordinate amount of the stress that you've never had before? I talked to a woman on the phone the other night and the problems for her were so overwhelming that she just needed to know where God was. It was really something! I tried to comfort her the best I could and I read some out of an article trying to help her.

Let's go to Psalm 73^[transcriber's correction] and see what we are confronted with. This is a Psalm that we have gone to in the past. Nevertheless,

- the Word of God is living
- the Word of God is true
- the Word of God is Holy and righteous
- the Word of God applies to all people at all times

When we have all these problems and stress and trial and everything, we're not using the Spirit of God, we're not praying and studying, and we get transfixed by the problem. In getting transfixed by the problem we only look at the problem.

Example: Down through the years I wonder how many people said, 'I wonder why God let someone like Michael Jackson do what he does?' There he is making millions, if not hundreds of millions, of dollars. Everyone had a sense in their mind that this guy's got to be perverted sexually somehow, because of what he's doing: the songs that he sings, his lifestyle and everything.

Well, wait long enough and Michael Jackson fits exactly Ps. 73—his day has just arrived, hasn't it? I never watch ET—Entertainment Tonight—because it is so phony. But I was watching this special report on Michael Jackson because it caught my attention that if you wait long enough God is going to take care of the situation. It's a good lesson for us when we get transfixed on the immediate

problem and we don't really take it to God in prayer, and we don't use the Holy Spirit and we don't use the mind of God.

I never will forget the rousing sermon that this one bombastic minister gave as a guest speaker down in Torrance, CA, when I was pastoring there. He came down and he gave us an attacking, scathing sermon on 14 reasons why your prayers are not answered. Every one of those 14 were true! The whole church, by the time he got done shouting, yelling, screaming and attacking everything and everyone, we were all just kind of quivering in our chairs.

As I was driving home after that I thought to myself, all of those are true, but why didn't you just tell us one way on how to get our prayer answered. That would have been nice. This is not going to be a diatribe about how you are not using the Holy Spirit, but *it's going to be how the Bible teaches us to use the Holy Spirit!*

Here's the trap and it happens to all of us, Psalm 73: "Truly God is good to Israel, even to those who are pure of heart.... [He's just making a general statement here to kind of get his bearings.] ...But as for me, my feet had almost stumbled; my steps had nearly slipped, for I was envious at the arrogant when I saw the prosperity of the wicked" (vs 1-3).

When it applies to preachers and so forth, how many times have you seen these prosperous preachers—Jimmy Swaggart, Jim Baker, whomever you want to name—and you go along and all of those, the Trinity Broadcasting and you look at some of these ministers the way they're dressed up and the gall of asking for money. The things that they have, the houses that they have, everything that they have and you know they're preaching false doctrine.

Look at all these people in the world who have got millions and lie, cheat and steal, and you look at the prosperity of the wicked and then you look at your circumstances—which are not too good—and we think...

Verse 4: "For there are no pangs in their death, and their strength is firm.... [nothing is going to get them out] ...They are not in trouble like other men... [he's saying about himself; or the poor or whatever it may be] ...neither are they plagued like *other men*. Therefore, pride is as a chain about their neck. Violence covers them like a garment" (vs 4-6). They seem to get away with everything!

Verse 7: Their eyes stand out with fatness; they have more than the heart could wish for. They

scoff and speak with malice; in their arrogance they threaten oppression. They set their mouth against the heavens, and their tongue walks through the earth. Therefore, his people return here: and waters of a full cup are wrung out to them. And they say, 'How does God know? And is there knowledge in the most High?' Behold, these are the wicked, who prosper in the world; they increase in riches" (vs 7-12). If that doesn't fit today and all the troubles and difficulties and circumstances that we go through!

Verse 13: "Surely I have made my heart pure in vain and washed my hands in innocence" I've been trying to follow God and do His way my whole life and all I have is trouble, pain, difficulty, anguish and problems that go along with it. My kids didn't turn out like I wanted. My job is not what I wanted. I get all these terrible things that come along. Maybe health is failing, facing death, whatever the case may be. It piles up and it really gets to be a lot—doesn't it? *Yes!* Well, this when you need to use the Spirit of God.

Verse 14: "For all the day long I have been plagued and chastened every morning.... [Doesn't seem like anything I do is going to turn out right. Some people wonder, where is God in all of this?] ...If I say, 'I will speak thus'... [that really exists and is true] ...behold, I would have betrayed the generation of Your children. When I thought to understand this, it was too painful for me" (vs 14-16). Sometimes it is!

I explained to this one person: My life got so low that the only thing I could do is just walk up on this hill on the back of Hollister and get on my knees and cry out to God: 'Heal my soul!' There is a psalm in which David said, 'Heal my soul, Lord, for I have sinned against You.' That gave her some encouragement. Here's what it is for this man. He said:

Verse 16: When I thought to understand this, it was too painful for me... [In other words, to find out all this thing and here you are struggling along, beating along, just anguishing along] ...**until I went into the sanctuary of God; then I understood their end**" (vs 16-17). A lot of these things come because we don't view it from God's perspective! We don't get close enough to God—like in this case into the sanctuary of God—to really understand it.

It's going to all work out in the long run! But because there are choices that other people have to make, they have to run their course as well. We cannot make the choices for other people, or live the lives of other people, but unfortunately, their choices scrunch in on our life. And in some cases, *they know* that they shouldn't be doing these things. In some cases—I've seen it—where these things happen to you because it is deliberate spite, however you want to call it, on the part of other people who want to put

you through the rigors of these problems. That makes even more difficult to take it to God—doesn't it? It tell you, yes, it does!

Then we're living in a time on top of it that those who are out there blinding themselves and knowing the Truth, just seem to be going along and nothing is bothering them.

Verse 18: Surely You set them in slippery places... [Is not Michael Jackson in slippery places? All of his millions from Pepsi are gone!] ...You cast them down into destruction. How have they been brought into desolation, as in a moment! They are utterly consumed with terrors" (vs 18-19). Plug in there any person, any name, any acquaintance, any difficulty.

One minister back east has been to six funerals in the last three weeks! In one case it was most tragic, because they went to the funeral home of the one man who died of cancer—which you know that if you have cancer and God doesn't heal you you're going to die. With the change of daylight savings time to regular time it was dark and two widows in the Church who came to pay their last respects were driving home and there was a big, wide Big-Boy truck trying to make a U-turn and was stuck on the center piece in the highway, blocked off the highway, and they didn't see it—dead! So, he went to those funerals.

God is trying to get a message to those people. Sometimes God will take the innocent to preserve them from further damage. I'm sure those two widows are going to make into the Kingdom of God. They suffered no pain, but it makes all the rest—the living—*think* about what's going on.

Verse 20: "Like a dream when one awakens; so, O LORD, when You awake, You shall despise their image." A lot of people in the Church of God today are in a dream! If not a dream, a fog! If not a fog, semi-sleepwalking! We're going to see that they're semi-blinded.

Verse 21: "For thus my heart was grieved and I was pricked in my reins. So foolish was I, and ignorant; I was like a beast before You" (vs 21-22). Whatever your problems are, don't end up being like this man who did this Psalm—the Psalm of Asaph. I don't know whether that was a Psalm of David or not, I doubt it, but whoever the high priest of Asaph was.

Let's not make ourselves as beasts before God by accusing God, because God has not done what we think He ought to do. Therefore, that becomes and excuse for me not to do what I know I should do. That's what he's saying in this Psalm. He was going along with all this anger toward the ungodly who were prospering. It's tough when you don't know where your next meal is coming from.

It's tough when you don't have the clothes you need, or the transportation you need, or whatever to look out there and see all these people that God has nothing to do with prospering and blowing money away right and left. Don't then become foolish and ignorant or like a beast!

Verse 23: "Nevertheless, I am always with You..." Think about what God will do and can do and really put yourself to God the way that it should be. I know that it is bearing in on my mind more and more: ***there is nothing that you didn't receive! Nothing!*** Life, physical goods, whatever; God created everything!

Then, "...You have held me by my right hand. You shall guide me with Your counsel, and **afterward** receive me to glory. Whom have I in heaven but You? And besides You I desire none upon earth. My flesh and my heart fail..." (vs 23-26). There are a lot of us in this particular situation, we're all getting older; our flesh is failing. But emotionally our hearts fail us from time-to-time because we don't include God in on the difficulties that we're going through.

Sometimes the difficulties are so overwhelming that we don't see God in it at all. It's true! God is not in those difficulties! That's why you have to take it to God and get God's perspective from His Spirit and *use God's Spirit!*

"...but God is the rock of my heart and my portion forever, for lo, those who are far from You shall perish..." (vs 26-27). Don't worry, God's Word is not being mocked! Don't worry because if you're having trouble it doesn't mean that God has left you. Maybe God is trying you to give you a greater blessing later. We don't know.

"...You have destroyed all who go a whoring from You" (v 27). Maybe those who are going whoring from God now God is not destroying because *He wants to give them a space of repentance*. Think on that! Even God doesn't delight in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked would repent and turn.

Maybe some of these things we are viewing in our own impatience and our own problems and difficulties that we are having, God is actually trying to give them a space of repentance that they will repent. Let's not be like the second son of the father of the prodigal son: when there is repentance we get mad and he was all upset.

Verse 28: "And me, it is good for me to **draw near to God**..." That's what we need to do. If your problems and difficulties are so bad you just go to God and say, 'God, I'm here. I'm totally overwhelmed with all of this. God, the stress is too much, I can't bear it. God, I know it looks like

it's the most miserable thing in the world, and I'm even sorry that I've wondered where on earth You were. Help me and strengthen me!' That's how to do it, just like he did here—*draw near to God!*

"...I have made the LORD God my refuge, that I may declare all Your works" (v 28).

Let's go to Revelation 3 and let's see that this is one of the big difficulties that we're going to have in the end-time. What if we were all Laodiceans from the beginning? That may prove to be right!

Revelation 3:15: "I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot; I would *that* you be *either* cold or hot." Isn't that true of so many of us? How many times have we run from hot to cold? Think about that! Don't we also do that when we find problems so overwhelming us that we don't pray when we ought to, we don't study when we need to, we don't use God's Spirit, but we sort of kind of let these things get to us.

Verse 16: "So then, because you are lukewarm, and *are* neither cold nor hot, I will spew you out of My mouth. For you say, 'I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing'; and you do not understand that you are wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked" (vs 16-17). Maybe in our wretchedness, poorness, blindness and nakedness we need to go to God and say, 'God, that's my life! Please help me!'

Verse 18: "I counsel you to buy from Me gold purified by fire..." We have to go out and do a little buying—don't we? I remember someone asked: Where do you think we are in Church history? I said, 'I think we are at the spiritual bazaar. Go buy! You got to go try. You got to go shopping. You got to go looking.'

"...buy from Me gold purified by fire so that you may be rich... [and the thought which comes in the Greek]: ...and **white garments** so that you may be clothed... [the righteousness of the saints] ...and the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed..." (v 18). Have we ever really understood what it means to be fully clothed in God? Since we've never really understood that, maybe we don't understand when nakedness is *nakedness*. I don't bring this up to condemn anybody, I'm also asking myself.

"...and to anoint your eyes with eye salve, so that you may see." (v 18). And, of course, you're to go buy the eye salve—right? *Yes!* All of this has to do with *the use of God's Holy Spirit*, every bit of it! We're in a situation today *spiritually* where a great number of people in the Churches of God are in varying degrees of blindness—right? For various reasons—correct? *Yes!* Wasn't the psalmist in Psa.

73 blind to a certain degree? *He was looking at the wrong thing.*

- Maybe there's blindness from looking at the wrong thing.
- Maybe there's blindness because of lack of prayer.
- Maybe there's blindness because of lack of study.
- Maybe there's blindness because of lack of using God's Holy Spirit.

All of those are different forms of blindness for different reasons. But surely the psalmist there in Psa. 73 was blind—wasn't he? He couldn't understand until *he drew near to God and went to the sanctuary of God so he could understand!*

I would have to say that is probably a psalm of David, because of drawing near to the sanctuary of God, because the Ark was there in the tent in the house of David.

Likewise, we have direct access to God! We have not taken these problems to God. Then you have the blindness because of sin; you're guilty of sin and you don't want to repent. You figure that you're going to work it out and then you'll get back with God as soon as you work it out instead of repenting the way you know you need to repent. ***All of these things are varying degrees of lack of clothing, lack of seeing—or blindness.***

Verse 19: "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore, be zealous and repent. Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me" (vs 19-20). We have two categories of people:

1. those already in the Body of Christ that become complacent and lukewarm; about ready to be vomited out
2. those whom the Spirit is with them, but not in them

In either case it's the same thing! The result is the same.

Let's see how we have nearly the same thing and the counsel is identical. *Go buy!* I tell you, if there's anytime you can go shopping in the history of the Church of God in our day, it is today! What do I mean by that? *You have that Church of God and that Church of God and the other Church of God!* I mean, you've got Worldwide, you've got Global/Living, you've got Philadelphia—just get the whole directory of Sabbath-Keeping Churches of God, and you're going to find there are over 400 Churches of God that have been organized. So, you can go shopping and you can find whatever niche you want. But, you're going to have to understand that if you really want the gold—the fine gold—

you're going to have to make sure that it is right. You're going to have to make sure it's from God!

Matthew 25:1: "Then shall the Kingdom of Heaven be compared to ten virgins..." Here again we have another 50% ratio—don't we? That's also interesting. We've also said that this is five tribes of Israel that repent and the five that don't. I don't know about that, could be. We won't throw it out and leave it as a possibility.

This is a parable, but nevertheless, these are the ones that were betrothed to Christ—right? Are we not all betrothed to Christ as virgins? *Yes!* (2-Cor. 4). And these are virgins that follows Christ wherever He goes (Rev. 14).

"...ten virgins, who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. And five of them were wise, and five were foolish" (vs 1-2). One of the big problems that we have in our spiritual relationship with God is that we end up being foolish. I've done that; I've done foolish things. Have you done foolish things? *Sure you have!* We don't have to remain doing foolish things. We can ask God for wisdom, because *God is instant to forgive!*

Remember Ahab, you can go back and study him—that's one of my favorites. People have said, 'Well, God can't possibly forgive me.' Have you done as bad as Ahab? *As soon as he repented, he sent Elijah back to say, 'Behold, my servant Ahab.'* Before he was one who sold his soul to do evil.

The whole purpose in all of this is not condemnation, the whole purpose in all of this is repentance. The whole purpose in all of this is to come back to God. The whole purpose in all of this is because God wants you and me and as many as will repent. That's the whole purpose of this.

Verse 3: "The ones who were foolish took their lamps... [God's Word is like a lamp: 'Your Law is like a lamp unto my feet' David said.] ...but they did not take oil with them." Oil is like God's Holy Spirit. We're going to see that this is the *use of the Holy Spirit of God!* or *the lack thereof!* They took no oil with them.

These were little lamps you could liken to an olive oil lamp with a wick hanging out the spout. The oil you carry in another container with you. In other words, your relationship with God is that God counts you as having spiritual reserve with His Holy Spirit being able to know how to use the Holy Spirit of God. Obviously, this is a crisis. Is this not a crisis here? *Yes!* Was it not a crisis that we read of in Rev. 3? *Yes!* So, here's the crisis: It's down toward the end of the age; it's talking about the return of Christ.

So, the foolish took no oil with them, v 4: "But the wise took oil in their vessels ***along with***

their lamps.... [They had the vessel of oil plus the lamps.] ...Now when the bridegroom [tarried] was gone a long time... [In other words, Christ is not going to return when expected. He didn't delay.] ...they all became drowsy and slept" (vs 4-5). Everyone has their problems. Everyone has their difficulties. Everyone sleeps at the switch.

And just like a man waking out of sleep, v 6: "But in *the middle of the night*..."—midnight; the darkest time. I don't think we're quite there yet at midnight, but we're getting close. We may be somewhere around 9:30-9:45 and rapidly getting darker. But *midnight pictures the darkest hour of the whole history of man*. When is that going to be? That darkness is going to blind them completely.

- Who is the master of darkness? *Satan the devil!*
- Who is building and formulating his whole system right now? *Satan!*

That's why when someone asked me sometime ago: Boy, I sure hope NAFTA doesn't pass. *I said that it's going to pass. You can be guaranteed it's going to pass, because it's going to lead to the ten economic regions of the world*. I think that helps us understand Rev. 17 even a little more—doesn't it? It's happening!

Now is the time for God to *let* wickedness and evil prosper! That's why it's going to happen. When the beast comes into power and the false prophet is there, that, brethren, is the midnight hour. How long is the Tribulation, and the midnight hour is halfway between the night? How long is the whole Tribulation altogether? *Seven years!* Three and half years of prosperity and plenty, and three and half years of tribulation and anguish leading to the return of Christ.

Could it be when it switches from peace and prosperity to the Tribulation that is the midnight hour, right then? *I don't know!* But I'm just saying that it's interesting. Think about it!

"...there was a cry: 'Look, the bridegroom is coming! Go out to meet him.' (v 6). There are a lot of things here we can look to. This is also drawn on the parable of what was a custom in Israel and in Judah, which was that the bridegroom and the bride were betrothed, and they drank a cup of wine of the betrothal.

Generally the bridegroom came back within a year. The bride, who stayed at her father's house—you can connect this with Mary and Joseph. Mary was betrothed to Joseph and in the third month found that she was pregnant, and he was going to undo the betrothal to divorce her.

When the bridegroom came they again drank the wine, which sealed the covenant of marriage.

Just think on this: What did Jesus say at the last Passover? *I shall no more drink of the fruit of the vine until I drink anew with you in the Kingdom of God!* What is one of the first things that's going to happen for us in the Kingdom of God? *The marriage of the bride and the Lamb!* We're to renew it every year because we're still waiting to show that we are faithfully waiting.

So the cry goes out, the bridegroom is coming, v 7: "Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps.... [they got all ready; they were doing everything they needed to do at that point] ...And the foolish said to the wise, 'Give us *some* of your oil, because our lamps are going out.' But the wise answered, saying, '*No, lest there not be enough for us and for you*. But instead, go to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.'" (vs 7-9). When I first read that, I thought: Aren't Christians supposed to be giving? Aren't they supposed to be sharing? That's not the point of this parable. The point of the parable is that

- no one can make choices for anyone else
- no one can draw close to God for you
- no one can give you God's Holy Spirit except God

I can't run to you and say, 'give me of your Spirit' so I can make it into the Kingdom of God. You can't come to me and say, 'give me of your Spirit' so I can be in the Kingdom of God. What does that do with the physical presence within a corporate structure for people who think their attendance will automatically get them there? *Surprise! Sale day is coming!*

Verse 9: "But the wise answered, saying, '*No, lest there not be enough for us and for you....*'" Can anyone—any of us here who have been together for years and years—possibly convey to people who are just coming in contact with us exactly what we have learned down through the years? *No!* But we can send them a 'Care Package' because they are 'spiritually buying.' We can say, 'Here's a Care Package, there's still time, we'll be glad to help you. But you're going to have to get up on your own two feet.'

"...But instead, go to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.' And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding feast, and the door was shut" (vs 9-10). When I first read that I didn't think it was possible that there would be those who would have the door slammed in their face. But now I can see that the time is going to come when it is possible to have the door slammed in the face.

Verse 11. "And afterwards the other virgins also came, saying, 'Lord, Lord, open to us.' But He answered *and* said, Truly I say to you, ***I do not***

know you” (vs 11-12). Why? *Because you didn't have enough of God's Spirit that He could identify you as one of His!* Isn't that something? That's something to ponder on!

I don't want to give a rousing, browbeating, knock-down kill the sinner sermon. Look, it's going to be tough enough! Let's hope that those who are in this condition—anybody can get in that condition—that they can recover themselves before the time happens.

So, He gives a warning, v 13: “Watch, therefore, for you do not know the day nor the hour in which the Son of man is coming.” Quite a thing!

Now we come to the next part of Matt. 25 which is very interesting—isn't it? Verse 14: “For the Kingdom of Heaven is like a man leaving the country, who called his own servants and delivered to them his property.” Remember: **You have nothing that you didn't receive!**

- God's Spirit
- God's calling
- The understanding of God's Word

The whole gift of God's Word is what it is and everything we have. This shows that we better be about *doing* things. God's Spirit will

- lead us
- help us
- guide us

but **it won't do for us!** We must be doing the *doing* as led by God's Spirit. We'll see this clearly.

Verse 15: “Now to one he gave five talents, and to another two, and to another one; he *gave* to each one according to his own ability, and immediately left the country. Then the one who had received five talents went and traded with them, and made an additional five talents” (vs 15-16). How did he do it? *By buying and selling*—right?

What is the one thing about trading and buying and selling that we can relate to. Sometimes some of these parables we really don't get because we haven't really understood the motivation behind it.

What is one of the things with buying and selling that people have? That people go through? What about those who professionally buy and sell? *You can either get something of more value or less value!* What is it with someone who is obsessed with buying and selling? *They are never satisfied!* That's the whole point here, brethren. Whatever we have today, **we should never be satisfied that that's going to carry us tomorrow.**

Far different from one minister who was quoted as saying, ‘I don't have to study my Bible

anymore, I know it.’ He's going to end up being like the one who had the one talent who thought God was going to do it all.

We have the *doing!* We need to *do* with God's Holy Spirit.

(go to the next track)

Sometimes people overdo it, yes, that's true from the point of view that they're trying to do things *their* way, instead of God's way, and they end up doing too many carnal things rather than doing the spiritual things. Or, they substitute carnal things for spiritual things. But nevertheless, this shows that we need to be *doing*.

Verse 17: “In the same way also, the one who had *received* two *talents* also gained two others. But the one who had received the single *talent* went and dug in the earth, and hid his lord's money” (vs 17-18). This is likened to the one who doesn't want to do, because God is going to magically do it for them.

If there's any one thing that we ought to learn, brethren, God is not going to magically do anything for us. He will do for us as we respond in

- loving Him
- serving Him
- coming hungering and thirsting
 - ✓ after God's Spirit
 - ✓ after God's way
 - ✓ after God's whole being

Then He will lead us and so forth.

Verse 19: “Now after a long time, the lord of those servants came to take account with them.... [There's going to be an accounting, Everyone's going to give an accounting to God of himself (Rom. 14).] ...Then the one who had received five talents came to *him and* brought an additional five talents, saying, ‘Lord, you delivered five talents to me; see, I have gained five other talents besides them.’ And his lord said to him, ‘Well *done*, good and faithful servant! *Because* you were faithful over a few things, I will set you over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.’ And the one who had received two talents also came to him *and* said, ‘Lord, you delivered to me two talents; see, I have gained two other talents besides them.’ His lord said to him, ‘Well *done*, good and faithful servant! *Because* you were faithful over a few things, I will set you over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord” (vs 19-23).

Verse 24: “Then the one who had received the single talent also came to *him and* said, ‘Lord, I knew that you are a hard man...’” In other words, in everything that he did he hid it away and said, ‘Lord, where are You. Lord, why don't you straighten this out? Lord, why don't You do that? Lord, why don't

You make me do this or that?' ***God isn't going to make anybody do anything.*** So, he hid it.

"...you are a hard man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not scatter. And *because* I was afraid, I went and hid your talent in the earth. *Now* look, you have your own.' His lord answered *and* said to him, 'You wicked and lazy servant! You knew that I reap where I did not sow and gather what I did not scatter'" (vs 24-26).

Why? *Because God wants you to grow in grace and knowledge with His Spirit*, so that there are going to be things created in you that are not there.

When you get up in a plane you can look down and see all the countryside and that really makes you feel really little. I was thinking about this: Why do we have—only in the last parts of the writings of the apostles—anything to do with love. I mean, look at John. He wrote late. It dawned on me that even John and his brother James were called the 'sons of thunder' because the Samaritans didn't receive Jesus one time and they said, 'Lord, do You want us to call fire down from heaven, we'll straighten these folks up right now'? Jesus said, 'You don't know what manner of spirit you are of.'

I think I understand that love does not come unless you have suffered so that you understand the value of love. All the circumstances that we are going through now in our lives is to *teach us the value of love*. The only problem is—it's sort of an inverse thing—that somehow we don't want to go to God to get that love from Him. We kind of want God to work it out instead of us going to God so He can help us work it out. We ought to know that God is going to expect things that we cannot do of ourselves. It's going to be that way. God has called us to eternal life. We can't do that ourselves.

"...I reap where I did not sow and gather what I did not scatter. Because *you knew* this, you were duty-bound to take my talent to the money exchangers, *so that* when I came, I could have received my own with interest'" (vs 26-27). He's saying, you didn't even do the bare minimum. You didn't even go out and do the slightest little thing so there would be something. But I'm not going to let you have anymore.

Verse 28: "Therefore, take the talent from him, and give *it* to the one who has ten talents. For to everyone who has, *more* shall be given, and *he* shall have abundance; on the other hand, *as for* the one who does not have, even that which he has shall be taken from him'" (vs 28-29). Isn't that what's going on with the buying and selling *doctrinally* today in the Churches of God? *Yes!*

Those who are going more and more into the

blindness of accepting the doctrines of this world are having less and less—isn't that true? Those who are really striving to serve God; those who are really going to God in the attitude of prayer and understanding, God is granting more and more. Not that we go to the stupidity then of comparing ourselves among ourselves and become unwise and stupid. It's up to God what He's going to do.

Verse 29: "For to everyone who has, *more* shall be given, and *he* shall have abundance; on the other hand, *as for* the one who does not have, even that which he has shall be taken from him. And cast the worthless servant into the outer darkness. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (vs 29-30). Because they didn't use the Spirit of God correctly.

While there's time to buy, let's buy. There are a lot of people out there in this spiritual bazaar and they are buying. How are they buying? *They're checking this church out and what it teaches; and they're checking that church out and what it teaches!* They are learning to examine the doctrines and the teachings whether they be of God or not. They are exercising God's Spirit to discern good from evil. That's where we need to be! So, we need to go buy!

Isaiah 55:1: "Ho, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and he who *has* no money, come, buy and eat. Yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price." ***Those are the true riches of God!*** The true spiritual meat! The true spiritual drink! That's coming to Christ, because He alone can provide.

Verse 2: "Why do you spend money for *what is* not bread?..." All the foolish false doctrines that are coming along. They're spending money on that which is not truly bread—*spiritual bread*. They're spending their resources, energy, money and everything that they have, and they're now being all wrapped up in that which is not from God.

"...And your labor for *what* never satisfies? Harken diligently to Me, and eat *what is* good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness.... [What is good? *The words of God! The words of Christ!*] ...Bow down your ear, and **come to Me...**" (vs 1-3). That's what Christ says. If there's anything we need to do it's *return to God!*

Have you ever found yourself in this attitude? You're sort of perplexed as to what to do! You know you aren't doing what you ought to, and you know you ought to do what you need to, but you really haven't come to the point that you want to do what you need to and you know you ought to do what you ought to do, but you haven't quite made up your mind to do it.

We could all raise our hand to that one—

couldn't we? *Yes, indeed!* What do you do? *First of all, you have to admit that you better quit procrastinating!* Go to God and tell God, 'I'm stuck in this mess! I am on this treadmill and my own mind is deceiving me because I'm not doing what I ought to do. I know what I ought to do, but I just don't have the gumption to do it.'

You have to start where you are and admit that to God. In admitting it to God you may even have to ask God, 'God, help me to really overcome this, because I can't. Grant me Your Spirit that I can get out of this mess. Grant me the understanding because I just don't know what to do.' God will do that! God will hear! But you got to come to Him!

Verse 3: "Bow down your ear, and **come to Me**... [What is it that Christ wants you to do? *Obe My voice!* all the way through—right? *Yes!*] ...hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David."

Verse 6: "Seek the LORD while He may be found; call upon Him while He is near. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return to the LORD, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon" (vs 6-7). That's where we need to be, brethren. That's the whole thing!

Verse 8: "'For My thoughts *are* not your thoughts, nor your ways My ways,' says the LORD. 'For *as* the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts'" (vs 8-9). Let God's Word work in you. Let it produce in you. You go buy, you develop, you trade, you work, and all these things will be.

Let's see how this is to be. Here is the bread; here is what we need to do, coming to Christ, John 6:35: "Jesus said to them, '**I am the bread of life**... [which ties right in with Isa. 55] ...the one who comes to Me shall never hunger; and the one who believes in Me shall never thirst at any time.'" That's what we need to do: *All be restored to Christ! All be restored to God the Father!*

Does God know all the problems and difficulties in our lives? *Yes, He does! Take them to God!* Are they heavy to bear? *Sometimes they are!* What if you're in the middle of a problem? *You might not see the end of it yet!* Remember what Jesus said, 'Take of Me, because My yoke is light.' Take your burdens and put it on Christ, for He came to heal the brokenhearted. Sometimes you have to go to God and say, 'Hey, I'm brokenhearted, God, terribly, heal my heart.' **He will!**

This is profound! We have to keep coming! "...the one who **comes to Me** shall never hunger;

and the one who **believes in Me** shall never thirst at any time. But *as* I said to you, you also have seen Me, yet you do not believe. All whom the Father gives Me shall come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will in no wise cast out" (vs 35-37). The ones who are cast out are the ones *not coming to Him*, because they are not going to Him to buy of what He freely gives—doesn't cost anything.

Verse 38: "For I did not come down from heaven to do My own will, but the will of Him Who sent Me." I remember in *The Christian Passover* book I wrote there that Jesus was not taught of the Pharisees and didn't go to any of their schools. He was taught of God the Father.

I saw this on television on PBS: What did Jesus do in the missing years, the mysterious years of Christ's life? *He went to Tibet and Egypt and Babylon and Delhi and He learned all the wisdom of the masters.* That isn't right, but why are those mysterious years? *Because wherever Jesus was He was where the Father was teaching Him directly!* Had to have been when Jesus was being taught of God the Father more directly.

Verse 39: "And this is the will of the Father, Who sent Me... [that needs to be our attitude] ...that of all whom He has given Me, I should not lose any, but should raise them up in the last day." Then we go on and see that God the Father has to call us.

Here's what we are to buy and to eat—the Bread of Life; and to drink—God's Spirit; likened unto Christ's body and blood:

Verse 53: "Therefore, Jesus said to them, 'Truly, truly I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood you do not have life in yourselves. The one who eats My flesh and drinks My blood...' (vs 53-54)—in a continuous way because you have to put in Christ. Remember where we read in Rev. 3 that He's standing at the door and knocking. If you open the door He will come in and sup with you; in other words you're going to eat together. That's what He's talking about.

"...has eternal life, and I will raise him up in the last day; for My flesh is truly food, and My blood is truly drink. The one who eats My flesh and drinks My blood is dwelling in Me, and I in him" (vs 54-56). So, it shows a constant ongoing process. Not like the one with the one talent who went and hid it. He buried it in such a way that God's Spirit couldn't help him.

Verse 57: "As the living Father has sent Me, and I live by the Father; so also the one who eats Me shall live by Me." Some of the disciples didn't like that saying that was a little bit too tough and turned around and followed Him no more.

Here's the important thing why study is so absolutely vitally important. As I was talking to a man the other day, in relationship to a sermon that I did recently where I said 'now is the time for all of those with God's Spirit to be correcting themselves' He said, 'What did you mean by that?' *I meant that you must take the Word of God and study it and apply it to you and let God correct you directly with the conviction of His Word and the power of His Spirit and then the correction is the easiest to take.*

- Is that not a whole lot better than having to have outside circumstances that God has to send to correct you?
- Is that not a whole lot better than the stripes that Christ is going to have lay upon those who do not yield to God's correction?
- Is that not a whole lot better than giving up your head in martyrdom as correction?
- *Yes!*

That's why it's very important! Studying is not just a matter of information. Studying is a matter of *the use of God's Spirit* and the spiritual exercise that comes from studying.

Why? *The words that are in here are the same alphabet that prints pornography!* Is this not the same alphabet that has the books on the occult? *Yes!* But Jesus said:

Verse 63: **"It is the Spirit that gives life; the flesh profits nothing...."** So, all the trials and difficulties you are going through, unless it is wrought in the Spirit of God, it is going to profit nothing because it's just a fleshly exercise in futility.

All of the carnal means of doing things is going to profit nothing—these fleshly letters that are here, these carnal letters that are on pages. Not here in the Bible; Jesus said something profound: ***'The words that I am speaking are Spirit and they are Life!'*** Why? *Because the Spirit of God has inspired these words!* With the Spirit of God in us, God is going to bring us the understanding that is in there when it was written by those who wrote it by the Spirit of God! ***We have to let God's Spirit be exercised in us by letting it lead us!***

Therefore, one of the first keys of using the Spirit of God is *to use the Word of God*—it is Spirit and it is Life! You're not going to find life by avoiding the problem. You're not going find salvation by neglecting study and prayer and yielding to God. Won't happen! It just won't!

I remember when we were told to pray an hour a day. Well, I tell you what, brethren, you can pray an hour a day, but if you don't believe what you're saying and if you don't believe the One you are praying to, and if you don't exercise the Spirit of

God in your prayers by studying God's Word and letting it correct you while you're praying, you can pray 18 hours a day like the nuns in the cloistered nunneries; they don't even speak to anyone in the outside world. They have taken a vow that the only thing they're going to do is have a few words with each other while they eat, but their days are spent in 18 hours of prayer.

So, it is not the length of prayer that is going to do it. *It is the kind of prayer* as led by God's Spirit with the belief of Christ *in you* that you *know* that God is going to work it out.

A strange thing happens when you do that, and I've observed it: At first the circumstances even get worse! Have you ever experienced that? *Yes!* Why? *I guess to see whether we're going keep at it!* I think because we are looking at it through *our* eyes, for *our* solution, and it's not yet God's time to do it with *His* solution. Therefore, God is still working it out, but *His way!*

Sometimes when there are other people involved and we're saying, 'Oh, God, help this person' and they go out and do worse. 'God, didn't I pray for You to help this person?' And they go out and do worse. 'I guess God isn't answering my prayer.' God will answer your prayer, but there's also the choice of the individual involved that you are praying for. Maybe God is going to let them exercise their choices until they box themselves into a canyon where they can't get out, and then God will answer that prayer.

"...The words that I speak to you, they are spirit and they are life" (v 63). That, brethren, is why it's so important that we eat of the Word of God, we drink of the Word of God, we put it in our mind and let the Spirit of God give us understanding. When you pray, then your prayers are going to be far more profound because they are led of the Holy Spirit. They're not just *your words* but from the greater depths of your heart the words that are motivated by God's Spirit.

As we know the Bible was canonized by Peter, Paul and John. The book of 2-Peter is a very interesting book. It is a last testimony, also a last warning, but he says something here that is profound:

2-Peter 1:10: "For this reason, brethren, be even more diligent to make your calling and election sure... [again, we have to diligently be doing] ...because *if* you are doing these things... [the seven things over here which lead to profound Godly love] ...you will never fall at any time. For in this way, you will be richly granted an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Therefore, I will not neglect to make you always mindful of these things..." (vs 10-12). How

is it always going to put them in remembrance of these things? *Think about that!*

"...although you *already* know them and have been established in the present Truth. For I consider it my duty, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by causing *you* to remember *these things*; knowing that shortly the putting off of my tabernacle *will come*, even as our Lord Jesus Christ has signified to me. But I will make every effort *that*, after my departure, you may always have a *written* remembrance of these things *in order* to practice *them* for yourselves" (vs 12-15).

How is he going to do that? *By writing them!* He is literally saying here that remembrance means a *memorial*—same word used for the memorial of the tombs—a *written remembrance*. So, these words are written for us, that we can understand, that we can know.

Verse 16: "For we did not follow cleverly concocted myths *as our authority*, when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of His magnificent glory."

Isn't it something that whenever they give up on the Truth of God, what do they go back to? *Cleverly devised fables!* Yes, they do! Showing how the Spirit of God is to work in us:

John 7:38: "The one who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." Tie that in with Matt. 5: 'Blessed is he who hungers and thirsts after righteousness, for he shall be filled.'

- Jesus Christ is our Righteousness
- the Word of Truth is the Spirit of God

All of these things you bring all together, brethren.

"The one who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water" (v 38). Brethren, may we come to that time; wouldn't that be something? Was that not true there in Acts 3, 4 & 5 in getting things done? *Yes!*

One man asked me why it was that we don't have too many healings in the Church. We've had healings here! But he means in the Church he was affiliated with. I said, 'Stop and think for a minute. What was it that they tampered with?' Good example of a little leaven. What was the first thing that led to the changing of the understanding of Passover and healing? Was very innocent, and very few people picked up on it. *The day does not really begin until dark*. Where it says of Atonement, 'ba erev' to 'ba erev' showing that it is from sunset to sunset. They said that the Jews say that the day doesn't really begin until dark and you can see three

stars. It just went over everybody's head—didn't it? But that was the little leaven of entrance that brought in all the rest.

Then it was when we are called and receive God's Spirit we are healed spiritually, so therefore, the stripes of Christ are not for our physical healing. Next was that the Old Testament Passover was not on the 14th but on the 15th.

And the man got the point. The reason was because it was not the faith and belief because they took upon themselves to tamper with the Truth of God. Therefore, God is not under any constraint to heal them. Why should He be? Think on that!

I know this: I don't have anything in me, brethren, that's special to heal. When we anoint and we ask God to heal, we are asking God's will because of the sacrifice of Christ. Whether that is a thing that we do—because there are some things that have to be done, which only doctors can do—we still put it in God's hands for that. Or whether someone is on the verge of death and we ask God to intervene if He would heal them. Either way, it is that *we are trusting completely in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ*.

May it come to the point that we have it flowing out of our belly—the innermost part of our being. In other words, if we have God's Word in us, God's Spirit in us, and are yielding to God, then these things are going to flow out from us just like *rivers of living water* because it's motivated by the Spirit of God. Again, *we have nothing that we didn't receive!*

Verse 39: "But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, which those who believed in Him would soon receive; for *the* Holy Spirit was not yet *given* because Jesus was not yet glorified."

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version* by Fred R. Coulter

Scriptural References:

- 1) Psalm 73:1-28
- 2) Revelation 3:15-20
- 3) Matthew 25:1-30
- 4) Isaiah 55:1-3, 6-9
- 5) John 6:35-39, 53-57, 63
- 6) 2 Peter 1:10-16
- 7) John 7:38-39

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- 2 Corinthians 4
- Revelation 14; 17
- Romans 14
- Matthew 5
- Acts 3-5

Also referenced: Book:

The Christian Passover by Fred R. Coulter

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How to Use God's Holy Spirit II

Fred R. Coulter

Living in the world we're living in today we really need to understand how to use God's Holy Spirit. Let's just review some very basic things.

How one receives the Holy Spirit:

That is basic and fundamental. The Holy Spirit is not given, as many people believe today, that you just take a zipper on your heart and open your heart and the Lord comes in.

It doesn't work that way. You have to repent and be baptized, then God will give the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38). Let's see that there is also a *condition* for receiving the Holy Spirit:

1. God is not going to give the Holy Spirit to those who do not obey Him
2. God is not going to give the Holy Spirit to someone who is not going to make it into the Kingdom of God

When you receive the Holy Spirit God is giving that commitment that you are going to be in the Kingdom of God. The only thing that can keep you from getting in there is not God, but *you—each individual!* And there are many times that people get so confused and go through so many problems and difficulties—not only in the world but also in the Church—that they just kind of give up. They think that maybe God has given up on them. *No!* God has not given up on them, because Jesus said, 'None of them are going to slip out of My hand or the Father's hand.'

This becomes a very important thing, one of the conditions for receiving the Holy Spirit. This was right after they had gone through what they went through in prison and the Sanhedrin telling them not to preach 'in that name' anymore.

Acts 5:29: "But Peter and the apostles answered *and* said, 'We are obligated to obey God rather than men.... [That's the whole key in receiving the Holy Spirit: *obeying God rather than men!*] ...The God of our fathers raised up Jesus Whom you killed *by hanging Him* on a tree'" (vs 29-30).

By the way, concerning the recent accord between the Vatican and Israel—how many have read the book *Judaism and the Vatican*; the whole thing was to try and get the Catholic Church to say that the Jews did not kill Jesus (that was the main thing)—they have signed it. It explicitly stated that the Catholic Church will assist the Jews in doing away with anti-Semitism. I thought that was really a profound part of the agreement.

The Apostle Peter didn't sign that. He said, "...Whom you killed *by hanging Him* on a tree. Him has God exalted by His right hand *to be* a Prince and Savior, to give repentance and remission of sins to Israel" (vs 30-31). There we have:

- repentance
- forgiveness of sin

put that in with:

- repent and be baptized (Acts 2)

put that together with

- receiving the laying on of hands for the Holy Spirit (Acts 8)

Verse 32: "And we are His witnesses of these things, as *is* also the Holy Spirit, which God has given to those who obey Him." That is saying to the Sanhedrin that 'you're not obeying God and you don't have the Spirit of God.'

Acts 7:51—Stephen gave this witness: "O stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears! You do always resist the Holy Spirit; as your fathers *did*, so also *do* you. Which of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? And they killed those who foretold the coming of the Righteous One, of Whom you have become the betrayers and murderers" (vs 51-52).

He accuses them of killing Jesus Christ. So, they got so angry that they got into a biting contest and went out there and gnashed on his flesh, then had him stoned while Saul (who became the Apostle Paul) was standing there agreeing and consenting with it. In order to receive the Holy Spirit:

- you have to *repent*
- you have to *be baptized*
- you have to have *hands laid on* you
- you have to be *willing to obey* God

That's the whole thing that is important there.

- What does this do for a person?
- Does it make them perfect? *No!*
- Is it going to run their lives? *No!*

We're going to see that *the Holy Spirit will lead you*.

- It's not going to drive you!
- It's not going to push you!
- It's not going to pull you!

It will lead you as you choose to follow God! What does it do? *It brings what the New Testament calls 'the circumcision of the spirit!' Having the carnal mind circumcised, which is removing the hostility toward God!*

Too many times we get our feelings involved and other people get hostile toward us and we get feelings that aren't right, even though we have God's Holy Spirit. It's not a matter that God is doing it or causing the problem, or that we're not converted. It's just that it is a frustration and problem at that particular time.

Romans 2:28: "For he is not a Jew who is *one* outwardly, neither is that circumcision which is external in *the* flesh; rather, he is a Jew who is *one* inwardly, and circumcision is of *the* heart, in *the* spirit and not in *the* letter; whose praise is not from men but from God" (vs 28-29). That's the circumcision in Christ that is called 'the circumcision made without hands' (Col. 2).

What is the Holy Spirit for us?

It's a guarantee and promise from God! That's why it's important for us to realize that—in spite of our mistakes and problems—

- we have the grace of God for forgiveness
- we have the love of God for forgiveness
- we have the love of to lead us
- we have the Spirit of God to lead us

—God has given an absolute commitment by the receipt of the Holy Spirit. There are times when it gets a little thin because we're not staying close to God like we ought to, so then we need to 'stir up' the Spirit of God, which is in us.

Here is the absolute commitment, 2-Corinthians 1:21 "But He Who establishes us with you in Christ, and Who has anointed us... [the receiving of the Holy Spirit is called *an anointing*] ...is God, Who has also sealed us and has given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts" (vs 21-22).

God has made a commitment—the commitment from the God of Truth, absolute Truth; God of love; God of faith. He can help us at any time, though we do what is commonly called in the Bible *backsliding*.

Attributes of the Holy Spirit:

Let's see some of the attributes that the Holy Spirit has. Let's see something very important concerning the Holy Spirit.

Romans 8:9: "However, you are not in *the* flesh..." Living your life as just a carnal, ordinary, everyday human being; all tied up in the world, all wrapped up in the world, caring nothing about God, caring nothing about anything but what you are doing. That is the carnal mind, *minding the things of the flesh!*

"...but in *the* Spirit, if *the* Spirit of God is indeed dwelling within you" (v 9). When the Spirit

of God is given, through begetting, it unites with the spirit of our mind and then we become God's own chosen, selected, called out, consecrated saint.

It's really something! And it's being pressed on my mind more and more as I'm studying and doing things in writing and so forth. It's really something when you stop and think about it: ***God the Father Himself has personally called you!*** 'None can come to Me except the Father draw him' (John 6:44). God the Father Himself has given you the begetting of His Holy Spirit so that you can be a very child of God. God the Father Himself hears and answers your prayers. That's something when you really begin to put all of it together!

I'm beginning to see, understand and realize it more and more that the reason the Church of God is in all the problems that it is in is because *it's not focusing on loving God and using the Spirit of God*. Rather, too many are focused in on a particular doctrine. The one we're recycling now is the postponements and calendar.

Or they get focused in on some other doctrine or way or whatever it is and they

- miss the love of God
- miss the grace of God
- miss the mercy of God

So, you have a lot of frustrated Christians out there that really want to do better, they really want to go ahead and do things, but they can't do it because they somehow feel limited and constrained by the circumstances they are in.

Nevertheless, I just have to say with the people I've seen and visited and talked to in traveling, all the people of God have gone through so many things and, yet, are trying as much as they can to be faithful to God. You've got to conclude that they have the Holy Spirit of God in them for them to go through so many different things. Some of the horror stories are really something! Some people have not had to go through as much as others.

"...*the* Spirit of God is indeed dwelling within you...." (v 9). There's a distinct absolute division. God does not give just part of His Holy Spirit to some of the people to help them along and encourage them. *No!*

"...But if anyone does not have *the* Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him" (v 9). There is a distinct division that God makes.

I've run across those who have not been converted, though they have tried. Some of it is not their fault. Some of it is that they really need to make a full, total commitment to God in spite of all circumstances. I'm not the one to judge whether a person is converted or not—I'm not God. When people ask me if they have the Spirit of God. I say,

'If you don't think you do, maybe you ought to fast and pray and ask God to reveal to you whether the Spirit of God is *in* you or *with* you.' I think there are a lot of people who have the Spirit of God *with* them, but not *in* them. If that's the case then you need to go ahead and be baptized properly and really have the Spirit of God so it is *in* you. But if it is *in* you then you belong to Christ. You are His! That's why the Bible talks about a slave or bond-slave.

Verse 10: "But if Christ *be* within you, the body *is* indeed dead because of sin; however, the Spirit *is* life because of righteousness.... [the righteousness which comes from God] ...Now, if the Spirit of Him Who raised Jesus from *the* dead is dwelling within you, He Who raised Christ from *the* dead will also quicken... [make alive] ...your mortal bodies because of His Spirit that dwells within you" (vs 10-11). There's the whole promise and commitment from God.

We need to claim those promises. We need to ask God to help us stir up the Spirit of God. We need to—because of our human weakness—go to God and ask Him to help us overcome those things. But I know this: I feel that if we focus in more on the love of God—which is the greatest thing—we'll be able to overcome a lot of the problems and difficulties that we tried to overcome just on our own.

You almost have to live that to experience it, to see it. There are certain things that I see that I've had to do, that I've had to change, and I many times have tried to change it: I'm going to do better; I'm going really resolve to do better. Well, if I don't really understand how much God has loved me and what He has done for me, then I have a hard time really overcoming myself. Then I wonder:

- Why can't I overcome?
- Why can't I change this?
- Why can't I do that?

The reason, I have found, is *that I don't understand God's love for me and what He's done for me, and why He's done it for me*. I hope I can grow in that so I can let God's Spirit do some changing in me. I need changing as well as anybody else.

There are many, many things talking about the Holy Spirit in the book of Isaiah. If we really let the mind of Christ *in us*—let God's Spirit be in us—with the **spirit of love, faith** and all of that that comes from God's way. But it also gives us other things, too. Talking about God's way:

1. Spirit of judgment
2. Spirit of burning

Isaiah 4:4: "When the LORD shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from its midst by the **spirit of judgment**, and by the **spirit of**

burning." Sometimes the Spirit of God has to be very sharp, powerful and sometimes kind of hot. God is the One Who can make it that way.

I talked to a man in Pasadena and he said that he went to Jerusalem, to the Wailing Wall, and he said, 'This is Catholic.' I said, 'You really don't understand what you're saying with that statement. You'll find out in some of the sermons we have in the series *Scripturalism vs Judaism*.'

It is talking about Christ. With the Spirit of God Who do we have in us? *Christ!* We need to grow in these kind of attributes, too. This is all a part of using the Holy Spirit of God.

Isaiah 11:1: "And there shall come forth a shoot out from the stump of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots. And the Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon Him..." (vs 1-2).

Didn't that happen in John 1? John baptized Him and was told, 'The One you see the Holy Spirit come upon as a dove, that is the One'? *Yes!* Was not Jesus led of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil for 40 days and 40 nights, and He was full of the Holy Spirit? *Yes!*

3. Spirit of wisdom
4. Spirit of understanding
5. Spirit of counsel
6. Spirit of might
7. Spirit of knowledge
8. Spirit of the fear of God

"...**the spirit of wisdom**... [read the Gospels and you will see *wisdom*] ...**and understanding**, the **spirit of counsel and might**, the **spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD**. And His delight shall be in the fear of the LORD. And He shall not judge according to the sight of His eyes, nor after the hearing of His ears. But with righteousness He shall judge the poor, and shall reprove with equity for the meek of the earth. And He shall strike the earth with the rod of His mouth..." (vs 2-4)—which He's going to do when He returns. All of that is part of the Spirit of God and part of the things that God's Spirit will do for us.

9. Spirit of grace
10. Spirit of supplication

Zechariah 12:10 "And I will pour upon the house of David..." That's a very interesting statement! {see sermon on *Tabernacle of David*}

"...and upon the people of Jerusalem, the **spirit of grace and of supplication**..." (v 10). All of that is very, very important in relationship to Christ and the Truth of God.

Then it continues on with the prophecy of Christ: "...And they shall look upon Me whom they

have pierced, and they shall mourn for Him, as one mourns for his only *son*, and shall be in bitterness over Him, as the bitterness over the firstborn” (vs 10).

There's going to come a time when God begins to deal with the Jews in Jerusalem, and that day is going to come! When He pours out *the spirit of repentance* upon them, it is going to be something! I don't know just exactly how that's going to fall. I don't know exactly how the events are going to work out leading up to that time, but we know that Zech. 3 talks about the high priest at Jerusalem who is led to repentance, and Zech. 4 talks about Zerubbabel and these two become the 'two olive trees that stand before the Lord of the whole earth,' which ties in with Rev. 11 and the two witnesses.

Maybe at that time is when God is going to pour out the Spirit upon those who are in Jerusalem. That's going to be quite an event! If you know anything about the Jews, once they're smitten they'll go full throttle. It's going to be quite a thing when that happens!

Let's come to the New Testament and perhaps the most important thing we will cover concerning the Spirit of God. In writing the first edition of *Lord, What Should I Do?* the thing that really struck me—and I'm coming to see this more and more—is that *too many people to develop doctrine handle the Word of God deceitfully*. That's how they come up with false doctrines and they use Scriptures that are true. You need to think on that, because that is really something!

You quote a Scripture and you quote another Scripture—which is true—and then you come to the wrong conclusion because you misapply it. That can happen. But here is the most important thing concerning the Spirit of God.

Spirit of the Truth:

John 14:15: “If you love Me, keep the commandments—namely, My commandments.” And I will ask the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that it may be with you throughout the age: *Even the Spirit of the Truth...*” (vs 15-17). That becomes very, very important. If we let the *Spirit of Truth* really lead us and really guide us and we properly divide the Word of God—humbly seeking God's way—God will lead us into all the Truth that He wants us to have. It is called *the Spirit of Truth*.

That's why we need to have the Spirit of God in our mind, so we can overcome our own deceitfulness. Doesn't the Apostle Paul say, 'Lie not to one another.' Have Christians lied to one another? *Yes!* Have you told lies? *Yes!* If I ask you if you told

a lie this past week, we might all raise our hand, because we're not letting the God of absolute Truth lead us in everything we need to be led in.

However, we have one caveat with that that we need to understand: *we are to be 'wise as serpents and harmless as doves.'* For people who are out in the world, I don't carry my shotgun, pull it out, this is my anti-Christmas shotgun.

Example: I was invited to a Christmas party for last night. Being Friday night I didn't show up and I got the call. I didn't tell them that I wouldn't go to your 'stinkin' rotten Christmas party.' That would be truth, but it also says in Eph. that we're to 'speak the truth in love.' I said, 'I'm sorry, I just couldn't be there.' That was an acceptable answer for him. I didn't lie. I was not misleading him. I was telling him the absolute truth of what he could bear. This man being a gun-ho Catholic pretty well figures that if you're against Christmas, you're against God.

When the time comes and I need to witness to him, I will. But in the meantime I can tell him that I just 'couldn't be there'—which was a fact.

1. because I didn't necessarily want to be there
2. because it was Friday night, the Sabbath and I wasn't going to be there

That's the *Spirit of wisdom and understanding*.

But for us is called “...the **Spirit of Truth**, which the world cannot receive... [Why can't the world receive it? *The world can't stand pure Truth!*] ...because it perceives it not, nor knows it...” (v 17). That's why they love their Christmas. What does Christmas re-enforce to the carnal mind? *That they can do by telling lies!* Everything that Christmas has is based on lies!

They can't stand the Truth of God! That's why the world cannot receive it. Why? What do you have to do to receive it? *Repent, be baptized, keep the commandments of God, obey His voice!*

“...but you know it because it dwells with you... [I think there are a lot of people in that category, that the Spirit of God is dwelling *with* them.] ..and shall be **within** you” (v 17). That's what happens when you repent, are baptized and receive the laying on of hands and receive the Holy Spirit of God. It is now *in* you, and with that you become a child of God.

What you desire in your whole spiritual life is the Truth. Christ is the Truth, the Way and the Life; *Christ in you!* Notice how all of these things refer back to *Christ in you!*

Spirit of Holiness:

Romans 1:3: “Concerning His Son; Who

came from *the* seed of David according to *the* flesh, Who was declared *the* Son of God with power, according to *the* **Spirit of Holiness...**" (vs 3-4). That's what it is to do for us. That's why we are called *Holy Brethren*. Not that we of ourselves are Holy, but because of the Holy Spirit.

"...by *the* resurrection from *the* dead—Jesus Christ our Lord" (v 4). That's going to be quite a thing when that happens; when the resurrection from the dead takes place that is going to be absolutely a marvelous thing! Every time we go passed a graveyard that is full of tombstones we always joke back and forth—Delores and I—wondering if there's going to be a lot of unconscious people when the first thing they do when they're resurrected is hit the tombstone. No it won't because they'll be a spirit being.

Just an aside: Did the stone have to be rolled away from the tomb of Christ in order for Him to be resurrected? *NO!* Most people believe that. It had to be rolled away for what purpose? *So that they could see that He wasn't there!* That's the only reason. The angel did that because of the women coming out there. They couldn't have done that.

Quite an interesting statement here, and this is very important for us to know and understand. In God's love, mercy and patience, He puts up with an awful lot; *yes, He does!* An awful lot of things that we do, *God knows!* He *leads us* to repentance so we can understand it.

Spirit of Life:

Romans 8:1: "Consequently, *there is* now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus..." That's a pretty powerful statement. No condemnation. Why? *Because if we are in Christ Jesus and loving God with all our heart, mind, soul and being*, then we stand before God as Christ stands before God. How does Christ stand? *Pure! Blameless! Sinless! Perfect!*

Therefore, for God to inspire us to want to be in the Family of God, it says "...*there is* now no condemnation..." That's not to go out and sin; we all understand that. But that is to inspire us! I'm coming to see more and more and understand more and more that God is not going to get us into the Kingdom of God by beating us over the head with His commandments.

He's going to inspire us to want to be in the Kingdom of God, and we need to be inspired because God does not condemn us, but just has given His Spirit so that we can have free access to Him. Really think on that! Really spend some time meditating on that!

If you're driving around in a car and you're

tired of listening to tapes, music, etc. You just get tired of it. I just turn the thing off and say, 'O God, spare me from this!' Just drive in silence and just think on some of the things that God has done. One of the ways that I find is very helpful, I look back and think about all the things that God has delivered me from, and all the of the stupidity that God has saved me from, then I look at all the stupidity that God has allowed me to do so that I can understand that only He can save me. Believe me, I've got a long list of stupidity! All of us do! That's why it's good to know that there is no condemnation. God is not going to get you into the Kingdom of God by condemning you into it, or beating you into it. ***He wants to inspire you into it!*** May we, as ministers, all learn that lesson!

"...who are not walking according to *the* flesh, but according to *the* Spirit; because the law of the **Spirit of Life...**" (vs 1-2). Having the Spirit of God is having the *Spirit of Life*. That's why Christ said, 'He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood *has eternal life!*'

"...in Christ Jesus has delivered me from the law of sin and death" (v 2). In other words, we don't have to be governed by all the carnal appetites of the 'law of sin an death.'

God did a marvelous thing here, v 3: "For what *was* impossible for the Law to do..." I remember reading in this magazine {put out by one of the Churches of God} that if everyone would follow the Ten Commandments we would have a near utopia on earth. No you wouldn't, because the world has had the Ten Commandments for how long? Why would you not have a utopia on earth? *Because of human nature and because of Satan the devil!*

Satan the devil has to be removed! It doesn't matter how many of the people know the Ten Commandments, unless Satan is removed you're not going to get rid of sin. Did David sin with Bathsheba and all that he did? *Yes!* Did Solomon do it? *Yes, and he gave an open door to Satan!*

No! You're not going to have a utopia on this earth before the return of Christ. That's a mistake that a lot of the religionists like Pat Robertson make. They feel that they can make the politics good enough so that we can have a Christian nation. It won't happen!

But human beings are that way, and God has put us under subjection to Satan the devil—we didn't ask for it. We didn't go up to God and say, 'O God, I want to be born into a world that is run by Satan.' We had no say-so. We were born into it and here we are. I'm thankful we were born here instead of there—wherever *there* may be. So, here's what God did.

Verse 3: "For what *was* impossible for the Law to do in that it was weak through the flesh, God, having sent His own Son in *the* likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh."

How many times have you heard someone say: Not only do you need to repent of your sins, but you have to repent of what you are. Have you heard that? That always bothered me from the point of view: How can I repent of what I am if God gave me the 'law of sin and death' in me? That's a pretty hard thing to do! Why must we do it? *Because God—Who is Holy and righteous and perfect—divested Himself to become a human being born of the virgin Mary who willing took upon Himself the 'law of sin and death!'* Yet, never sinned! That's what it means to be made in the likeness of sinful flesh. We really cannot repent of what we are—with the 'law of sin and death' in us—and understand the powerful thing that that is unless we understand what Christ has done.

That takes an awful lot of love, an awful lot of powerful concern. We had quite an experience going into San Francisco recently and we saw all the middle-class bums. What are the middle-class bums? *Those who hold jobs and live in an apartment, but go out and beg for money at night!*

We could tell because they had on good pants and good shoes and a good shirt, rattling their little cup. There were a couple who were really needy. I gave some money to one that I was convinced was really needy. Then you look at all of these others out there and you think: disgusting, miserable, rotten, terrible, horrible people! Some of them are.

Would you give up your life and your place and go live as one of them? *Have a hard time doing it—wouldn't you?* I would! I would have a real difficult time doing that! If that is kind of repulsive to your mind, just understand that it's only a small degree of what Jesus did giving up God to become a human being, to take within His own human flesh the 'law of sin and death.' I think if we can comprehend and understand that even more, then we will understand why God does not condemn us, but also at the same time, why in the final analysis, God will lead us to repent of what we are. ***What we are is not what God wants us to be!*** That will take some thinking on. It's taken me all these years to understand it a little bit.

Don't worry about if you don't understand it now. Ask God to help you understand it. I hope to understand it even more in the future. That's really something when you think about what Christ has given up to save us from the 'law of sin and death.'

So, it is the Spirit of Life from Christ, and

that's what the Holy Spirit does for us: It gives us life—*eternal life!* Let's also understand what it is from God. This is something! This is tremendous! Absolutely tremendous!

Spirit of Sonship:

Verse 15: "Now, you have not received a spirit of bondage again unto fear..." Why have we, as ministers, not understood this, and we have tried to run churches on fear? *You can't do that!* How can you develop the love of God if you put fear into the brethren all the time? How can you develop the love of God if you're going around fearful all the time? *You can't do it!*

So, Paul is saying, "...you have not received a spirit of bondage again unto fear... [that's the way the world is] ...but you have received **the Spirit of sonship**... [Being the very sons of God; that's what it's talking about—to be the sons and daughters of God. That is absolutely mind-boggling when you really sit down and think about it.] ...whereby we call out, 'Abba, Father'" (v 15)—the greatest being in the universe!

Is God humble? *Yes, God is humble!* What does He want to be called? *Father!* No great names like he had to reveal under the Old Testament, because they couldn't come into a Father/son relationship because they didn't have the Spirit of God to do that. This is what God wants to be called: *Father!* Isn't that something? That tells you about God's humility, love and the relationship that God wants us to have with Him! It is the Spirit of the life of Christ; the ***Spirit of sonship.***

Spirit of Meekness:

This is something we need to grow in. I was talking a person and the woman asked why we had to have all of these false doctrines and all of this stuff that we have to through and everything. I said that I think the real reason is—and I didn't get it for years—that we're dealing with the vanity of the minister and he wants to have something new, different and special. That's why you're having a problem with it.

1-Corinthians 4:21: "What do you desire? Shall I come to you with a rod, or in love and a **Spirit of meekness?**" Part of the fruits of the Holy Spirit.

Verse 7: "...And what do you have that you did not receive?..." ***Nothing!*** What do you have spiritually that you didn't receive from God? ***Nothing!*** All of it came from God:

- His love
- His Spirit
- His faith

- His calling

If we can all remember that, that will help us!

Spirit of Faith:

Lot's of times the question will come out: Why aren't there more miracles in the Church? *Again, I think we need to focus in on the Spirit of God and the love of God!* I think I'm beginning to understand that the more that we really comprehend the love of God, the more that those things may come, because we're not going to be all 'hung up' on it.

2-Corinthians 4:13: "And having the same **Spirit of faith**, according as it is written, 'I believed, therefore I have spoken,' we also believe..."

(go to the next track)

As you can see we are progressing through the New Testament and I think that's the best way to do it, rather than go back and forth.

Spirit of Promise:

Ephesians 1:12: "That we might be to *the* praise of His glory, who first trusted in the Christ; in Whom you also trusted after hearing the **Word of the Truth**, the **Gospel of your salvation**; in Whom also, after believing, you were sealed with the Holy **Spirit of promise**" (vs 12-13).

- the Spirit of Truth
- the Word of Truth
- the Gospel of Truth
- the Gospel of your salvation
- the Spirit of promise

If you have the Holy Spirit and you are sealed with the Spirit of Truth—which is the Spirit of promise that comes from God the Father—is God going to see you into the Kingdom of God? *Yes!* What has He provided?

- the whole life and sacrifice of Christ
- direct access to Him
- calling Him Father
- grace, mercy, forgiveness
- His Word inspired by His Holy Spirit

God gives a promise! Can God lie? *NO! It's impossible for God to lie!*

If you have the Spirit of God and it is the Spirit of promise, you're going to make it into the Kingdom of God! Really think on that! It is most difficult to commit the unpardonable sin! Most difficult! God made it that way. That's why when we sin inadvertently we need to go to God and ask Him to forgive us. He will! Instantly!

"...the **Holy Spirit of Promise**, which is *the* earnest of our inheritance... [2 Cor. 1] ...until *the*

redemption..." (vs 13-14). It's not just a promise for part of the time; it's not like us. We can make what we think are promises and then we kind of weasel out of them sometimes and don't keep them or change it or whatever. God is not like that!

"...*the* Spirit of Promise...until *the* redemption... [the buying back] ...of the purchased possession... [Us! What paid for us? How was the Church paid for?] ...to *the* praise of His glory" (vs 13-14).

If you want something to think on sometime, or if you're kind of down and discouraged, think on this: ***God has called us to be the praise of His glory!*** Think on that! That's really mind-boggling! Isn't that something that the angels are going to praise God for, the glory that God is going to give us? That is something!

We'll see what purchased the Church. This is all relating to receiving the Holy Spirit through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. There's a great debate now: What is the Gospel of the Kingdom of God? If you aren't preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom of God, you're not a Church of God. I found that most of them that say that don't understand the most important part of the Gospel.

Gospel of the Grace of God:

Acts 20:24: "But I myself do not take any of *these* things into account, nor do I hold my life dear to myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to fully testify the **Gospel of the Grace of God.**"

You cannot preach the Gospel without grace. You cannot live a Christian life without grace. You have no comprehension of growing, overcoming or yielding to God the Father and Jesus Christ unless you understand about the grace of God.

Note sermon series: *Grace of God*. Almost everyone writes back and tells me they have never understood it until they have gone through those sermons. When you understand the grace of God and what Christ has done for you, that is one of the most liberating—from the point of view of getting rid of guilt—things that can possibly happen to you. That's what Paul preached. He said that he's going preach, "...testify the Gospel of the Grace of God."

Verse 25: "And now behold, I know that you all, among whom I have gone about proclaiming the Kingdom of God..." So you have:

- the Gospel of Grace
- the Gospel of the Kingdom

"...will see my face no more" (v 25).

What happens when you preach the Kingdom of God and people repent? *You have*

people in the Church! Most of the New Testament and all of the writings of the Apostle Paul have to do with feeding the flock. When there's turmoil and difficulties within the Church of God, then that becomes the most important part of preaching the Gospel so they can understand the love and grace and forgiveness of God. Most people are at loose ends within the Church of God because they don't know that. When they are able to be strengthened, then we in turn can reach out and reach more new people, but not until then.

Verse 26: "Wherefore **I testify to you on this day...**" This must have been some meeting with those elders from Ephesus who came down to Miletus to see Paul as he was on his way up to Jerusalem.

"...that I am pure from the blood of all, for I have not held back from preaching to you all the counsel of God. Take heed therefore to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to feed the Church of God, which He purchased with His own blood" (vs 26-28). Everyone needs to think on that concerning people in the Church of God:

- Who do they belong to? *They belong to God the Father!*
- Who gave them the Holy Spirit? *God the Father!*
- Who died for them? *Jesus Christ!*
- Through Whom do they have their sins forgiven? *The blood of Jesus Christ!*

They are the purchased possession of God! Therefore, every minister is to be a steward. A steward means that *you handle someone's property and wealth for their benefit*; without any benefit to you. That's what it means; it's a purchased possession; purchased with His own blood.

Verse 29: "For I know this: that after my departure grievous wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock." Same problems we're up against today—all the vanity of the ministers. May we all be spared from ministerial vanity; myself included. May I spare myself from my own vanity. Only through God's Spirit can it be done.

We did see the play *Phantom of the Opera*, which was pretty good. I viewed it like the heroine was the Church of God being assaulted by Satan. In the final analysis the Church is saved. I thought that it was interesting that what if you were one of the actors and they plan on running this thing for three years. Every night for three years and a matinee on Sunday as well as Sunday night—double duty on Sunday—what if you had to say the same words and sing the same songs and go through the same routine everyday for three years.

I asked Delores about that and she said that when Johnny Wiessmuller finally retired—the one who did Tarzan—he went to a rest home, the biggest problem they had was that he would give the Tarzan yell all the time. What happens is that when people believe their own propaganda or believe all the compliments that people heap upon you, you're in trouble. As ministers you're all in trouble when that happens. That's why we need to give all the glory to God.

- it's the Church of God
- God has called them
- God has given His Spirit
- Christ purchased it with His own blood

Paul says right here that "...grievous wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves men will rise up speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after themselves" (vs 29-30). Paul prophesied it would happen then and we're going through the same exact thing today.

What do we have right here? *We have the prescription on how to overcome it! Let it all be in God's hands!* That's what it has to be. Let God send to you—whoever you are as a minister—whomever God will send! Don't go out and fight over the brethren of God as if they are possessions.

I remember one man said, 'I'm the rightful heir.' Another one of his competitors in the ministry said, 'I am the rightful heir.' My comment was: **Since when did the people of God become the possessions of the ministry? You're the purchased possession of Christ!**

We're going to see part of what it is that we need to do in growing and using God's Spirit. We all ride high and low; I don't know anyone who doesn't have ups and downs. Anybody here have a perfectly stable life?

- always happy
- always joyful
- always loving God
- never sinning
- never having any problems

None of us! We all have our ups and downs, and I think that it is something that is misleading the brethren when the ministers are not honest with the brethren to let them know they have their own faults and mistakes, too.

Every minister needs the prayers of the brethren just like the brethren need the prayers of the ministry. When we get to these low points, especially this time of year because Satan is invading and just taking over the whole world whole hog and it gets a little discouraging. Here's what we need to do:

2-Timothy 1:5: "When I remember the unfeigned faith *that is* in you, which first dwelt in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice—and I am convinced that *it dwells* in you also. For this reason, I admonish you to **stir up the gift of God...**" (vs 5-6). We have *our* responsibility!

How do we *stir it up*? *Sometimes we just have to go to God and say, 'Help me, God, so I can!'* you stir up the gift of God:

- by God's Word
- by God's Truth
- by studying
- by drawing close to God in prayer
- by understanding how great and magnificent God the Father is and Jesus Christ

That's how we stir up the gift "...that is in you by the laying on of my hands" (v 6). I'm sure he's also talking about the gift of grace for the ministry at this particular point.

- Spirit of love!
- Spirit of power!
- Spirit of a sound mind!

Verse 7: "For God has not given us a spirit of fear... [again, notice how against fear and the bondage of fear that the Apostle Paul always was] **...but of power, and of love, and of sound-mindedness.**" That's what we need, all of these; every one of these, so that we can live our lives in the way that God wants us to.

We have to stir it up! If you feel so down and out about the whole thing, just go to God and say, 'God, look, I'm here, I'm feeling down and out, I feel totally carnal, I feel just like hanging on a thread. Help me and strengthen me and help me to stir up Your Spirit.' Go to the Psalms and read a Psalm every day before you start praying. Really learn how to come to God in prayer, beseeching prayer.

He'll hear you! You don't have to shout loud and long. Doesn't have to be that. You can do it quietly. Remember the mother of Samuel. She was praying fervently to herself and it kind of spilled over a little bit and Eli said that she was drunk. She said, 'No, I'm disappointed and in bitterness of heart; I have no children.' Eli was embarrassed and said, 'God grant you your wish. God grant you your request' and she had Samuel and six other children after that.

Sometimes we have to go to God just like Hannah, the mother of Samuel and say, 'God, here it is! It's a terrible mess.' When you do there are going to be tears and you'd better have a hanky nearby. If

it's really a bad scene, maybe you'd better have a box of Kleenex there, because you'll need more than a hanky. Sometimes that's necessary, too. Life is that way. But we can stir it up and ask God to bless us with these things.

Then Paul said after this, v 8: "Therefore, you should not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner; but jointly suffer with *me for the sake of* the Gospel, according to *the power of God.*" The Apostle Paul had every right to be bitter, disillusioned and against God. Why? *Because every church he raised up went against him!*

He was left alone and the only one that was with him was Luke, but he knew that God was true and he knew what was going to happen. I just imagine that the Apostle Paul really felt kind of down in many ways, even though he knew that he was going to be saved. He gave the prophesy that the 'grievous wolves would rise up among the ministers' and so forth.

He's writing to Timothy, encouraging him, telling him what to do and so forth. ***We need to stir up the Spirit of God that is within us!***

- Spirit of love!
- Spirit of power!
- Spirit of a sound mind!

Here is a warning against the unpardonable sin. Hebrews is really quite a book. Let me just give you a little something to think on: Carl Franklin thinks, and I think he's quite right in this: Why didn't the book of Hebrews start out like Paul started all of his epistles? '*Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ unto the brethren in Jerusalem...*'

If you understand the riot they had when he went to Jerusalem you would know that Paul couldn't get them to read one thing that he had written. What was actually happening here was that the Jews in Jerusalem were abandoning Christianity and going back to the temple worship and animal sacrifices. That's why he is so particularly emphasizing those things in the book of Hebrews.

But Carl thinks that the Epistle of James was put on as a cover letter or introduction to the book of Hebrews and that's why James has no 'Amen.' It went directly right into the book of Hebrews, which by all analysis and study are the teachings of Paul written by Luke. There is no authentic verified authorship of it. I think that's the best explanation of it that I have ever heard as to why the book of Hebrews is the way it is.

Hebrews 10:28^[transcriber's correction]: "***Consider this:*** anyone who rejects *the* Law of Moses dies without mercy under *the testimony* of two or three witnesses. How much worse punishment do you

think he will deserve who has trampled underfoot the Son of God, and has regarded the blood of the covenant, with which he was sanctified, *as* an unholy thing, and has scorned **the Spirit of grace?**" (vs 28-29).

After what we've gone through you can see how difficult it is to really commit the unpardonable sin. I mean:

- you have to reject Christ
- you have to reject the grace of God
- you have to reject the Spirit of God
- you have to reject everything that God the Father and Jesus Christ stand for

in order to commit the unpardonable sin. When you do you're despising the *Spirit of grace*.

Spirit of Prophecy:

Revelation 19:10—this is John when he saw the angel who brought him the knowledge of the book of Revelation: "And I fell at his feet to worship him. Then he said to me, 'See *that you do not do this!* I am a fellow servant of yours, and of your brethren, who have the testimony of Jesus. Worship God. For the testimony of Jesus is the **Spirit of Prophecy**.'"

We'll have to think on that one a little bit more. When you think of all the prophecies that we've gone through that have not been true. Maybe we're missing something here. The ***Spirit of Prophecy*** could also be inspired speaking, not just prophesying events.

Here in this particular case the angel talking to John who had the whole vision of the book of Revelation through the ***Spirit of Prophecy***. Wasn't it Christ Who gave it to him? *Yes, it was!*

So maybe there's a little more to this verse than maybe we have understood, but I would have to say that the track record, for most Churches of God that I know of, in prophecy hasn't been too good. So, maybe that was telling us something also. Maybe something is missing because of *the lack of*:

- the love God
- the grace of God
- really trusting in God in faith

I don't know, I just put it out there and say 'what if?' We need to consider that those things are true. If they are, then we need to ask God to help us understand the things that are taking place in the Spirit of Prophecy, if we have the full testimony of Jesus Christ.

All Scriptures from The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version by Fred R. Coulter

Scriptural References:

- 1) Acts 5:29-32
- 2) Acts 7:51-52
- 3) Romans 2:28-29
- 4) 2 Corinthians 1:21-22
- 5) Romans 8:9-11
- 6) Isaiah 4:4
- 7) Isaiah 11:1-4
- 8) Zechariah 12:10
- 9) John 14:15-17
- 10) Romans 1:3-4
- 11) Romans 8:1-3, 15
- 12) 1 Corinthians 4:21, 7
- 13) 2 Corinthians 4:13
- 14) Ephesians 1:12-14
- 15) Acts 20:24-30
- 16) 2 Timothy 1:5-8
- 17) Hebrews 10:28-29
- 18) Revelation 19:10

Scriptures referenced, not quoted

- Acts 2:38; 2; 8
- Colossians 2
- John 6:44; 1
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How to Use God's Holy Spirit III

Fred R. Coulter

I suppose that for the time we're living in, it's very important that we understand *how to use* the Holy Spirit, because we're being assaulted on every side by false doctrines, by the world, by angels (demons), by almost anything in the society around us. So, the only way we're going to be able to survive all of this is to *understand how to use the Holy Spirit of God and how to grow in grace and knowledge and understanding of God's way!*

Everything physical is not going to stand. We just saw everything that took place at the earthquake here in Southern California, in 1993. I heard that Walter Mattheau lost \$7-million in property. His whole swimming pool slid off the side of the mountain. The reason that he lost it was because he got mad at the cost of earthquake insurance—they have a 10% deductible and they don't give you a penny unless you put up the deductible first. They have this so you won't collect on an earthquake. He got mad and canceled it ten days before the earthquake.

Canceling the insurance was really not the problem. Building where he built was the problem. Canceling became a secondary problem. People in circumstances like that—and there were numerous ones—said that nothing counted in the physical realm except that they escaped with their lives. Disasters almost have a miraculous way of changing how people think. Then they understand that the physical things around them really are not their life. They understand that there has to be something greater.

Contrary to what most people would think, crime went down 80%. People actually talked with their neighbors; yea, actually helped their neighbors and one another, rallied together and did things to help one another. It lasted all of three days, until the bureaucrats got out there and said 'form the line.' The lines were nearly miles long because there were 14,000 who were homeless.

These people have learned the lesson—at least for three days—that the physical things really don't count. There is something that we also need to learn with God's Holy Spirit: ***You cannot build spiritual character by physical means!*** There are certain things we have to do and think, but *you cannot build spiritual character by physical means!*

That's why so many ministers are missing the whole point. They are preaching from the point of view that you do your works and you save yourself! That is not true. ***By grace we are saved with God's Spirit!***

Let's see how God's Spirit works with us. This is something! We always read John 6:44, but I also want to read v 45. Stop and think about it. When you go back and really analyze it and think about it, God the Father had to have been the One to plant the seed to *call* you. Doesn't matter if you have relatives in the Church, they can't get you in.

- How many have relatives who are not in the Church? *You know it's not by relatives!*
- How many have husbands or wives who are not in the Church? *You know it's not by marriage!*
- How many have lost husbands or wives, brother and sisters because of trying to follow God? *A lot of people!*

John 6:44 shows God's intervention in our lives by His Spirit: "No one... [*'anthropos'—no human being*] ...can come to Me unless the Father, Who sent Me, draws him... [*to reach down and select him to; to reach down and call him*] ...and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, ***'And they shall all be taught by God.'*** Therefore, ***everyone who has heard*** from the Father, and has learned, comes to Me" (vs 44-45).

When you answer that call, when God reaches down—in whatever your circumstances are—and begins to call you and deal with your mind, He is sending a message to you to motivate you to do certain things. ***"...everyone who has heard from the Father, and has learned, comes to Me."*** That is quite a thing!

We will see how Jesus Christ described this when He was talking to His disciples, John 14:16: "And I will ask the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that it may be with you throughout the age." Until today's modern technology—recorders, radios, telephones and things like this—it would not be possible to fully understand how a power can do certain things, such as the power of the Holy Spirit.

The Spirit *speaks*, but who does it say that the Spirit is? ***That Spirit is Christ*** (2-Cor. 3). You read in Rev. 2 & 3 'to the one who overcomes shall inherit...***he that has an ear let him hear what the Spirit says*** to the Churches.' That is Christ speaking through the power of the Holy Spirit.

He describes here, v 17: "***Even the Spirit of the Truth...***" In the book *Lord, What Should I Do?* (1st ed.) I point out very clearly that you cannot mix lies with Truth and have half-truths and half-lies. It won't work!

"...the Spirit of Truth, which the world cannot receive because it perceives it not, nor knows it; but you know it because it dwells **with** you, and shall be **within** you" (v 17). When God begins to call, He sends His Spirit to be with that person. They must hear and answer that call. We don't know how many that God's Spirit is *with* in that particular way. We just don't know!

Let's see a Scripture that is kind of an enigma to some people. John 20:19: "Afterwards, as evening was drawing near that day, the first *day* of the weeks, and the doors were shut where the disciples had assembled for fear of the Jews..."

By the way, it is true that one of the largest organizations of the Church of God has accepted a Friday crucifixion. [note: this is the former Worldwide Church of God]

"...Jesus came and stood in the midst, and said to them, 'Peace *be* to you.' And after saying this, He showed them His hands and His side. Then the disciples rejoiced *because* they had seen the Lord. Therefore, Jesus said to them again, 'Peace *be* to you. As the Father sent Me, I am also sending you.' And after saying this, He breathed on *them* and said, 'Receive *the* Holy Spirit'" (vs 19-22).

Why did He do that? *That's when the disciples, who were to become the apostles, received the Holy Spirit.* None of the rest received the Holy Spirit until the Day of Pentecost. Then the disciples received the Holy Spirit in power, for preaching, for conviction, just like it is in John 16—what the Holy Spirit would do.

You take John 16 and read that and compare Peter's sermon and you will see how it lines up almost in an outline form exactly as Jesus said that the Holy Spirit would do when it would come:

- because of *judgment*—there was no sin in Jesus
- because of *sin*—to convict them of sin
- because of *Truth*—to show what the Truth is

You see all of that right there in Acts 2,

Then He said, v 23: "Those whose sins you shall remit, they are remitted to them..." That is true in the sense that when you baptize someone for the forgiveness of sins they're forgiven. This does not mean that a minister has control to forgive sin separate from God.

As in the case of Simon Magus, "...and those whose sins you shall retain, they are retained" (v 23). Read that in Acts 8.

- What does the Holy Spirit do for you?
- How does it work?

Now that you have received it through baptism and

laying on of hands. We're going to see that with the Holy Spirit will do.

The Holy Spirit of God is that *direct begettal*, the earnest of the Holy Spirit, which is *the promise of eternal life*. Why is a promise from God important? *Because God does not lie!* Whatever God says that He is going to do, He's going to do. God Spirit has been given *to those who obey Him*. All of those conditions must be met.

The Spirit will Lead You:

Romans 8:14: "For as many as are led by *the* Spirit of God, these are *the* sons of God." So, the Spirit *will lead you*. How is the Spirit going to lead you?

- it will *convict* you of sin
- it will *lead* you in the way to hunger and thirst after God's Word
- it will *teach* you

And it's a special gift that comes from God to do that. That's why that the most important thing that a minister can do it to teach the people of God to yield to God the Father and the Holy Spirit of God so that God can *lead* them through His Spirit. In being led:

- you are not pulled
- you are not pushed
- you are not forced
- *you have to choose*

The whole purpose of God's way is that you *choose His way* and follow God and the Holy Spirit will lead you.

God's Spirit is Dwelling Within You:

Let's see what it has promised to do, v 9: "However, you are not in *the* flesh, but in *the* Spirit, if *the* Spirit of God is indeed **dwelling within you**..." God's Spirit is the Spirit of Liberty, Spirit of Truth, Spirit of Life. It's going to be living *in* you! It's going to be dwelling *in* you!

"...But if anyone does not have *the* Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him" (v 9)—because the Spirit of God is not in that individual. Therefore, between God's calling and giving the Holy Spirit as a begettal, God knows everyone that is His. A person cannot be a Christian by proclamation. A person is a Christian only by spiritual fact indeed.

The Gift of Grace & the Gift of Righteousness:

Verse 10: "But if Christ *be* within you, the body *is* indeed dead because of sin; however, the Spirit *is* life because of righteousness." That is standing before God with the gift of righteousness. This something that very few people really grasp or really understand.

Protestants misunderstand it. They say that the gift of grace is given so you are put in right standing with God—so far, so good. Therefore, it doesn't matter what you do because Christ is going to do it all for you—WRONG! God does it this way to *inspire* you.

Romans 5:17: "For if by the offense of the one man death reigned by the one, how much more shall those who receive the abundance of grace and the **gift of righteousness...**" *That gift of righteousness is imputing to you the righteousness of Christ*—to everyone that God calls.

If Christ is *in* you, how does God the Father look at you? *As He's looking at Christ!* This is to inspire you, brethren! This is to inspire us! Would that we all could learn; God is not going to 'beat us' into the Kingdom of God. God is not going to take a rod and make us *by fear* do it because of escaping eternal death. That's better than not being there, but God isn't going to do it that way. God wants to *inspire* us!

How is He doing that? *Part of it is by saying, 'Look, I know your sins! I know the law of sin and death you have in you. I understand that, but I want you in My kingdom. I have called you and I want you to love Me with all your heart, mind, soul and being and inspire you into the Kingdom of God, and to inspire you to not want to sin by saying that when I view you I see Jesus Christ Who is your Advocate saying, **Father, forgive them, they know not what they do!**'* Think of that for a minute!

That's not to say, 'Well, if God does that then I'll go do anything I want to do and repent later. You're in deep trouble if you do that. That's not why God gave the gift of righteousness.

When we all stop and think to the innermost depths of our being and what miserable sinners we really are, isn't that a fantastic gift? Isn't that so absolutely overwhelming that you can go to God and really draw close to Him in prayer and understanding and let God's Spirit *lead* you?

Let's see what it will lead you to do, Romans 8:10: "But if Christ *be* within you, the body *is* indeed dead because of sin; however, the Spirit *is* life because of righteousness. Now, if the **Spirit of Him...** [the Father] ...Who raised Jesus from *the* dead is dwelling within you..." (vs 10-11). There are two parts to the Spirit of God:

1. the Spirit of Christ
2. the Spirit of the Father

They are not separate; they are two aspects of the Holy Spirit of God. That's something to contemplate.

Verse 11: "Now, if the **Spirit of Him...** [the Father] ...Who raised Jesus from *the* dead is **dwelling within you...**"

Verse 9: "...if anyone does not have *the Spirit of Christ*, he does not belong to Him."

There are the two aspects of the Spirit of God: that which is Christ-like and that which is from the Father to make you the begotten son of God. Who was the only begotten of the Father anyway? *Jesus Christ!*

"...He Who raised Christ from *the* dead will also quicken... [make alive with Spirit power] ...your mortal bodies because of His Spirit that dwells within you. So then, brethren, we are not debtors to the flesh, to live according to *the* flesh... [no physical thing is going to make you spiritual] ...because if you are living according to *the* flesh, you shall die; but if by *the* Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you shall live" (vs 11-13).

- The Spirit of God is going to convict you of sin.
- The Spirit of God, within you, is going to give you the power to overcome sin.

The longer that you have the Spirit of God the more you're going to see the sinfulness of sin, because then you will understand everything that you do originates right up here in the mind.

"...but if by *the* Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you shall live" (v 13). If you're doing that then the Holy Spirit will *lead* you! Granted, you have to yield to the Holy Spirit.

Verse 14: "For as many as are led by *the* Spirit of God, these are *the* sons of God. Now, you have not received a spirit of bondage again unto fear, but you have received *the* Spirit of sonship, whereby we call out, 'Abba, Father'" (vs 14-15). That's why it's so important, brethren, that each one of you know and understand that it is God the Father Who is dealing with you in your life.

Verse 16: "The Spirit itself bears witness conjointly with our own spirit, *testifying* that we are *the* children of God. Now, if *we* are children, *we* are also heirs—truly, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ—if indeed we suffer together with Him, so that we may also be glorified together with Him" (vs 16-17).

There's one other thing that will take place. This is the difficult part of it. The more you yield to the Spirit of God and are led by the Spirit of God, in many cases the greater the trials that you go through. Look at what the Apostle Paul went through.

Paul said, v 18: "For I reckon that the sufferings of the present time *are* not worthy to *be compared* with the glory that shall be revealed in us." You cannot compare it!

The Holy Spirit will Intercede for Us!

It's going to intercede in such a way that sometimes all you have inside is just a feeling. That feeling is such that you have no words to truly express what you feel. Have you ever been that way? I know I have!

Let's see how the Holy Spirit will work with us to God. This is something that we have to, in faith, understand is taking place. We can see the results of it over a period of time.

Verse 23: "And not only *that*, but even we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, also groan within ourselves, awaiting the sonship—the redemption of our bodies. For by hope we were saved; but hope that is seen is not hope; for why would anyone still be hoping for what he sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we ourselves wait for it with patience. Now, in the same way also, the **Spirit is conjointly helping our weaknesses...**" (vs 23-26).

We need to understand that. 'Infirmities' here (KJV) is not sicknesses. It is *weaknesses* of the flesh. The Spirit will compensate for the weakness of the flesh. Every human being is going to have one or more sins that will almost be like a lifelong plague!

- You hate it!
- You don't want it!
- You're disgusted with it!

Regardless of what it is, you can hang any label on it, whichever is yours that you are burdened down with, because as long as we're in the flesh we're going to have something we're going to be burdened down with.

I'll tell you one of mine. I am not, by nature, a loving person—period! I'm just not! I don't have a loving, kind face. I know that! My burden is—and the reason I emphasize it so much—because I'm trying to learn it, brethren. I see myself falling so short. There are other things, but this is the major one. I am constantly confronted with situations where that I'm beginning to learn how to apply this:

1-John 4:16: "And we have known and have believed the love that God has toward us.... [Everyone is willing to accept that. Oh yes, everyone wants that!] ...God is love, and the one who dwells in love is dwelling in God, and God in him. By this *spiritual indwelling*, the love of God is perfected within us, so that we may have confidence in the day of judgment because even as He is, so also are we in this world" (vs 16-17). That's the gift of righteousness that God has given to us.

Verse 18: "There is no fear in the love of God; rather, perfect love casts out fear, because fear has torment.... [I understand that. When things go wrong and there's fear and everything like that, it is

tormenting!] ...And the one who fears has not been made perfect in the love of God. We love Him because He loved us first." (vs 18-19). We're not going to God and say, 'O God, I love You, I chose You, aren't I great?' That's why God the Father has to call us and the Spirit draws.

Verse 20: "If anyone says, 'I love God,' and hates his brother, he is a liar. For if he does not love his brother whom he has seen, how is he able to love God Whom he has not seen?" That, brethren, it is the most difficult thing for me. I don't know about you, but that is the most difficult for me. It doesn't mean that I run around and hate people. But I just find in many cases, that though as Paul said, ***'the will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I find not'***—in himself.

I have to say the same thing! I do not find that with me. It's from me. Whatever love I have it has to come from God. I do take solace in the fact that Peter had to *learn* to love God. John had to *learn* to love God. He was called one of the 'sons of thunder' so he must not have been a very pleasant person when he was young. But I see that, and I see—if God's Spirit is convicting me—I am beginning to understand the tremendous love that God has not only for me, because that would be selfish to me, but for everyone that He calls, ***and even the whole world!***

John 3:16: "For **God so loved the world...**"—not just you, not just me. In order to love the world, in order to bring salvation to the world, in order to straighten out this world, it's got to take a love of love.

So, pray for me that God will lead me, intercede for me, and you, and all the brethren. I tell you one thing, out of all this if there's any one convicted thing that I see in all the trouble that's in the Churches of God today is that they're all trying to 'play church' and not love God and each other.

What I'm saying is that **love is a gift of God**. If it's a gift, you don't have it; it's something we don't have. It has to be the *gift of the Spirit* as it leads us. I hope that God will lead us in it, brethren, that we can help those in the different Churches of God.

I get sermons all the time from people sending me this and that. I know what's being preached and where it's being preached and what is being preached. They're all still in the 1950s or they're still thundering Acts 2 and that's the whole summation of their life. You've got to do this and that and got to have all these works—and they're fine, you need to do those—but then where's the time that you grow into maturity where you're going to grow in love.

Anyone who says that he really has the love

of God come right here, I'll get right behind you. I will follow you wherever you go. But I know one thing, it's got to be a *gift from God! The Holy Spirit is going to make intercessions for us!*

The Holy Spirit is Helping:

Romans 8:26: "Now, in the same way also, the Spirit is conjointly **helping our weaknesses...**" Whatever that is you plug yours in there, there Spirit will help you.

I am beginning to learn and understand that when you really focus in on really loving God, then the Holy Spirit can work with you even more. That doesn't mean that it's going to be easy, or that it's going to come in great gushes of liberality. God wants us to develop the character of Christ through the things that we are going through. So, it's helping our weaknesses.

"...because we do not fully understand what we should pray for, according as it is necessary... [Isn't that so? We think we need this and that and the other thing] ...but the Spirit itself makes intercession for us with groanings that cannot be expressed *by us*" (v 26). So, the Spirit is going to convey to God what you really feel and mean and know. This is not speaking in tongues, because it "...cannot be expressed..." It can't be heard with the human ear.

Our prayers come up to God. When we say 'Father,' we have direct access to God the Father and Christ is at the right hand. Lots of times people don't pray because they have a guilty conscience. Well, you're not going to get rid of your guilty conscience and then go pray. God's Spirit is convicting you to give you that so you will go to God and repent! ***Let the Holy Spirit lead you!***

I've done this many, many times. When you sin, you think: I'll just get it straightened out and then I'll go to God. God already knows! Only He can straighten it out—right? I mean, look at the whole affair with David and what he did. He was going to work it out His way and then do some big deal and then present God with some great thing. God sent Nathan^[transcriber's correction] and he said, 'You're the one.' He should have gone to God right off.

Revelation 8:3: "And another angel, who had a golden censer, came and stood at the altar; and much incense was given to him, so that he might offer *it* with the prayers of all the saints on the golden altar that *was* before the throne. And the smoke of the incense went up before God from *the* hand of the angel, ascending with the prayers of the saints" (vs 3-4). Isn't that something? *Prayers go right to God!*

How God's Spirit is Going to Lead:

This is the best way to describe it. How they get from here to there is a spiritual function and God knows. It's not how long the prayer is. There are many lessons in this parable in the book of Luke. This is to show you how God's Spirit is going to lead.

God doesn't care how long you've been in the Church. God does not care what positions you may or may not have held. God wants you to do everything that is listed here of the Pharisee and the publican:

Luke 18:9: "And to some who **trusted in themselves...**" Brethren, if there's anything you can't trust it's yourself and human nature, just because of the nature of it. If you trust that you are righteous... Who's righteousness are we to have? *We go to God and say thank you for the righteousness of Christ!* 'Inspire me to love You; inspire me to overcome, because You are so good and kind to view me this way.' I tell you, when you really go that way, then you understand something that's really important. That's how you overcome. Then you have the desire to overcome in the right way. {tie this in with 2-Cor. 10—about those who compare themselves among themselves are not wise.}

'...that they were righteous, and despised others...' (v 9). That righteousness is not from God. How can you say you love God when you 'hate your brother whom you can see'? There it is!

"...He also spoke this parable: 'Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one *was* a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood and prayed with himself in this manner: "God, I thank You that I am not like other men—extortioners, unrighteous, adulterers—or even as this tax collector"'" (vs 9-11)—all things he should not do; it is required that you not do them.

What did Jesus tell the 'rich man' when he came and asked 'Good Master, what good thing should I do that I may have eternal life.' Jesus said, 'Don't call Me good, there's only one good and that's the Father. But if you will inherit eternal life, keep the commandments.'

The rich man said, 'Which?' and Jesus listed them off, and the rich man said, 'I've done that all my life.' Jesus said, 'Go sell all that you have; because when you're done with those commandments I've got plenty more.'

Verse 12: "'I fast twice in the week, *and* I give a tithe *of* everything that I gain.'..." He's trying to build spiritual character with physical things. Yes, there should be tithing, that needs to be; but it needs to be done right and it needs to be done

because you love God. Whatever you give, if you don't give because you love God, don't send it. I don't want to extort a penny out of anyone. All of these physical things that you do, which are right, you can't make that equal the spiritual attitude of loving God.

Notice the publican: hated, despised, maybe ugly because it's the only job he could get, no one liked him, no friends. The only ones he would be friends with is he would go into the local tavern and get something to eat or drink and guess who would be there? *All the harlot and ne'er-do-wells and all that sort of thing*—bad and miserable people. That's why Jesus went to the publicans and sinners, because at least they knew they needed God—right? The ones who don't think they need God are the ones who are in trouble!

Verse 13: “And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat himself on *the* chest, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me, a sinner.’”

- Do you have the ‘law of sin and death’ in you? *Yes!*
- Are you a sinner by nature? *Yes!*
- Can we go to God and say how good we are? *No!*
- Can we go before God and thank Him for His goodness, mercy, righteousness, His Spirit and His love? *Yes!*

That's what God wants to give us.

That makes overcoming a whole lot simpler—doesn't it? That makes overcoming a whole lot easier. It does! I have overcome things by seeing the lack of love and trying to, with God's Spirit, grow in that love. I've been able to overcome things that I have exerted a great amount of effort to overcome and couldn't do it; I just couldn't do it! You'll find the same thing in your own situation as you go along.

Verse 14: “I tell you, this man went down to his house justified, rather than the other. For everyone who exalts himself shall be humbled; and the one who humbles himself shall be exalted.” How do you humble yourself? *You go to God and admit that everything that you have comes from Him! That's how!* You don't go put on a humble attitude. You don't go around and beat your back, flagellated and have it bleeding. You go to God and ***admit that with everything that you have has come from Him!***

(go to the next track)

Here's another parable that we know. We're going to see everything at work right here in this parable. We're going to see the good, the bad, the ugly and the redeemed and the one who is not so redeemed.

Luke 15:11^[transcriber's correction]: “Then He said, ‘A certain man had two sons; and the younger...’” (vs 11-12). It's always the younger who becomes the ‘whippersnapper’—right? Whenever you have sons, there's always the competition to be ‘as good as’ or ‘better than.’ The older one always thinks he's got it made, and he pretty well let's the younger ones know it. In this case the younger one said, ‘I'm getting out of here, I can't take this any longer.

“...of them said to *his* father, “Father, give me that portion of the property which falls to me.” And he divided to them *his* living. And not many days after, the younger son gathered everything together *and* departed into a distant country. And there he wasted *all* his substance, living *in* debauchery” (vs 12-13). Great sin; spent it all, ruined his life.

Verse 14: “But after he had spent everything, there arose a severe famine throughout that country, and he began to be in need.... [In his pride—not willing to swallow his pride—he humbled himself a little bit here]: ...Then he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, and he sent him into his fields to feed swine” (vs 14-15).

Remember, Jesus is talking to Jews. One of the worst jobs would be working with swine. They smell! They are disease ridden! They are miserable creatures indeed!

Verse 16: “And he was longing to fill his stomach with the husks that the swine were eating, but no one gave *anything* to him.” The world is not as good and glamorous as you think—right? ‘Go young man, go into the world, it's going to chew you alive!’ That's the whole story here—right? You think you're big, strong and tough, and you know how to do everything in the world. Now then, it gets down to the nitty-gritty.

Verse 17: “And when he came to himself...” Brethren, that's where everybody needs to come. Every human being needs to come to him or herself before God! This is talking about God the Father's love and this is talking about God the Father drawing with His Spirit. Many times He calls us at our very lowest.

Think how low this is. When you're out there in the manure and the water and the smell and the grunting and all the things that pigs have. Have you ever seen pigs fight over food? Can you imagine getting in there and trying to rip off one ear of corn to try and eat it? If you're not careful they'll turn on you and eat you!

So, “...he came to himself, he said... [a humble attitude but somewhat misunderstanding of God, in this case the father of the son] ... ‘How many of my father's hired servants have *an* abundance of

bread, and I am dying of hunger? I will arise and go to my father, and I will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you"" (vs 17-18). Here is repentance; he had to come to himself; *God's Spirit had to lead him to this*. You come to God. He goes back to his father.

He had all this worked up in his mind. He had it prepared and planned. 'When I get home the first thing I'm going to do is say this,' v 19: ""I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me as one of your hired servants."" And he arose *and* went to his father. But while he was still a long way off, **his father saw him and was moved with compassion...**" (vs 19-20).

That's what God wants to have on you and everyone—*compassion*.

- That way you *learn love*!
- That way you *learn understanding*!
- That way you *learn faith*!
- That way you *learn that whatever you have comes from God*!

"...and ran *and* embraced him, and ardently kissed him" (v 20). Does God have wide-open arms to receive anyone back? *Yes!* There it is!

Notice the father's attitude. He didn't say, 'Well, son, let me hear your speech. That's good! I'll take you on as a hired servant. Maybe you'll learn your lesson.' NO!

Verse 22: "But the father said to his servant... [He didn't want his son disgraced and run into the gutter] ...'Bring out a robe, the best robe, and clothe him, and give *him* a ring for his hand and sandals for *his* feet... [the ring was that he officially represented his father] ...and bring the fattened calf and kill *it*, and let us eat and be merry'" (vs 22-23).

It shows you the tremendous feast that God is going to have with all of those who enter into the Kingdom of God—right? That's why we meet Christ in the air and have the wedding feast before we come to the earth. That's going to be quite a thing—isn't it?

Verse 24: ""For this my son was dead, but is alive again..." Just like that man who was trapped in the '89 earthquake. He spent five days crushed in his car but still alive, under the Cypress double-decker freeway that collapsed. Finally they got him out. I tell you what, his life changed, and he said so. When you're there stuck for five days, guess what, you get a chance to review your whole life! I bet he shed many a tear. I'll bet he resolved to do good—right? *Yes, indeed!*

Verse 24: ""For this my son was dead, but is alive again, and he was lost, but is found.'...."

Verse 10: "I tell you *that* in like manner,

there is joy before the angels of God **over one sinner who repents.**" That's what God is interested in! He knows you sin! He knows you have the 'law of sin and death' in you. He put in you, and He's given you the way out through Christ: through His love, through His Spirit.

Verse 24: "...And they began to be merry.... [here's the other side of the coin]: ...But his elder son was in a field..." (vs 24-25). You could liken this unto Judaism. You could like the first son like unto all of those filthy swine goyeem; all hated by the Jews. Cast out, kicked out, nothing! Liken the second one unto the Jews.

Verse 25: "But his elder son was in a field, and when he was coming *back*, *and* approached the house, he heard music and dancing. And after calling one of the servants nearby, he inquired what these things might be. And he said to him, 'Your brother has come *home*, and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has received him safe and well.'" (vs 25-27)—and the brother ran in and kissed him. NO!

Verse 28: "Then he was angry... [see the sermon series: *Scripturalism vs Judaism*—that anger is still there to this day] ...and would not go in. As a result, his father came out and pleaded with him." Through Christ, that's what Christ did.

Verse 29: "But he answered *and* said to *his* father, 'Behold, I have served you so many years, and never did I transgress your commandment; yet you never gave me a kid, so that I might make merry with my friends;' but when this son of yours came, who has devoured your living with harlots, you killed the fattened calf for him.' Then he said to him, "Son, you are always with me, and all that *is* mine is yours. But it was fitting to make merry and rejoice because your brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, but is found" (vs 29-32).

Brethren, that's one of the things that God's Spirit is going to lead us in doing. Do you see the whole situation with the attitude that we have here?

We're going to have some situations where we're going to be able to help some people recover themselves out of some of the difficulties that they are in. We don't need to come along and have the great condemning condescending, self-righteous attitude: 'Well, if you would have had enough character you wouldn't have done that.'

What are you going to do? It's done! Is that not true? *It's done!* If God forgives, does God forgive? *Yes!* Who are to challenge what God forgives and doesn't forgive—right?

- There is how the Spirit is going to *lead* us!
- There is how the Spirit is going to *intercede* for us!

The Holy Spirit will Teach You:

This is really important in the days that we are in today. That's why studying God's Word is so important.

What did Jesus say of the words that He spoke? *The words which I'm speaking to you, they are Spirit and Life, as well as Truth!* When we study and when we really get into the Word of God, let God's Spirit *teach* you the will. Part of the problem that we see with false doctrines and things that we've come up with and had to answer, is because people are 'playing religion' and they are working a doctrine and they are not loving God. Therefore, God's Spirit is not going to lead them.

John 14:26: "But *when* the Comforter *comes*, even the Holy Spirit, which the Father will send in My name, that one shall **teach you all things**... [everything necessary for salvation; all your life! Isn't that something?] ...and shall bring to your remembrance everything that I have told you."

In these days, brethren, I see one of the greatest lacks among the people of God and the brethren of Jesus Christ is that they have not been studying, praying, and they have just been 'practicing' church.

I got a phone call from a woman who said, after hearing some of the things that we sent to her, 'I know why God has called me out of this other Church of God, because we're dying!' They're not yielding to the Spirit of God! They're not letting the Spirit of God *lead* them!

They still have it, like the parable of the Ten Virgins, there is some flickering going on. That's why we send the Care Package. We want to give them a little fuel for that flicker; let them come back to life again. When we're dealing with all of these false doctrines going on, as we saw one of the major Churches of God where it started out with 30 changes and then they went up to 97 and then to 130-something. It depends on how you count it.

- You've got to know the Bible!
- You've got to know the Word of God!

If you don't you're going to be in trouble. There are antichrists coming around teaching.

Here is where the danger is, 1-John 2:18: "Little children, it is *the* last time; and just as you have heard that the antichrist is coming, even now **many antichrists have risen up**..." I explain this is the book: *Lord, What Should I Do?* (1st ed.). How do you handle it? *At first, when there are some that come into the Church, you can get rid of them!* Those who are righteous and love God outnumber the antichrists or the false prophets and teachers. But when they take over and are in control and you can't change them, then it's like Paul told Timothy,

'Withdraw yourself from them.' You can't stick around.

Verse 19: "They went out from among us, but they were not of us, because if they were of us they would have remained with us; nevertheless, *they left* that they might be exposed *to show* that *they* all were not of us. But you have *the* anointing from the Holy One... [God's Spirit in you] ...and you have knowledge of all things ***pertaining to salvation***" (vs 19-20).

Didn't it say that the Holy Spirit would teach you all things? There comes a time when you are mature in your Christian growth and development and you know all the basic things for salvation. You don't know everything, but this is all the basic thing for salvation and you don't need someone coming along giving you a 'new' doctrine, which is an old satanic lie, and call this 'new understanding and truth' to lead you away from Christ. That's what he's talking about here.

Verse 21: "I did not write to you because you do not know the Truth, but because you know it... [He's dealing with people who understand the Truth of God.] ...and *you understand* that not one lie comes from the Truth. Who is the liar if it is not the one who denies that Jesus is the Christ? He is the antichrist—the one who denies the Father and the Son" (vs 21-22). That's happening right now.

This weird doctrine of the trinity is unreal! God is manifested in three ways: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. He didn't really die because He's one. When He was on the cross He prayed to Himself. When He was dead He was never really dead. Because He's God He could not be tempted. Every contradiction in the Scripture! This is what they were going through at the same time, very similar to it.

Verse 23: "Anyone who denies the Son does not have the Father either.... [But he has the Son has the Father also.] ...Therefore, let what you have heard from *the* beginning dwell in you; if what you have heard from *the* beginning is dwelling in you, then you will be dwelling in the Son and in the Father. And this is the promise that He has promised us: eternal life. These things I have written to you concerning those who are leading you astray. But you yourselves have dwelling in you the anointing that you received from Him; and you do not have need of anyone to indoctrinate you..." (vs 23-27). It doesn't contradict that a teacher must be sent. You don't need any of those antichrists coming around trying to teach you. That's what he's saying.

"...for the same anointing instructs you in ***all spiritual*** things..." (v 27). What we need to pray for is to let God's Spirit *lead us and teach us* as much as we can—right? I don't think in a lifetime we will ever learn all that the Holy Spirit of God can teach us through His Word. But at least we need to be busy

doing as much as we can—right?

“...and is true, and is not a lie; and *if you do* exactly as it *has* taught you, you will be dwelling in Him [Christ]. And now, little children, dwell in Him, so that when He is manifested we may have boldness, and not be put to shame before Him at His coming. If you know that He is righteous, you *also* know that everyone who practices righteousness **has been begotten by Him**” (vs 27-29).

That's tremendous! *The Holy Spirit is going to teach you!*

The Holy Spirit is Going to Comfort You:

Every one of us, sooner or later, is going to go through an experience in life where nothing but God's Spirit can help you; not even a friend, not even a husband/wife. It's going to happen that way, it's just the way that life is. When you hit the bottom and the pit is so big—just like the son feeding the swine—God alone can comfort you.

2-Corinthians 1: “Grace and peace *be* to you from God our Father and *the* Lord Jesus Christ. Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and ***the God of all comfort***; Who comforts us in ***all our tribulation***, in order that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trial, through the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God” (vs 2-4).

Brethren, may we be able to do that to a lot of brethren, and we can comfort them! A lot of people would like to be comforted before they have trouble. It doesn't work that way! Here's how God works it—I remember preaching sermons on this. It sure is amazing how God's Word is the living Word of God and it's alive, real and affects us today.

1-Peter 5:5: “In the same manner, *you* younger men be subject to *the* older men; and all of *you* be subject to one another, being clothed with humility... [Ties right in with ‘the one who exalts himself shall be abased and the one who humbles himself shall be exalted.’] ...because God sets Himself against *the* proud, but He gives grace to *the* humble. Be humbled therefore under the mighty hand of God so that He may exalt you in *due* time... [in the right time; in the time that God wants] ...casting all your cares upon Him, because He cares for you. Be sober! Be vigilant! For your adversary *the* devil is prowling about as a roaring lion, seeking anyone he may devour.... [That's what He's doing right now!] ...Whom resist, steadfast in the faith, knowing *that* the same afflictions are being fulfilled among your brethren who *are* in *the* world. Now, may the God of all grace, Who has called us unto His eternal glory in Christ Jesus, after *you* have suffered a little while... [He's not going to do it right away.] ...**Himself perfect you, establish,**

strengthen, and settle you” (vs 5-10).

Those are other words that reflect the comfort that God alone can give. *God's Spirit is going to comfort us.*

John 16:33: “...In the world you shall have tribulation. But be courageous! I have overcome the world.” I've heard some people say, ‘Yeah, Lord, thanks a lot but I'm in this trouble.’ Be of good courage, God will still take care of you—throw yourself on His mercy.

God's Spirit will Speak to You:

Not necessarily some audible voice, not as some people think where He comes along and a voice says, ‘Go here, go there, go the other place.’ God's Spirit will speak to you in the sense that it's going to convict you in hear and mind. That's God's Spirit doing it. There are times in the New Testament where we see that the Holy Spirit actually did speak. The message came from God, like: ‘Separate unto me Saul and Barnabas for the work I've called them to do’ (Acts 13:1-2). Then ‘the Spirit speaks expressly that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith’ (1-Tim. 4:1).

Have you ever had a situation where God's Spirit has impressed something on your mind that you just couldn't get away from that thought and you couldn't get away from doing what that through was impelling you to do? If that's so, *it's God's Spirit leading you*. In that sense, ***speaking*** to you.

God's Spirit will Inspire You:

What I want you to do is add other Scriptures to these in your study. What I'm doing here is meant so that you can take this and add to it yourself as you study. God's Spirit will inspire you. I have experience in being inspired of God many times in speaking, so I know what I'm talking about here. But I have never had this experience:

Matthew 10:16 “Behold, I am sending you forth as sheep in *the* midst of wolves. Therefore, be wise as serpents and harmless as doves. But beware of men; for they will deliver you up to councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues; and you shall also be brought... [forcibly] ...before governors and kings for My sake, for a witness to them and to the Gentiles” (vs 16-18). That means that you're to just get up and say how it is. Just exactly when and how that's going to happen, I don't know. But here's a promise, *it will happen!*

Verse 19: “Now, when they deliver you up, do not be anxious *about* how or what you should speak; for in that hour it shall be given to you what you shall speak. For it is not you who speak, but **the Spirit of your Father that speaks in you**” (vs 19-20). It's going to have to be with conviction, with

love, with power. Those days are coming! I don't relish that they come, but I tell you what, when they've got you, let them know, however it may be. It's going to be this way:

Verse 21: "Then brother will deliver up brother to death; and *the* father, the child; and children will rise up against *their* parents and *have* them put to death. And you shall be hated by all for My name's sake... [I can see that just around the corner] ...but the one who endures to *the* end, that one shall be saved" (vs 21-22). Then it gets tough!

Verse 23: "But when they persecute you in this city, escape into another; for truly I say to you, in no way shall you have completed *witnessing* to the cities of Israel until the Son of man has come." He isn't here and it hasn't been done, and maybe we have a small part in doing it.

God's Spirit is Going to Bear Witness:

We saw how the Spirit 'bore witness' to the man who took his inheritance and ended up with the pigs/the swine—right? He 'came to himself' and then God's Spirit as it were testified to him, convicted him by saying, 'Look, I'll just go home and be a servant.'

John 15:26: "But when the Comforter has come, which I will send to you from the Father, *even* the Spirit of the Truth, which proceeds from the Father, that one **shall bear witness** of Me. Then **you also shall bear witness**, because you have been with Me from *the* beginning" (vs 26-27).

John 16:7: "But I am telling you the truth. It is profitable for you that I go away because if I do not go away, the Comforter will not come to you. However, if I go, I will send it to you. And when that one has come, it will convict the world concerning sin... [because of the preaching that God inspires] ...and righteousness, and judgment: Concerning sin, because they do not believe in Me" (vs 7-9).

I was studying the first chapter of the Gospel of John again, and that is amazing what is there, brethren. Every word there in John 1 is breathtaking! Christ Who was God, Who created everything that there is, Who is the Light of all men, came to the world, came to His own and they didn't receive Him! Isn't that something? It's amazing!

Verse 10: "Concerning righteousness, because I am going to the Father and you no longer will see Me; and concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged. I have yet many things to tell you, but you are not able to bear them now. However, when that one has come, **even the Spirit of the Truth, it will lead you into all Truth...**" (vs 10-13). That's what we need, brethren! In these times that we're living in, and all

the things that the Churches of God are going through, we need that!

"...because it shall not speak from itself, but whatever it shall hear, it shall speak. And it shall disclose to you the things to come. That one shall glorify Me because it shall disclose to you *the things that* it receives from Me. Everything that the Father has is Mine; for this reason, I said that it shall receive from Me and shall disclose *these things* to you" (vs 13-15). That is the whole function of the Holy Spirit, and that's how we are to use it. Let's see how that was used by the apostles at that time.

After they let the apostle go and they came to their own company, Acts 4:23: "Now after being released, they came to their own *brethren* and reported to them all *that* the chief priests and elders had said. And when they heard *this*, they lifted up *their* voices to God with one accord and said, 'O Master, You *are* the God Who made the heaven and the earth and the sea, and all that *are* in them, Who by *the* mouth of Your servant David did say, "Why did the nations insolently rage, and the people imagine vain things? The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord and against His Christ." For of a truth they did gather together against Your Holy Son, Jesus, Whom You did anoint, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with *the* Gentiles and *the* people of Israel, to do whatever Your hand and Your counsel had predetermined to take place. And now, Lord, look upon their threatenings..." (vs 23-29).

I tell you what, brethren, we're in a time now when the Churches of God are being threatened. We need to gather together. We need to do what is here.

"...and grant that Your servants may speak Your Word with all boldness... [That's what we need to do, speak the Word of God! Then God is going to reach out and do the other things.] ...by reaching out Your hand to heal, and that signs and wonders may be done through the name of Your Holy Son, Jesus" (vs 29-30).

And may some of these things be done! May they be done that way! Not for glory! If you don't do whatever you're doing with love it doesn't matter what you're doing. Serve God!

Verse 31: "And when they had prayed, the place in which they were assembled was shaken; and they were all filled with *the* Holy Spirit, and they spoke the Word of God with boldness."

You talk about an experience, that's something! I don't think it was like some of these 'holy roller' things that you see. Unfortunately, the movies depict all of that all the time. This was with sound-mindedness and power. Can you imagine the

Spirit of God motivating the speaking and preaching, bringing everything to remembrance because they walked with Christ, they talked with Christ, they were with Him day and night for almost three and a half years? Can you imagine the things that they preached at that time?

Verse 32: "And the multitude of those who believed were of one heart and one soul... [May the Church of God get back to that again, brethren!] ...neither did anyone say that any of the things he possessed was his own, but they had all things common." That's because they were still in Jerusalem after Pentecost. This doesn't mean Communism here by any stretch of the imagination.

Verse 33: "And with great power the apostles testified of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and **great grace was upon them all.**"

That's what the Holy Spirit of God is going to do. That's how God's Spirit is going to work with us. *Yes, indeed!* That's what we need to yield to, to see and understand the power and grace of God.

- Ephesians 4:22 thru Ephesians 5:2—you're to be renewed inwardly; you are to put away the carnal things that you do and *grieve not the Holy Spirit* by continuing in all of these carnal sins of the flesh.
- 1-Thessalonians 5:17—quench not the Spirit, which means that when the Spirit of God leads you and inspires you—especially to repentance, to do the works of love and faith—don't put it out.
- Revelation 2 & 3—each section to the churches says, *'He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.'*

This is the whole ultimate that God wants us to understand, Ephesians 3:1: "For this cause I, Paul, *am* the prisoner of Christ Jesus for you Gentiles, if indeed you have heard of the ministry of the grace of God that was given to me for you; how He made known to me by revelation the mystery..." (vs 1-3).

That's something! God is sharing His secrets with you, brethren. That's overwhelming when you understand that. That's unreal! But it's true!

"...(even as I wrote briefly before, so that when you read *this*, you will be able to comprehend my understanding in the mystery of Christ), which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His Holy apostles and prophets **by the Spirit**" (vs 3-5). That's how the Spirit of God works in you!

- Let the Spirit of God *lead* you!
- Let the Spirit of God *teach* you!
- Let the Spirit of God *comfort* you!
- Let the Spirit of God *guide* you!

- Let the Spirit of God *lead you into all Truth!*

That will produce the fruits of the Spirit:

- love
- joy
- peace
- longsuffering
- temperance
- goodness
- meekness

'against such there is no law!'

Brethren, use the Spirit of God especially in these days in which we're living!

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version* by Fred R. Coulter

Scriptural References:

- 1) John 6:44-45
- 2) John 14:16-17
- 3) John 20:19-23
- 4) Romans 8:14, 9-10
- 5) Romans 5:17
- 6) Romans 8:10-11, 9-18, 23-26
- 7) 1 John 4:16-20
- 8) John 3:16
- 9) Romans 8:26
- 10) Revelation 8:3-4
- 11) Luke 18:9-14
- 12) Luke 16:11-20, 22-24, 10, 24-32
- 13) John 14:26
- 14) 1 John 2:18-29
- 15) 2 Corinthians 1:2-4
- 16) 1 Peter 5:5-10
- 17) John 16:33
- 18) Matthew 10:16-23
- 19) John 15:26-27
- 20) John 16:7-15
- 21) Acts 4:23-33
- 22) Ephesians 3:1-5

Scriptures referenced, not quoted

- 2 Corinthians 3
- Revelation 2; 3
- Acts 2; 8
- 2 Corinthians 10
- Acts 13:1-2
- 1 Timothy 4:1
- Ephesians 4:22 thru 5:2
- 1 Thessalonians 5:17

Also referenced:

- Sermon Series: *Scripturalism vs Judaism*
- Book: *Lord, What Should I Do?* by Fred R. Coulter

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How the Holy Spirit Works

Fred R. Coulter

All of our children have been given the opportunity to make their own choices—to choose right or to choose wrong. In Deuteronomy 30, here is what God sets before everyone! This is set before everyone in the world! Everyone in the Church! Every human being is confronted with the choices that we find here. We always need to keep this in mind.

Deuteronomy 30:11: “For this commandment which I command you today *is* not hidden from you, neither is it far off. It *is* not in heaven *that you should* say, ‘Who shall go up to heaven for us, and bring it to us, so that we may hear it and do it?’ Neither *is* it beyond the sea *that you should* say, ‘Who shall go over the sea for us to bring it to us, so that we may hear it and do it?’ But **the Word is very near you...**” (vs 11-14). In other words, God has made it that **wherever His Word is it is near to you!**

I suppose if we calculated the billions of Bibles that are in the world, it would be absolutely amazing how many people have access to the Word of God. In those countries where, unfortunately, they don’t have it, then God holds them to a little different standard. Their standard is found in Rom. 2 where just in living and debating good and evil among themselves that they do end up keeping some of the laws of God, which in that case Paul said, ‘is a law unto itself.’ But nevertheless, for those of us, we have the Word of God.

Verse 14: “But the Word *is* very near you in your mouth and in your heart... [in other words, the language that you understand] ...so that you may do it. Behold, I have set before you this day life and good... [That’s what God gives to every human being] ...and death and evil, in that I command you this day to love the LORD your God, to walk in His ways, and to keep His commandments and His statutes and His judgments so that you may live and multiply. And the LORD your God shall bless you in the land where you go to possess it” (vs 14-16).

In order for these blessings to come, then God gives us the choice. Here with the children of Israel—the descendants of Israel, the descendants of Abraham—God does certain things, not because the children of Israel necessarily follow this, but because of *His promise to Abraham!*

Because of that, this causes a lot of different nations of the world to look at America especially—and this is really part of the heart and core of difference between Islam and the western world—they look and see that these people are so corrupt, which they are; given over to various licentious

things, which they are; ‘here we are living in this desert being very frugal’—they’re thankful they have the oil—‘and we try and lead a decent life.’ Yet, they [America] get all blessings!

That’s the heart and core of the problem of it. Because God has given these blessings to us, He holds us accountable. God defers bringing His punishment or penalty upon people in hopes that they will repent—and even repent enough in the letter of the Law—that they would return to doing at least the commandments of God that they know, some people then really take it for granted that God endorses evil. He’s not endorsing evil. He’s giving an opportunity and space for repentance.

Many times they would repent in such a way, as it says in Psa. 78 that God is interested in mercy and kindness. We need to understand all that they did in the wilderness, and all that God provided for them. They wouldn’t have had such a terrible time in the wilderness if they would have said, ‘God, we know that You’re a God of love, graciousness, mercy and kindness and we’re out here in this wilderness and it’s mighty hot. We know that You brought us out with a strong hand. We know that You performed many great miracles for us. Now, God, we would really love to have just a little bit of meat. We like this manna, but it’s a wonderful diet and it really feeds us, but it would be nice if we could have just a little bit of meat to eat in the desert.’

No! They didn’t do that! They spoke against God. They sinned, Psalm 78:17: “Yet, they continued to sin still more against Him by rebelling against the Most High in the wilderness. And they tempted God in their heart by asking food for their lust.”

You read that account in the book of Numbers. They again wanted meat, so God said, ‘Ok, I’m going to give you meat. I’m going to give you quail. You’re not going to eat it one day or two days or ten days, but for a whole month. Because of their lusts, He smote them while it was still in their teeth. Sometimes, God will give you what you want, but not necessarily as a blessing. God basis everything on our heart and mind and attitude.

Verse 19: “Yea, they spoke against God; they said, ‘Can God set a table in the wilderness?... [Listen, God can do anything!] ...Behold, He struck the rock so that the waters gushed out, and the streams overflowed! Can He also give bread? Can He provide flesh for His people?’ Therefore, the LORD heard and was furious; so a fire was kindled against Jacob, and anger also came up against Israel,

because **they did not believe in God...**" (vs 19-22). They looked to the physical thing, but they didn't believe God or believe in Him.

The greatest thing you can do is **believe God!** Then God can work with you. Not just, 'People who keep God's commandments get blessings, therefore, I'm going to keep the commandments.' You may end up with some trials because that's not the whole purpose. Keeping the commandments is required of everyone. To do them just to get blessings is not going to necessarily result in blessings, if that's your attitude. God deals with each of us in a different way. **Believing God is the most important thing.**

Verse 23: "Though He had commanded the clouds from above, and had opened the doors of heaven; and He had rained down manna upon them to eat, and gave them of the grain of heaven. Man ate the food of angels..." (vs 23-25).

- Wonder what an angel meal is like?
- Have you ever wondered what it's going to be like at the wedding feast? *We're going to eat!*
- What kind of food does God have for spirit beings?
- *I'm sure it won't be just manna! But nevertheless, they did.*

Verse 26: "He caused an east wind to blow in heaven, and by His power He brought in the south wind. And He also rained flesh upon them like dust, and winged birds like the sand of the sea; and He let them fall in the midst of their camp, all around their tents. So they ate and were filled to the full, for He gave them that which they craved. They were not turned away from their lust, but while their food was still in their mouths, the wrath of God came upon them and killed the strongest of them, and struck down the chosen men of Israel. For all this **they still sinned** and did not believe in His wonderful works" (vs 26-32).

I think in this age, it's going to be really something to really believe God, in spite of all of the circumstances around us. We're not in a literal, physical desert, but we certainly are in a *spiritual* desert.

Verse 33: "Therefore, He ended their days in vanity and their years in terror. When He slew them, then they sought Him... [when trouble comes, people come back to God]: ...and they turned back and sought after God earnestly" (vs 33-34).

That's what happened with 9/11; 'Oh, we forgot God.' Then they went back and remembered Him, but not the right way. 'Oh, we have to go to church. Let's have ecumenical services and bring in a motif to show us how peaceful that the Muslims

are.' Quite a thing! I think when you understand about the Word of God and how important that it is, then you realize how merciful that God is that He deals with people this way.

Verse 35: "And they remembered that God was their Rock, and the Most High God was their Redeemer. Nevertheless they flattered Him with their mouths, and they lied to Him with their tongues" (vs 35-36). 'Oh yes, Lord, we'll shape up. Oh yes, Lord, we won't do that anymore.'

Verse 37: "For their heart was not steadfast with Him; neither were they faithful in His covenant. But He, *being* full of compassion, forgave their iniquity and did not destroy them; yea, many times He turned His anger away and did not stir up all His wrath, for He remembered that they were but flesh, a wind that passes away and does not come again. How often did they provoke Him in the wilderness and grieve Him in the desert? And still again they tempted God, and limited the Holy One of Israel. They did not remember His hand, nor the day when He delivered them from the enemy" (vs 37-42). Then it goes on showing continuously that way.

When God sets before us life and death, He does so in such a way that He wants us to love Him. Isn't it really a paradox of God: God is love; God is full of love; yet, He is the least loved by His creation. Have you ever thought of it that way? That puts us with a great deal of responsibility upon us.

Deuteronomy 30:17: "But if your heart turn away so that you will not hear... [no longer listen to God, the Word of God] ...but shall be drawn away and worship other gods and serve them, I denounce to you this day that you shall surely perish; you shall not prolong *your* days on the land where you pass over Jordan to go to possess it. I call heaven and earth to record this day..." (vs 17-19). Heaven and earth are still here—right? The words of Jesus Christ are based on heaven and earth—aren't they? *Yes!* So, that's a perpetual witness that God means what He says and says what He means.

Here's what He's put before all people. We much more so because now we—when we are baptized and receive the Spirit of God—are in a covenant relationship with God. That covenant relationship is unto death.

Verse 19: "I call heaven and earth to record this day against you *that* I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing. Therefore, choose life, so that both you and your seed may live." Sound's a little bit like the Garden of Eden—doesn't it? *Yes, it does!*

Verse 20: "That you may love the LORD your God..." That's why it's so important! That's why the primary commandment is to love God.

That's why! God wants you to love Him, and God wants to love you. God wants:

- to give you of His love
- to give you of His Spirit
- to give you of eternal life
- to bless you with those things that will help you accomplish that

"...and may obey His voice, and may cleave to Him; for He is your life and the length of your days, so that you may dwell in the land which the LORD swore to your fathers—to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob—to give it to them" (v 20). Ours is the Kingdom of God, the fulfillment of that. This is quite a thing that God sets before us in these particular cases.

There is something that has to happen to everyone that God deals with. God is patient, kind, loving and understanding. How long has God dealt with someone before they respond to the call?

I hope that we will have many, many more of the children who grew up in the Church and become adults that God will continue to work with them. I don't think God has forgotten them. I don't think God has forsaken them. But they are not in a covenant relationship with Him. When you're baptized and receive the Holy Spirit you're in a covenant relationship with God. Before that time *they have life and death set before them and they have to choose!* God wants them to *choose life*, but He wants them to *know* why they are doing this. He wants them to *understand*. He does not want them to do it just because father and mother say so. He wants them to do so because they answer the call of God individually.

Here we have the parable of the prodigal son. We can respond in several different ways. Luke 15:11: "Then He said, 'A certain man had two sons; and the younger of them said to *his* father, 'Father, give me that portion of the property which falls to me.'" And he divided to them *his* living'" (vs 11-12).

Apparently he was of age. When your children come of age they have to stand or fall before God on their own. That's a difficult choice for parents to understand. It's very difficult when you know that they go out and make mistakes. Just as they have the right to choose the good, they also have the right to choose the bad. Hopefully, they will choose the good. Or if they choose the bad—like we have in this case—then they will respond back to God.

Verse 13: "And not many days after, the younger son gathered everything together *and* departed into a distant country. And there he wasted *all* his substance, living *in* debauchery." When we see our children make bad decisions financially, it's

tough—isn't it? It's really difficult.

Verse 14: "But after he had spent everything, there arose a severe famine throughout that country, and he began to be in need." God brings out circumstances to bring people to understanding. That's why God does not constantly give blessings all of the time. With a blessing will also probably come a trial to see how you're going to receive the blessing. I like the way William Tyndale says it: "If God bid you over the sea, He's going to send you a little tempest to see whether you believe Him or not."

When the famine began, he was in want, v 15: "Then he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, and he sent him into his fields to feed swine." There is nothing more loathsome for a Jewish man to do than to feed swine. By the way, the swine there that Jesus cast the demons into—out of the man who had the legion of demons—and they went into the swine, the swine were being grown for consumption by the Romans soldiers in Jerusalem. So, He accomplished two purposes:

1. got rid of the demons
2. caused a shortage of pig meat

There's a proper use for hogs: *to get rid of garbage!* We would not have the problems we have with polluting the environment if we used pigs in the right way. So, there he's out there with the pigs:

Verse 16: "And he was longing to fill his stomach with the husks that the swine were eating... [It's just like going out here to the Midwest and they give them all this good corn.] ...but no one gave *anything* to him." Here the swine, the lowest thing that could possibly come into the mind of a Jew as an occupation to do, they were being fed better than he was. ***God has a way of letting circumstances come upon people***—come upon us; we can apply this to us or anyone else—***so that He can continue to work with them.*** We'll see how He works with them.

Verse 17: "And **when he came to himself...**" That's when all of us repent, when we come to ourselves. Lots of times God will just let us go on our own vain way, our own selfish way, whatever, until we come to ourselves. God is merciful and kind. He doesn't dump it on us all at once. That's why you will go along and you ask God to help you grow, help you overcome, help you to overcome human nature, and all of these things, and help me to see my vanity and stupidity and my errors.

Then all of a sudden one day God begins to answer that prayer and BINGO! you begin to see some things. Maybe in prayer you begin to see yourself for what you really are. Maybe you begin to

see that all the time when you thought you were so high and mighty and hoity-toity, you were really kind of low and dirty as far as spiritual standing before God. God is looking to the heart!

So, “...when he came to himself...” That’s the key thing! Obviously, when he began he was not thinking right. It was ‘stinking thinking’—wasn’t it? ‘Give me my inheritance, give me my money. I am young, strong, tough, good, I can go do it on my own, dad. Bye, see you later!’

So, he gets out there and lets the wilds of the world get hold of him and spends all of his money. Now he has nothing! Doesn’t have his family, doesn’t have his father; there he is all alone in a foreign country. I tell you, working in the middle of the hog field would be a stinky, stinky proposition and all the uncleanness that goes with it. Now he starts thinking correctly. That’s what repentance brings about: *correct thinking*; provided you take it to God and let God give you more understanding and continuously help you to think in right way.

“...he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired servants have *an* abundance of bread, and I am dying of hunger? I will arise and go to my father, and I will say to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you... [That’s repentance; that is admitting sin; confessing to God and confessing to the one that was offended. There he is preparing his speech.] ...and I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me as one of your hired servants’” (vs 17-19). He had this speech all ready in mind.

Verse 20: “And he arose *and* went to his father. But while he was still a long way off...” I wonder if he was kind of like Jacob after Joseph was sold off into slavery and he assumed the goodness of his own sons. There’s a real case—isn’t it? Joseph was sold off by his own brothers because of what they basically thought was vanity, that Joseph had this dream that they were all going to bow down to ‘worship me’ ‘You young whippersnapper, who do you think you are?’ But it was true. They were going to kill him, but Judah intervened and said, ‘No, we’ll sell him. We’ll take this coat and we’ll put goats blood on it and we’ll take it back to dad and say, Dad, the lions got him.’ There was Jacob for 17 years thinking that Joseph was dead. That’s quite something!

Furthermore, Joseph got into Egypt and got caught into a corrupt legal system—didn’t he? *Yes!* And he got accused of adultery, which he didn’t do, and he was thrown into prison. There he was in the dungeon for however long he was in the dungeon, and God still intervened and worked the circumstances out so they wouldn’t be so bad for him there in the dungeon. God was still with him to humble him, to meek him, to make him fit for what God wanted.

In examples like this, it’s always necessary to see the other side of the story, to see the finish of the story. It did turn out for good, because it saved all the children of Israel—didn’t it? After Jacob died the brothers said, ‘Oh, oh, we’re in trouble, we better go to Joseph and humble ourselves. They did, they came to Joseph and said, ‘We did it and we’re sorry.’ They repented! Joseph didn’t say, ‘It’s about time.’ No, he didn’t! He said, ‘I’m not God. I know you meant it to be for evil, but God meant it for good. Go in peace!’

We look at a life history like that and we see the lessons that God deals with us. God works with us, and God does not give up on us even though the circumstances get low and desperate and miserable. All of you who are parents, if things like this have happened to your children and they virtually rejected the things of God, pray for them. Ask God to intervene for them. God will in *His* time, in *His* way.

God is in the business of salvation. That’s what’s important to remember. I imagine that this father was much the same way. He’d go out there at sundown and probably see in his own mind his son when he left. Didn’t hear from him. No cell phones! He didn’t know what happened to him, didn’t know where he was, but probably out there praying every night that everything would work out. One night he’s out there and his father saw him. The father did not say, ‘Well, it’s about time you woke up. You only deserve to be one of my servants.’ God doesn’t do that to us, either.

“...his father saw him and was moved with compassion, and ran *and* embraced him, and ardently kissed him” (v 20). That’s also how God views us when we repent and come back to him. You need to understand that.

The son started out, ‘I’ve got my speech all ready, v 21: “And his son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you, and I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’ But the father said to his servant, ‘Bring out a robe, the best robe, and clothe him... [get him out of these swine clothes and give him a bath and clean him up] ...and give *him* a ring for his hand and sandals for *his* feet; and bring the fattened calf and kill *it*, and let us eat and be merry. For this my son was dead, but is alive again; and he was lost, but is found.’ And they began to be merry” (vs 21-24).

God is the One Who has to work out the circumstances. There are many, many in the Church who have attended who are in similar circumstances. That’s why it’s imperative for us that when they do repent that we have the right attitude toward them. Be thankful that they’re repenting. Don’t remind them of all the wrongs that they have done, because they’re repenting of them—and they know that!

Verse 25: “But his elder son was in a field... [this is likened to the one who’s always been faithful in church] ...and when he was coming *back*, and approached the house, he heard music and dancing.... [an unusual thing] ...And after calling one of the servants nearby, he inquired what these things might be. And he said to him, ‘Your brother has come *home*, and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has received him safe and well’” (vs 25-27).

Verse 28: “Then he was angry and would not go in. As a result, his father came out and pleaded with him. But he answered *and* said to *his* father, ‘Behold, I have served you so many years, and never did I transgress your commandment; yet you never gave me a kid, so that I might make merry with my friends; but when this son of yours came, who has devoured your living with harlots, you killed the fattened calf for him.’” (vs 28-30).

That’s a very good example of what we go through, too. That there will be more people who will see the error of their ways, there will be more children who have left God who will come back. God hasn’t forgotten them. If we have this attitude then we will know for sure that they left for a good reason.

We have to have the attitude of compassion and forgiveness as the father had here. They know that they’ve got to get their lives squared around. They know they’ve got to change and keep the commandments of God. This is a momentous occurrence that takes place. This kind of repentance is deep and profound. It moves people to do the things that they need to do to get right with God. What is the whole lesson for the Laodiceans? *Be zealous and repent!* They all have to *come to themselves*; we have to constantly *come to ourselves* before God, too.

Verse 31: “Then he said to him, ‘Son, you are always with me, and all that *is* mine is yours. But it was fitting to make merry and rejoice because your brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, but is found’” (vs 31-32).

Part of the problem involved in this with the other brother was that he didn’t understand his own nature; he did not understand the problems of self-righteousness. Self-righteousness is so hard to see, because *you’re doing right*. But because you do right, that hasn’t necessarily changed your nature. Only the Holy Spirit can change the nature.

Let’s look at another parable, Luke 7:36^[transcriber’s correction]: “Now one of the Pharisees invited Him to eat with him. And after going into the Pharisee’s house, He sat down *at the table*. And behold, a woman in the city who was a sinner... [a known harlot] ...when she knew that He was sitting in the Pharisee’s house, took an alabaster flask of

ointment; and she stood weeping behind Him, *and knelt* at His feet, *and* began to wash His feet with *her* tears and to wipe *them* with the hairs of her head; and she was ardently kissing His feet and anointing *them* with the ointment.” (vs 36-38). I imagine that caused quite a little disturbance there in the Pharisees’ house.

Verse 39: “But when he saw *this*, the Pharisee who had invited Him spoke within himself, saying, ‘This *man*, if He were a prophet, would have known who and what the woman *is* who is touching Him because she is a sinner’” Jesus could understand the thoughts, so He gave them this parable:

Verse 40: “Then Jesus answered *and* said to him, ‘Simon, I have something to say to you.’ And he said, ‘Teacher, say *on*.’.... [you could almost see it] ...‘There were two debtors of a certain creditor; one owed five hundred silver coins, and the other fifty. But when they did not have *anything with which* to pay *him*, he forgave *them* both. Tell *Me* then, which of them will love him most?’” (vs 40-42). Simon thought that’s an easy one.

Verse 43: “And Simon answered *and* said, ‘I suppose *the one* whom he forgave the most.’ And He said to him, ‘You have judged rightly.’ And after turning to the woman, He said to Simon, ‘Do you see this woman? I came into your house, and you did not provide *any* water to wash My feet; but she has washed My feet with *her* tears and wiped *them* with the hairs of her head. You did not give Me a kiss; but she, from the *time* I came in, has not ceased to ardently kiss My feet. You did not anoint My head with oil; but she has anointed My feet with ointment. For this cause, **I tell you**... [it’s a lesson for him] ...her many sins have been forgiven because she loved much. But to whom little is forgiven, he loves little’” (vs 43-47). There’s a key lesson, brethren. It’s got to be the love of God. Everything we do has to be based on that.

Verse 48: “And He said to her, ‘Your sins have been forgiven.’ Then those who were sitting with *Him* began to say within themselves, ‘Who is this, Who even forgives sins?’ But He said to the woman, ‘Your faith has saved you. Go in peace’” (vs 48-50).

We need to look at it the way that God looks at those things. We need to understand that we’re going to be dealing with a generation that has been into all kinds of things—right? They’re going to need a lot of understanding. They are going to need a lot of repenting on their part. They’re going to need the example of love. A lot of times they did the things that they did because they weren’t loved. That’s very important for us to understand.

- How does the Holy Spirit work with a person?

- In particular, how does the Holy Spirit work with someone before they're baptized?
- What is it that God does?

If we believe that God only has His eye on His Church, then we are indeed most self-righteous! God is God of heaven and earth! God is interested in all the people on earth. God has special means whereby He seeks out those who are trying to find Him. He does answer those prayers.

- How does He do it?
- By what means does He do it?

We find it right here in Revelation 5:6: "Then I saw, and behold, before the throne and the four living creatures, and before the elders, *was* standing a Lamb as having been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are **the seven spirits of God** that are sent into all the earth."

- What do those seven spirit do?
- What is their job?

Let me give you an example of how God did something and the people didn't even have a clue. The soldiers who crucified Jesus, actually nailing Him to the cross:

- What did they have? *They had His garment and His vesture—right?*
- Did they know God? *No! Had no thought about God!*
- What was their job? *The nasty job of crucifying Jews!*

Get rather callus in that kind of occupation. But nevertheless, they did what God wanted them to do. That is, they parted His garment and cast lots on His vesture to fulfill the prophecy in Psa. 22.

- Did God work with them to accomplish that? *Of course, He did!*
- Did they know it? *I doubt it! I don't think they even had a clue!*
- Is God working with people that we don't even know about?
- Is He working with them in a way that He desires? *Yes!*

I think that the seven spirits have an awful lot to do with it.

Let's look at how this operates and how it works. I do not care who the individual is, there is not one individual on earth—even an atheist... An atheist is just a 'good-time Joe.' When the going gets tough he calls on God. God is not like the joke; He doesn't answer them. God will deal with them.

Here's the principle, 2-Chronicles 15:1: "And the Spirit of God came upon Azariah the son of Oded. And he went out to meet Asa, and said to

him, 'Hear me, Asa, and all Judah and Benjamin. The LORD *is* with you while you are with Him. **And if you seek Him, He will be found by you....**'" (vs 1-2). Jesus gave that promise—didn't He. He said, 'Seek, you will find. Knock and it shall be opened. For everyone who seeks will find, and everyone who knocks it will be opened.' We have the same principle here: **"...if you seek Him, He will be found by you...."** And God is interested in that. That's what God wants. He does not want to come down and destroy and kill people. That's why when He says, 'You that desire the day of the Lord, what is it to you?'

If anyone wants to be a prophet, you better read the book of Ezekiel.

(go to the next track)

This is what we need to realize, Ezekiel 33:7: "And you, son of man, I have set you as watchman to the house of Israel.... [That's why no one should stand up and say, 'I'm a watchman'—because you have set yourself.] ...Therefore, you shall hear the Word from My mouth, and warn them from Me. When I say to the wicked, 'O wicked one, you shall surely die;' if you do not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked one shall die in his iniquity; but I will require his blood at your hand. But, if you warn the wicked of his way, to turn from it; if he does not turn from his way, he shall die in his iniquity, but you have delivered your soul" (vs 7-9).

This is a responsibility for each of us in a way where we are to be a light. We are to be ready to give an answer of the hope that lies within us. That may be something that will help turn this person to God.

Verse 10: "And you, son of man, speak to the house of Israel. Thus *shall* you speak, saying, 'When our transgressions and our sins *are* on us, and we are wasting away in them, how then shall we live?' Say to them, 'As I live,' says the Lord GOD, **'I have no delight in the death of the wicked...** [May all of Saudi Arabia understand that, and all of the terrorists. If you take in your hand to execute God's judgment, then God's judgment is going to be upon you.] ...except that the wicked turn from his way, and live....'" (vs 10-11).

That's what God wants. God is able to help repair any life. Do you understand that? Remember, there are going to be those called at the very last hour. "...Turn you, turn you from your evil ways; for why will you die, O house of Israel?" (v 11). God takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked. Then He gives a warning: If the righteous turn from his way and sin then all the righteousness that he has done shall not be remembered. If the wicked will turn from his way and his sin, then all of his sin shall not be remembered either. That's also a very important thing for us to understand.

I think what you will see is that God is busy working with many different people at many different levels that we don't even know about, because of the way that God works. Remember when Jesus told the disciples in Samaria, 'Look at the fields, they're already white unto the harvest.' They didn't know what was going to happen, because that was early in the beginning of the ministry of Christ. That happened later on after the Day of Pentecost. The harvest was great—wasn't it? *Yes, indeed!*

We find the principle here: ***If you seek Him, you will be found of Him!*** 2-Chronicles 15:3^[transcriber's correction]: "And for a long time Israel *had been* without the true God, and without a teaching priest, and without law. And when they turned in their trouble to the LORD God of Israel, and sought Him, He was found by them. And in those times *there was* no peace to him who went out, nor to him who came in, but great tumult *was* upon all the inhabitants of the lands. And nation was destroyed by nation, and city-by-city, for God troubled them with every adversity. But you be strong and do not let your hands be weak, for your work shall be rewarded" (vs 3-7). Asa took heart, he returned to the Lord, they made a covenant with God, all of Judah rejoiced at the oath, and they made this covenant:

Verse 15: "And all Judah rejoiced at the oath, for they had sworn with all their heart and sought Him with their whole desire. And He was found by them, and the LORD gave them rest all around.... [v 19]: "And there was no war to the thirty-fifth year of the reign of Asa."

Asa went ahead and he did the things that were not right, 2 Chronicles 16:7: "And at that time Hanani the seer came to Asa king of Judah and said to him, 'Because you have relied on the king of Syria and have not relied on the LORD your God, therefore the army of the king of Syria has escaped out of your hand. Were not the Ethiopians and the Libyans a huge army with many chariots and horsemen? Yet, because you relied on the LORD, He delivered them into your hand, for **the eyes of the LORD**... [here's the whole point, those are the *seven spirits that are the seven eyes*] ...run to and fro in all the whole earth to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart *is* perfect toward Him. In this you have done foolishly; therefore, from now on you shall have wars'" (vs 7-9). Then he got mad at Hanani the seer.

God is seeking out whom He is going to seek out. Let's see how God is going to begin dealing with different people. Here we have the disciples on the night of the Passover. Jesus is talking to them, John 14:15: "**If you love Me, keep the commandments**—namely, My commandments."

That's why all repentance begins with transgression of the Law. Everyone who transgresses the Law has to see that he or she is a sinner and needs to repent to God. Then they have to come to the point that they desire to keep the commandments of God. That is a starting point for them.

Verse 16: "**And I will ask the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter...**" Let's say someone really has a messed up life. He or she wants to get it straightened out. They don't know God. They don't know anything about God. Maybe they just start praying. Is God going to ignore that prayer or are the seven eyes of God seeking those kinds of individuals to hopefully lead them to repentance. ***It's the graciousness of God that leads people to repentance!*** Then they begin to see they need to keep the commandments. Here we're going to find a great principle where this all ties up with love, too.

"...that it may be with you throughout the age: *Even* the Spirit of the Truth, which the world cannot receive because it perceives it not, nor knows it; but you know it because it dwells with you, and shall be **within** you" (vs 16-17).

How many people have the Spirit of God *with* them, but not *in* them? How they respond to that depends on how God will continue to deal with them. If they come along and come to church once or twice and they're gone, and they didn't go any further than that.

- Has God necessarily given up on them? *We don't know!*
- Can the Spirit of God be *with* them? *Yes, the Spirit of God, I think, will be with them as long as they respond to God!*

If they don't respond to God, I think it will be withdrawn.

- What if they go through several sessions there, where then they really *come to themselves*? *I'm sure the Spirit of God will come back to be with them!*

But the Spirit of God is not *in* a person until they have repented, have been baptized, receive the laying on of hands and then the Spirit of God is *within* the individual as a begettall and the mind of Christ. We will see two functions of the Holy Spirit.

Verse 21: "The one who has My commandments and is keeping them, that is the one who loves Me; and the one who loves Me shall be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will manifest Myself to him." God is love and wants to be loved. Therefore, God will continue working with an individual until they come to that point.

Verse 23: "Jesus answered and said to him, 'If anyone loves Me, he will keep My Word; and My

Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him.” What is an *abode*? A *dwelling place*! When you come to that point of receiving the Holy Spirit that *you become a temple of God!* That’s what you are! That’s what’s important!

Verse 24: “The one who does not love Me does not keep My words...” Obviously the Holy Spirit is going to leave.

Let’s see what the Apostle Paul wrote to the Corinthians concerning our bodies. When that happens, when the Holy Spirit comes *into* us we now have the abode of Christ and the Father. It says *WE* will come and make *OUR* abode with you—which means *in you!*

1-Corinthians 3:16: “Don’t you understand that you are God’s temple, and *that* the Spirit of God is dwelling in you?... [His abode is *within* you!] ...If anyone defiles the temple of God... [his body] ...God shall destroy him because the temple of God is Holy, **which temple you are**” (vs 16-17). That’s the key important thing. You’ve then become a temple of God, for God to live *in you*.

How is that done? We will see that in order to accomplish this, there are two functions of the Holy Spirit. There is one Holy Spirit but two functions of it. One we will see is the function that Christ does. The other is the function of the Father, which He does.

Romans 8:9: “However, you are not in *the* flesh, but in *the* Spirit, if **the Spirit of God** is indeed dwelling within you. But if anyone does not have **the Spirit of Christ**, he does not belong to Him.” Notice that we have two things:

1. the Spirit of God
2. the Spirit of Christ

That shows two aspects of the Holy Spirit. First of all, the Holy Spirit comes to those who are seeking God and is *with* them. When they repent and are baptized and receive the laying on of hands, then the Holy Spirit is *in* them, and they become the temple of God, because God the Father and Jesus Christ—through the power of the Holy Spirit—is ***dwelling in them!***

Verse 10^[transcriber’s correction]: “But if Christ be **within** you... [that’s the function of Christ, the mind of Christ, the function of Christ] ...the body is indeed dead because of sin; however, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. Now, if the **Spirit of Him Who raised Jesus** from *the* dead is dwelling **within** you...” (vs 10-11).

We’re talking about two aspects of the Spirit: Spirit of Christ that dwells in you; and the Spirit of “...Him Who raised Jesus from the dead...” What does that do? *There are two distinct functions of the Holy Spirit!*

“...He Who raised Christ from *the* dead will also quicken your mortal bodies because of His Spirit that dwells within you” (v 11). What is that called? What is the function of that?

Verse 12: “So then, brethren, we are not debtors to the flesh, to live according to *the* flesh; because if you are living according to *the* flesh, you shall die; but if by *the* Spirit... [this is using the power of the Spirit *within* you] ...you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you shall live. For **as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are the sons of God**” (vs 12-14). The whole function of the Holy Spirit is *to lead us*. There are two aspects of this that we will see.

1. **The Function of Christ:**

Let’s look at the function of Christ, which is the mind of Christ. It is something that you have to yield to, want and desire. God is not going to force it upon you. As we started out He set choices before us.

Philippians 2:5: “Let this mind be in you, which *was* also in Christ Jesus.” We are to have the mind of Christ. How do we have the mind of Christ?

- by studying His Word!
- by living by His Word!
- by thinking with the Word of God!

That’s when you begin really maturing spiritually; when you use the Scriptures that are in your mind because you’ve studied it and it has become part of you. Then you think with the Scriptures! Then you have the mind of Christ. That’s the function that comes from Christ.

Part of what I am covering here I’ve covered in a little different way. That is the worse translated verse in the King James. Notice that it did not say to have the mind of the Father. It said to have the mind of Christ. Nevertheless, Christ said that ‘we will come and make Our abode—or dwelling place—with the one who loves God.

2. **The Function of the Father:**

What is the function of the Spirit that comes from the Father? Unfortunately, in the *King James Version* is where a lot of difficulties and problems come. This is the false doctrine of Protestantism that once you are converted you are *born again*.

1-John 3:9 (*KJV*): “Whosoever is born of God **does not** commit sin; for his seed remains in him: and he **cannot** sin, because he is born of God.” Wait a minute! If that’s true, why do we have:

1-John 1:9^[transcriber’s correction]: “If we confess our own sins, He is faithful and righteous, to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” If you cannot sin, why do you

have to confess your sins? It's an absolute contradiction!

1-John 5:16 "If anyone sees his brother sinning a sin *that is* not unto death..." If you cannot sin, if you are converted, then how can you see a brother sin a sin which not a sin unto death? It's totally contradictory. It doesn't make any sense at all. The reason is 1-John 3 is not properly translated—that's why!

A sin that is a sin not unto death is any sin that is not the unpardonable sin, any sin that can be repented of "...he shall ask, and He will give him life for those who do not sin unto death..." (v 16).

When young people have left the Church and have forsaken God, have they sinned a sin unto death? *You don't know!* So, you pray for them that they come back. Pray for them that God would work in their lives, whatever it may be, to have them come to him or her self. Then they can come back to God.

"...he shall ask, and He will give him life for those who do not sin unto death. There is a sin unto death; concerning that *sin*, I do not say that he should make *any* supplication *to God*" (v 16). How do we understand 1-John 3:9?

Let's come right through this so we understand it, 1-John 3:4 (KJV): "Whosoever commits sin transgresses also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.

A more precise translation, v 4 (FV): "Everyone who practices sin is also practicing lawlessness, for sin is lawlessness. And you know that He appeared in order that He might take away our sins; and **in Him is no sin**. Everyone who dwells in Him does not *practice* sin..." (vs 4-6). The verb in v 4, *practicing*, carries down into the meaning of v 6: *does not practice sin!*

"...anyone who *practices* sin has not seen Him, nor has known Him. Little children, do not allow anyone to deceive you; the one who **practices righteousness** is righteous, even as He is righteous. The one who **practices sin** is of the devil because the devil has been sinning from *the* beginning. For this purpose the Son of God appeared that He might destroy the works of the devil. **Everyone who has been begotten by God...**" (vs 6-9)—the receiving of the Holy Spirit. The begetting comes from *the Father!* That is the action of the Holy Spirit on the Father's part. It is a begetting, because you are going to be His children at the resurrection.

Verse 9: "Everyone who has been **begotten** by God does not practice sin because His seed of *begetting* is dwelling within him... [Why can you not practice sin?]: ...and he is not able to *practice* sin **because he has been begotten by God.**" God's Spirit convicts you of sin—right?

Maybe for a time you can deceive yourself and think you're getting away with sin. But sooner or later you're going to *come to yourself* and *understand that you cannot practice sin!* **If you truly have the Spirit of God you cannot practice sin!** You can sin, but you can't live in sin as a way of life.

- God's Spirit is there to ensure that.
- God's Spirit is there to give you the mind of Christ
- God's Spirit is there to retain the begetting of the Holy Spirit

so that you can become the children of God!

That's why this verse has led to a lot of problems, especially with Protestants who like to say, 'When you're born again you cannot sin, so therefore, you don't have to worry about the Law.' It doesn't mean that at all.

Verse 9, again: "Everyone who has been begotten by God does not practice sin because His seed... ['sperma' in the Greek] ...*of begetting* is dwelling within him, and he is not able to *practice* sin because he has been begotten by God. By this *standard* are manifest the children of God and the children of the devil. Everyone who does not practice righteousness is not of God, and neither is the one who does not love his brother" (vs 9-10). This is to develop in us.

Let's look at that. The function of the Holy Spirit—which comes from God—it performs that which brings you to become the children of God. When do you become the children of God literally? *At the resurrection!* That's when your mortal bodies shall be changed from flesh to spirit. Be fashioned like His glorious body.

Romans 8:11: "Now, if the Spirit of Him... [from the Father] ...Who raised Jesus from *the* dead is dwelling within you... [that's the begetting] ...He Who raised Christ from *the* dead will also quicken your mortal bodies because of His Spirit that dwells within you." Therefore, the function of the Spirit by the Father is for the begetting and then for the change at the resurrection.

This gives us a better understanding of how God deals with people in the world. If anyone is seeking God, He'll send one of the seven spirits to keep tabs on what he's doing. The Spirit of God can come and be with that individual—not *in* them. If they respond to God then the Spirit of God will continue to lead them. God will lead them to repentance. If they reject it and go the other way, the Spirit of God will be withdrawn from them. They have not been called unto salvation. They have been exposed to Truth, but because they were not willing to believe and obey, therefore, God's Spirit could not remain with them to lead them to repentance. Maybe

that will happen again at a later time, we don't know.

Once we have been baptized and received the Holy Spirit as a begettal we are in a different category with God—we are *His begotten children*. It is the Father Who has caused this to be. That's why when we baptize, we baptize *into the name of the Father*, because He is the One Who sends the Holy Spirit of begettal. And *of Christ*—not into the name of Christ—because it's through His crucifixion and resurrection that we can have forgiveness of sin, and *of the Holy Spirit* because the Holy Spirit is to lead us. Then the person is baptized. All of this together in the name of Christ.

Now then, we are in a different category than the rest of the world. We are not *of* the world, as Christ said. We live in the world—sometimes we wish we didn't have to, but we do—but *we are not of the world*. Therefore, we are in a constant battle against the world and against self, and that expends *spiritual energy*! That's why you need to constantly be renewed, constantly need to stir up the Spirit of God within you.

What we need to remember is that this came as a spiritual blessing from God the Father. Stop and think how great it is, what a marvelous blessing that it is that *you are the children of God*! That's a little hard to fathom, because of the limitations of our mind. Therefore, God has guaranteed that you will have a spiritual body by the very fact that you now have a physical body. You're walking around with your guarantee all the time.

Here's why we're in a different category, Ephesians 1:3: “Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly *things* with Christ.” We're not in heavenly places now, but we've been blessed with part of the heavenlies with the Holy Spirit of God.

Verse 4: “According as He has personally chosen us for Himself... [Isn't that interesting? God had this plan all ready] ...before *the* foundation of the world...” But because He sets before us choices, we respond to God—many are called, few are chosen because few repent. Once we repent, receive the Holy Spirit of God, then here is what He has done.

“...in order that we might be **Holy and blameless before Him in love**; having predestinated us for sonship to Himself through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of His own will” (vs 4-5). Maybe you never thought of it before, but God has looked down upon you and called you “...according to His good pleasure...” He has! Every one of us!

What is the pleasure of God for us going to be? That's something— isn't it? Here's the Being that John said twice: *God is love*! He loved us first

and manifested His Son Jesus Christ. Therein is the love of God shown to us.

How many people respond back to God with the love of God that they need? With the love of God that God desires? *With all your heart, mind, soul, being*! That's what God wants. There can be nothing greater in this life that you can do than that. That includes keeping His commandments. That includes everything that He desires to do. That God can have pleasure in us. Isn't that something? ***He's called us for His own good pleasure! According to His own will!***

Maybe you've never thought of it this way. ***God the Father Himself has chosen you!*** The Supreme Being of the universe has reached down in your life to call you and to give you His Spirit that you can be in His kingdom! That takes a lifetime to really come to grasp the full meaning of that.

It's going to be, v 6: “To the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein He has made us objects of *His* grace in the Beloved *Son*.” That's what imputed righteousness is all about. God looks upon us as He looks upon Christ. That's something—isn't it? That's why we go daily to have our sins forgiven. That's why God wants us to be loving, to be forgiving, to be kind—because that's what God is!

There's a time when we stand for the Truth. There's a time when we give no quarter to anybody or anything because we are defending the Truth and standing for God. That in effect is showing supreme love for God, because you're going to stand against the enemy. That's what Christ did—didn't He? *Yes, He did!*

Verse 7: “In Whom we have redemption through His blood, *even* the remission of sins, according to the riches of His grace.” That's a constant, ongoing thing, brethren. You always have access to the throne of God in heaven above through Jesus Christ. You always have access to the forgiveness of sins upon repentance. That's what we need to really grasp in this whole thing of our relationship with God.

Verse 8: “Which He has made to abound toward us in all wisdom and intelligence; having made known to us the mystery of His own will...” (vs 8-9). How many know the true plan of God? I imagine if you asked even a lot of religious people they wouldn't know. If you ran a survey in a shopping mall and asked, “What do you think God's purpose is?” I don't think anyone would say to *create His Family through mankind!*

- How's He going to do it? *God has a plan!*
- How do we know what it is? *It's laid out in the Bible and structured by the Holy Days!*

Amazing thing! It is the mystery or the secret of His will. That's how much God loves you, that He's brought you into His confidence so much that He has revealed His secret plan to you, to me, to all those that He calls regardless of where they are. Isn't that a marvelous thing? All of that is through the power of the Holy Spirit.

"...according to His good pleasure, which He purposed in Himself; that in *the Divine* plan for the fulfilling of *the* times, He might bring all things together in Christ, both the things in the heavens and the things upon the earth; yes, in Him, in Whom we also have obtained an inheritance..." (vs 9-11).

Let's talk about the inheritance a little bit. I was talking to a man recently and he said that he received an inheritance, because one of his relatives died. What did he get? *He got something!* It was not an empty envelope with ethereal POOF! It was substance. God has prepared the universe for His Family. It's going to be a literal inheritance.

- Did God give the inheritance of the land to the descendants according to His promise? *Yes, He did!*
- Was it real substance? *Yes, it was!*
- Are spiritual things of greater substance than physical things?
- In inheriting the Kingdom of God and in living in New Jerusalem, is that not being blessed with substance greater than our mind can really fully grasp at this point?

Romans 8:14: "For as many as are led by *the* Spirit of God, these are *the* sons of God.... [let the Spirit of God lead you] ...Now, you have not received a spirit of bondage again unto fear, but you have received *the* Spirit of sonship, whereby we call out, 'Abba, Father.'" (vs 14-15). Isn't that something? You can call God the Father, *Daddy*—a term of endearment.

Verse 16: "The Spirit itself bears witness conjointly with our own spirit, *testifying* that we are *the* children of God." Remember, God is preparing for us. Jesus said, 'If I go, I will come again. In My Father's house are many abodes and I go to prepare a place for you, that when I come I will receive you to Myself.' God is working, preparing that. That's why He wants us to work to prepare, in reciprocal fashion, *spiritually* in our lives so that when we receive the inheritance that He has prepared for us, we will be fully equipped to handle it. It's an inheritance.

Verse 17: "Now, if *we are* children, *we are* also heirs—truly, heirs of God and **joint heirs with Christ**—if indeed we suffer together with Him, so that we may also be glorified together with Him. For I reckon that the sufferings of the present time *are* not worthy *to be compared* with the glory that shall be revealed in us.... [That's quite a thing—isn't it?]

...The earnest expectation of the creation itself is awaiting the manifestation of the sons of God." (vs 17-19). When it gets down to it, you need to realize this: ***the destiny of the world also depends upon you as a son or daughter of God!***

That's why God wants you to do it *His* way. That's why God does not want you out trying to correct the world through politics and elections and militia today. The Kingdom of God is not here. If it were then we would fight. When it does come we will fight, and we will be equipped.

Ephesians 1: 11: "Yes, in Him, in Whom we also have obtained an inheritance, having been predestinated according to His purpose, Who is working out all things according to the counsel of His own will... [Your will be done in earth as it is in heaven; not my will by Your will] ...that we might be to *the* praise of His glory, who first trusted in the Christ" (vs 11-12). That's a hard one for me to comprehend, that we should be "...to *the* praise of His glory, who first trusted in the Christ."

In other words, what God is doing with those that He calls and gives the Holy Spirit to, **"...be the children and inheritors of His plan. That it is going to 'be to *the* praise of His glory...'" (v 12).**

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version* by Fred R. Coulter (except where noted)

Scriptural References:

- 1) Deuteronomy 30:11-16
- 2) Psalm 78:17-42
- 3) Deuteronomy 30:17-20
- 4) Luke 15:11-32
- 5) Luke 7:36-50
- 6) Revelation 5:6
- 7) 2 Chronicles 15:1-2
- 8) Ezekiel 33:7-11
- 9) 2 Chronicles 15:3-7, 15, 19
- 10) 2 Chronicles 16:7-9
- 11) John 14:15-17, 21, 23-24
- 12) 1 Corinthians 3:16-17
- 13) Romans 8:9-14
- 14) Philippians 2:5
- 15) 1 John 3:9
- 16) 1 John 1:9
- 17) 1 John 5:16
- 18) 1 John 3:4-10
- 19) Romans 8:11
- 20) Ephesians 1:3-11
- 21) Romans 8:14-19
- 22) Ephesians 1:11-12

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Romans 2
- Psalm 22

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Transcribed: 8-13-12

Be Strong in the Lord I

(Hope)

Fred R. Coulter

How to be strong in the Lord! This is going to become more and more important for us as we go down in time toward the return of Christ. The thing that is going to see us through is *being strong in the Lord*.

Let's see something that really applies to our day in a very important way, because we have all the comforts that we have today, and all the conveniences and everything around us is just right there. I thought about it when I got up this morning and I wanted a real cold glass of water. We had a bottle of water in the refrigerator, and I pulled it out and poured a cold glass water.

I thought: we have water running into the house and we have drinking water delivered to the house. Here's this refrigerator, it's got everything in it. And if that's not enough, we have two freezers for extra things and we have another refrigerator, which has more things in it. Then we have an auxiliary refrigerator down in the garage for little things that we keep there for the 'poochy-poops,' because we feed them turkey hotdogs. That's why we have the cleanest clean dogs in the world. They don't eat unclean food, and they've never had a case of worms. Think about that!

I got to thinking: look at this, everything is at our fingertips. We want light, *switch!* We want water, *the faucet*. If we want something from a faraway country we go to the supermarket. When we want to go someplace, we saddle up our car and take off. We don't have to have a donkey or a horse or go by foot. Lo and behold, we get in our cars and we sit there; you can have it outside 120 degrees and you're tooling along down the road in an air-conditioned car, and it's about 75 degrees. If that's too warm turn it down to 65 degrees. If you want to enjoy yourself, turn on some music, put on a CD and listen to music. If you want to listen to the news you listen to that. Every pleasure is right there at our fingertips.

Likewise at home we have all the gadgets and so forth. You can tell how Laodicean we are by the number of gadgets that we have. You don't have to get up and do anything. You can sit there using your remote control and click! They even have it now where you don't even need any keys. When they get *the mark of the beast* everything will be fixed up for *the mark of the beast*. You just go along and pass your hand before the door and the door opens. They will even have things where you will not need any remote controls. You can just sit there

and think about it; if you have a chip in your head, you can make it work!

So, with all of these things, and man approaching how man should consider it, and maybe even how people in past ages would look upon it. If you resurrected someone say from the 700s_{A.D.}, or maybe the 700s_{B.C.} and bring them into our society today, they'd be scared to death, first of all because of the cars. They wouldn't know what those things would be. If you've got them on a plane, they would wonder what kind of 'bird' this was. They wouldn't understand all the modern conveniences, they would be in awe with the lights and hot water; just turn it on. They would be in awe of all these things, and they would conclude you must be gods!

But with this kind of living comes complacency and sin and acceptance of it. Let's look at the parable of the ten virgins. Here's a warning for us today. If this is not describing the difference between those who are diligent and those who are lazy, I don't know which parable does.

Several have asked me why, with *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order*, why don't you do red letters? Well red creates a problem in printing, and red gives a false illusion that those are the only meaningful words that we need to follow. A lot of people would do that. You also need to realize, that every 'jot and tittle,' though not spoken by God, is *God inspired*. So, I think putting it in red letters would defeat the purpose of having all of the Word of God together. Some people may disagree with me on that, but nevertheless, I think that that has some merit to it.

Matthew 25:1—these are the words of Jesus: "Then shall the Kingdom of Heaven be compared to ten virgins, who took their lamps *and* went out to meet the bridegroom."

A lamp can be the Word of God; 'Your Word is a lamp unto my feet and Your statutes are a light unto me.' So, all of those of us who are in the Church have Bibles. How many use them to read and to study? *Continuously! Daily!* Jesus said, 'The words that I speak to you they are Spirit and they are Life' (John 6), which then is all the Word of God. So, they went out to meet the bridegroom.

Verse 2: "And five of them were wise, and five *were* foolish. The ones who were foolish took their lamps, *but* they did not take oil with them" (vs 2-3).

The lamps symbolize the Bible and oil symbolizes the Holy Spirit. They were not using the words of God—which are Spirit and Life—with the Holy Spirit to develop the character that they need. They had no reserve. It's important to understand; we have to have a reserve. We need to realize that.

Verse 4: "But the wise took oil in their vessels *along* with their lamps." A vessel means a *container, a bottle*. They had a bottle of oil with them so when they needed it, they could pour it into the little lamp. The lamps were much like seashells that you could put a little oil in there, and the wick would come over on the side and you light the wick and it would draw the oil out. Of course, over a short period of time you'd need to put more oil in it. This is something that we need to understand, too, because with the Spirit of God we need to be renewed daily. We need to be renewed every Sabbath, need to be renewed every Holy Day. That's what the oil in the lamp is all about.

Verse 5: "Now, when the bridegroom was gone a long time, they all became drowsy and slept." We're right at this point, because it looks like there's going to be more time than we've anticipated.

Dolores and I, after we were married, moved over to Boise, we were driving in the car one day and we looked at each other and we said, 'Hey were not getting old!' Because we thought Jesus was coming in 1975, and we got married in 1965, and this was, I think, May 1965. We said 'Hallelujah, we're not going to get old!'

So, here we are now 40-plus years later. And if you look at some of my old videos, you can see my skunk streak down the middle of my hair; now it's a totally white. So, we don't know how long it's going to be. Because of that, you get drowsy, you get sleepy, you get lazy. You don't have time for prayer; you don't have time for study. Which is like saying, 'God, You save me, but I don't have any time for You. However, when trouble comes You better rescue me!' Well, we're going to see that that's not so.

Verse 6: "But in *the* middle of *the* night there was a cry..."

What happens if you're awakened in the middle of the night? You're in a deep sleep, your eyes are heavy, and you wake up with a start. You wonder what's going on. This is illustrative of the fact that ***things will happen when you least expect them!*** Is that not right?

"... 'Look, the bridegroom is coming! Go out to meet him.' Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps" (vs 6-7).

We've had false alarms, and everybody was diligent up to the time that it should have been. What

happened in 1844-45 when the SDAs and Miller were wrong in the return of Christ? *You talk about not understanding prophecies!* Wow! They were out there standing all day. Some of them were on top of rocks, on top of stumps and they had their hands in the air, praying, 'O Lord, take me up, take me up, take me up.'

We had a lot of people preaching fire, hell and brimstone, when it looked like Jesus was going to come in 1975. A lot of people zoomed into the Church to save their necks, because there was a way of escape to go to the place of safety: Petra.

So, this is illustrative of what happens when men have it wrong, and people trust in men. But what happened? *1972 and 75 came and went!* Then what happened? *Things began to settle down and get corrupt!* That's what he's talking about here. And then when it gets down to the pinch:

Verse 7: "Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps." 'We have to get ready. I have to pray. I haven't been praying for three years, but if I pray 20 minutes a day for the next month, I'm in good shape.' But they found out that's not enough, because they didn't know.

Verse 8. "And the foolish said to the wise, 'Give us *some* of your oil, because our lamps are going out.'"

The only way that you retain oil in your vessel, is that you pray and you study and you live God's way *every single day!* That doesn't mean you aren't going to have troubles, because it says that they all slumbered and slept:

Verse 5: "Now, when the bridegroom was gone a long time, they all became drowsy and slept." Showing that everyone has their problems and weaknesses, but you don't let them get you down.

But the five foolish saw that they had lost a lot, so they wanted to get it from the wise. You can't do it. You can't do this like jumping the car when you have a dead battery. You can't put jumper cables. You can't put jumper cables on someone's ears, and put them on someone else's ears, and by magic transfer all that information to the one who's deficient so that now you have all of what the other person has. *You can't do it!*

Verse 9: "But the wise answered, saying, 'No, lest *there* not *be* enough for us and *for* you. But instead, go to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.'"

What this means and shows is that there is an individual responsibility for everyone who has the Spirit of God and who is a true Christian, ***they have to be responsible for their own lives!*** Not the minister! We're going to see here in a little bit, the

minister is to teach the people *how* to live their lives, not live their lives vicariously for them and always tell them what to do, because this also leads to another problem, which is this: If you always rely on a minister to tell you what to do and he's willing to do that:

1. he is not a good minister
2. you do not put yourself in a position to be led of the Holy Spirit of God so you can *make your own decisions*

That becomes very important to understand. And you see why that this parable is here, because we're going to also see that there a lot of ministers and brethren who are derelict in their standing before God, because:

- they are more interested in pleasing people and one another
- they are more interested in their social contact with brethren

rather than standing for the Truth, even if no one else is around.

I've had a lot of people say, 'We go to our church, but we get spiritually fed from Fred.' That's like standing where there is a crack right between your feet, with one foot on one side and one foot on the other side. What are you going to do? It's like in California and all of a sudden there are earthquakes and the crack goes apart, and there you are? If you're lucky, it will only spread far enough for you to do an extreme version of the splits. But otherwise you're going to fall into the cavern. Remember the story of the splits: *The minister is not going to be split for you so you can be saved!* Remember that!

They are going to be a lot of people that are going to come at the last minute and say, 'Teach me, teach me! Let me learn let me learn!' Well, we'll be able to give to them. We'll say, 'You want to know? Here is an iPod with 1600 sermons on it; have a go at it. Here are 20 books that we have done that explain all about it; have a go at.' And maybe if they get in and work hard, and listen long and diligently, they may be able to get enough oil to avoid the problem.

But we can also look at this on a generational basis, too. We have the older generation, and we have the younger generation. And the younger generation is feeding off the older generation and relying on them for things, rather than the younger generation. So, all you young people out there—let's say 40 and younger—you better get your act together. You better decide *what* you're going to do; you better decide *how* you're going to live your life. Quit relying on the older generation. Now, were going to be kind and good

and help you in every way that we can, but the help is not a substitute for your own work and getting things done that you need to get done.

There's going to come a day, and this applies to all of these 'good Protestants' who are expecting to be raptured, and many in the Church of God expecting to go to a place of safety.

Verse 10: "And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding feast, and the door was shut." When the tribulation breaks, they're going to say, 'I thought I was going to be raptured away! I thought I was going to go to Petra!' *No!*

Verse 11: "And afterwards the other virgins also came, saying, 'Lord, Lord, open to us.' But He answered *and* said, 'Truly I say to you, I do not know you'" (vs 11-12).

You have to go out and give your life for God so that He knows you. He will know you by your works. If you want to wait to the last minute for works, your day will come, and the last minute will be upon you.

What do we do between now and then? *We still don't know how long it is to the end!* I read a paper about the latest NASA moon project. They're going to send a rocket to the moon, crash it deliberately toward the south pole of the moon and have another part of the rocket land four minutes later.

When the first one lands it plumes up the dust and everything, which will make a crater 30 feet wide and 15 to 16 feet deep. They're looking for water, which may be frozen in some of the craters. With the dust they're gathering for four minutes on the second one before it crashes, that will send all the information to NASA so they can go up there and build their base. They expected to do this in 2009. You tie that together with the thing that says, 'there will be war in heaven'; that's not just Satan alone. Satan has to use people, so there will be people there.

How much time do we have left, and if we have much more time, what is our attitude toward growing and overcoming? *I know exactly how human nature is! I have human nature myself!* I exercise 3 to 5 times a week, and when I feel really on top of it, boy I'm there really doing it. But when I'm not on top of it, my human nature says, 'Well you don't have to do quite as much. You really did a lot yesterday. So, it's the same way with everything.'

Today we don't buy things until we need it. Very few people have things in storage. Now we have some, perhaps more than other people. But nevertheless, even all the things we have in storage,

just say for example you can't buy food at the supermarket for 60 days, we would be out of food, easily. Even with all the things that we have.

Whereas, when people had to depend on growing their own food, taking care of their own animals making sure that they had it for what, a whole year! That was a different story. Then when they faithfully followed the 'land Sabbath,' the crop of the sixth year would be for three years. And they could eat at the sixth and the seventh and the eighth year, until the crop came in that they planted at the eighth year, which then would be harvested in the ninth year.

None of us have any of that mentality at all. I know I don't! When I get gas, I wait for the gas tank to go way down. When Delores is with me, she always reminds me. 'Look at how low that gas is! 'Oh, no! I'll get gas in plenty of time.' Well what would happen if I got really, really low, and the gaslight was on and I pulled into a station, and it was the last place I could go, and they were out of gas? Now what am I going to do?

This is how we live our lives. Unfortunately this is how we live our lives spiritually, too! Jesus knew how people would live their lives; even ministers and disciples and apostles!

Let's see what Jesus told Peter. This is really a good example of how we can have so much self-confidence that we become filled with pride and cockiness and think we know everything. Thus was Peter. He even had so much confidence that when Jesus said He had to go to Jerusalem and suffer many things of the priest and the elders, and be killed the third day, Peter came up to Him and took him to the side began to correct him, and say, 'Lord, that's not going to happen; *because I am here!*' (Matt. 16).

Who was the one who took the sword and *hacked off the ear of the servant of the high priest?* Peter! You can rest assured he was not aiming for the ear! He got the ear because the guy turned his head down, and the sword sliced off his ear. Of course, Jesus put it back on and healed him. And I bet that that soldier was there all night feeling his ear feeling his ear. Is it bleeding? How did it get back?

I wonder what he thought when they crucified Jesus. I wonder if he was converted on the Day of Pentecost. Makes you wonder; very possible. Jesus said, 'Father, forgive them for they don't know what they're doing.' Here is a great lesson to learn.

Luke 22:25^[transcriber's correction]: "And He said to them, 'The kings of the nations lord over them, and those who exercise authority over them are called benefactors.'"

Look at any two-bit dictator: Chavez, Castro, Hussein, Hitler, Stalin, Mao tse Tung, Mussolini, and on back into all of the Caesars and clear back to Nimrod who started the system.

Verse 26: "But *it shall* not be this way *among* you..." Everyone who is an elder and teacher listen up! Especially those who run their church corporations with an *iron* fist of hate, and yet, claim they are the 'church of brotherly love.' Watch out, your day of judgment is coming!

"...rather, let the one who is greatest among you be as the younger, and the one who is leading as the one who is serving" (v 26).

We are called to serve the brethren: to teach them, to help them so they may obtain eternal life, and that they may be *spiritually strong* in an independent way to spiritually stand before God on their own two feet, and have confidence, faith, hope and love.

Verse 27: "For who *is* greater, the one who is sitting *at the table*, or the one who is serving? Is not the one who sits *at the table*? But I [Christ] am among you as One Who is serving."

- Did He not wash their feet?
- Did He not tell them to do this one to another? *Yes!* Why?

because

- the servant is not greater than his Lord
- the disciple is not greater than his teacher
- the messenger is not greater than the one who is sent

Verse 28: "Now, you are the ones who have continued with Me in My temptations. And I appoint to you, as My Father has appointed to Me, a kingdom; so that you may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, and may sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (vs 28-30). What greater thing could you get? *Yet, this was not enough for Peter!*

Verse 31: "Then the Lord said, 'Simon, Simon, listen *well*. Satan has demanded to have all of you, to sift as wheat. But I have prayed for you, that your faith may not fail; and **when you are converted, strengthen your brethren**'" (vs 31-32).

That's what every minister, elder and teacher needs to do: *strengthen the brethren!* You can trust God in this: ***If you are not strong in the Lord, you're not going to strengthen the brethren!*** So, here's Peter, 'Lord, I don't need that!'

Verse 33: "And he said to Him, 'Lord, I am ready to go with You both to prison and to death.' But He said, 'I tell you, Peter, *the* cock shall in no

wise crow today before you have denied knowing Me three times” (vs 33-34).

Did that happen? *Yes it did!* That’s why Jesus said to reaffirm. This is another thing that is very important. This is why Jesus wanted to reaffirm what He told Peter: *to strengthen the brethren*. This was after He was resurrected and He appeared to them at the Sea of Galilee.

John 21:14: “This *was* now the third time *that* Jesus revealed Himself to His disciples after being raised from *the* dead.... [they were all out there fishing; they really didn’t know what to do] ...Therefore, when they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, ‘Simon, *son* of Jonas, do you love Me more than these?’....” (vs 14-15). He said this three times because Peter denied him three times.

“...And he said to Him, ‘Yes, Lord. You know that I love You.’ He said to him, ‘Feed My lambs’” (v 15).

How do you feed lambs? Have you ever had a lamb? We had a lamb one time up in Salt Lake City and we thought it’d be a great pet. It was. So, we got this little lamb that had to be bottle-fed. We had a place that we could keep it out in the yard. Our kids were real little at that time, and we would go out and feed the lamb. We would have this bottle with a big nipple on it, and we’d give it to the lamb. He would almost invert the bottle, sucking so hard on it.

Wherever you would go the lamb would follow you. Just like the old tale about ‘Mary had a little lamb’ and so forth. Well, you didn’t have to be Mary, all you had to do is be the bottle carrier. He followed you wherever it would go. As it got older it demanded to come in the house, because we would feed it, run into the house and shut the screen door, which was aluminum screen door with a glass on it. And this lamb would come up, and it would jump up and kick the bottom of the door to get more! It wanted to be fed.

Which ties in with what? What should our attitude be in learning? What did Jesus say? ***Blessed are those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled!*** Now when they get older, you have to give them other things to eat. So He said, ‘Feed My lambs.’

Verse 16: “He said to him again a second time, ‘Simon, *son* of Jonas, do you love Me?’ And he said to Him, ‘Yes, Lord. You know that I love You.’ He said to him, ‘Shepherd My sheep.’”

Shepherding is not *ruling over*. Shepherding is *leading* them to follow Christ, because Christ is *the Chief Shepherd!* Peter learned that lesson.

Verse 17: “He said to him the third time, ‘Simon, *son* of Jonas, do you love Me?’ Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, ‘Do you love Me?’ And he said to Him, ‘Lord, You know all things. You know that I love You.’ Jesus said to him, ‘Feed My sheep.’”

Every time any minister or elder gets all uplifted in what he is doing, he better go back and read this. Another thing, too, is that very few of them have as good a wife as mine, because if I am not doing this, she will well let me know. That’s why she always says to me before I speak, she has burned a little place in my brain: Fred, just talk!

Did Peter strengthen the brethren? *Yes, he did!* You read what he did in Acts 2-10. Then you find that, yes:

- he did learn the lesson
- he did strengthen the brethren
- he did teach them
- he was an apostle to the circumcision

We find at the end of 1-Peter 5, that Peter was in Babylon. Why was he in Babylon? That’s not Rome! That’s the city of Babylon over there and in what we call Iraq today. Why was he in Babylon? *Because there are more Jews in Babylon than there were in Judea!* He was over there teaching the Jews. So, he writes this letter:

1-Peter 5:1: “*The* elders who *are* among you I exhort, even as a fellow elder, and an eyewitness of the sufferings of Christ, and a partaker of the glory that is about to be revealed”—because he saw Jesus transfigured.

Verse 2: “Feed the flock of God *that* is among you... [Did Peter learn the lesson? *Yes, he did!*] ...exercising oversight... [not over-lordship, there’s a difference] ...not by compulsion, but willingly; not in fondness of dishonest gain, but *with an eager attitude*; not as exercising lordship over *your* possessions... [these people belong to me] ...but *by* being examples to the flock *of God*. And when the Chief Shepherd is manifested, you shall receive an unfading, *eternal* crown of glory” (vs 2-4).

So he *did* learn the lesson and that’s what he taught and preached. He is to strengthen the brethren. That’s what we need to do here. How are we strengthened?

- we need to be strengthened with *God’s Spirit*
- strength and steadfastness are always related to *hope*

Let’s see what Paul said about hope. This kept Paul going all his life. In teaching, helping,

writing and doing the things that he did in spite of trials and in spite of difficulties. You can read all the things that he went through (2-Cor. 11). Go back and read those. Read all of 2-Cor. Go through all the things that Paul went through, and many of them even life-threatening, and even to the point he said that it was so bad we despaired even of living! Then ask yourself:

- Would you endure that and still remain faithful?

or

- Are you a 'fair weather' Christian?

That as long as everything is right and 'I have all my gadgets and all of my remote controls and everything convenient, I'm going to be a good little Christian. But I don't know about what I'm going to be when the going gets tough.' Then you better answer the question before the going gets tough. What are you going to be? *That you have to be strengthened in order to do it!*

So, here's what Paul said when he was falsely accused, arrested and drug on down to Caesarea to stand trial. All false charges in everything against him, and he stood up to speak for himself. He said to the governor down there:

Acts 24:14: "But I confess to you that according to the way, which they call heresy..."

- the Jews *to this day* call it heresy
- the Catholics *to this day*, following in the footsteps of the Jews (except for Sunday-keeping), call it heresy

Their contempt for true Christians is so absolutely incredible. Now that's not to say other Sunday-keeping Christians buy into the Catholics because the pope has declared them 'persona non grata'—*non-Catholics* can't be true Christians.

"...so I serve the God of my fathers, believing all things that are written in the Law and the Prophets" (v 14).

You cannot have true hope unless you understand what the prophets went through and their message! You will never be able to endure the miserable terrible times that are coming, unless you understand what they went through.

Verse 15: "Having hope in God, which they themselves also acknowledge, *that there* will be a resurrection of *the* dead—both *the* just and *the* unjust.' And in this *hope*, I exercise myself to have a conscience without offense toward God and men continually" (vs 15-16).

Notice what he has to do. He has hope! he believes! What does he do? *He exercises himself!* How?

- through prayer
- through study
- through living
- through preaching
- through teaching

That's how *we* need to exercise our lives as ministers and elders, and all brethren also need to exercise themselves. This is spiritual exercise:

- of prayer
- of study
- of living
- of being an example to others

That's all part of it. That's how we do it. It kept him through everything, through the thick and through the thin.

Let's look at some *hope*, where it talks about *hope and strength*. I'll tell you this, which is true. All those who believe the Law and the Prophets have been done away, they don't read the Old Testament because they are told that everything in the Old Testament has been fulfilled.

Well, if it's been fulfilled, why read it? *So, they don't learn the things in the Old Testament!* They missed the whole unity of the Scripture, as God designed it to be. If you read all of Psalms 119 *there is no way in heaven and earth that you could possibly believe that the laws have been done away;* that the statutes, the commandments, the precepts and testimonies of God and the Word of God have been done away.

Psalms 119:49: "Remember the Word to Your servant upon which You have caused me to **hope.**" We're hoping in the resurrection, the return of Christ, the Kingdom of God. We're *hoping* for the blessing of the reward that God will give us, to reign kings and priests.

So, hope always causes you to keep your mind on the goal that God has for us. When you do that, that will give you the diligence to exercise yourself spiritually every day.

(go the next track)

Psalms 119 is important to understand. It is important to grasp. There are differences between positive attitudes. People can have positive attitudes and hope. Hope gives you a positive attitude *spiritually*, because you're trusting in God. Whereas, a positive attitude without God is something you work up in yourself. When it comes to 'crunch time,' it may not be there. It can be like 'pop' psychology.

Listen! Satan can give anybody a positive attitude. Think on that! He can make them feel really

good. There is what appears to be a good side, a tender side and an understanding side *that Satan deceptively portrays to ensnare people!* He has many willing accomplices out there, who are ‘do-gooders.’ So, just remember the difference between, true hope and just a positive attitude.

Here is what true hope is going to do, and we’re going to need it for the days ahead. I’m going to tell you *why* you need to be strong in the Lord, and what is really going to come down in fulfilling prophecy. Unless you’re *strong in the Lord*, you’re not going to understand. ***You’re going to have a greater and more difficult time having faith in God, and enduring the difficulties that are coming!*** It doesn’t mean that you can’t, but remember where we started with the parable of the ten virgins, the five wise and the five foolish.

Psalms 119:50: “This is my comfort...” That is, ***the hope!*** Hope gives comfort in all circumstances. And we have the comfort of the Holy Spirit, which will get into a little later.

“...in my affliction...” (v 50). Whenever you have a trial, whenever you have an affliction, God’s Word and God’s promises ***causes you to hope in Him Who sees you through all your afflictions and gives you comfort!*** Another way of saying it is, it gives you *peace of mind*. That’s what you need in times of difficulty, *peace of mind*, regardless of what’s going on.

“...that Your Word has given me life” (v 50)—‘quicken’ (KJV)—to enliven or to give you *living strength*.

Notice the things that he was up against. ***Regardless of your circumstances, if you have the hope in God, you’re going to be stronger!***

Verse 51: “The proud have utterly scorned me...” Now that could also be a prophecy of Jesus. Everybody hated Him.

“...yet, I do not turn aside from Your Law” (v 51). That’s quite something! Never let the pressure from anyone cause you to turn your back on the laws of God.

Verse 52: “I remembered Your judgments of old...” That’s why it’s important to read the Old Testament. You read what God has promised in *blessings* and what God has promised in *cursings*, and the cursings are judgment for sin and transgression. When you remember the judgments of old, for good and for evil, then you know which ones to choose.

“...O LORD, and have comforted myself” (v 52). The Holy Spirit will do that. That’s why it’s important to study the Word of God.

- it gives you comfort
- it gives you hope
- the words are Spirit and Life

That’s why *the Sabbath needs to be made the greatest day of the week* by everyone participating into it—the teachers, elders and all the brethren together, ***as well as the Spirit of God***—because God puts His Spirit, in wherever two or three are gathered together, and He teaches us. The Sabbath should be a day of:

- education
- hope
- teaching
- learning to walk in God’s way

so that ***the Sabbath truly becomes the greatest day of the week!***

1. because of your fellowship is with God
2. the teaching that you get from His Word
3. then the fellowship that you give, which should be in love

Too many people have the fellowship as the first thing. Then everything else becomes a social mix.

Notice how bad it can get *and you still have hope*, v 53: “Burning indignation has taken hold upon me because of the wicked who forsake Your Law.”

He loved God’s Law so much that he was horrified to see what was happening! Listen, brethren! I am horrified at what I see happening with a lot of those we considered brethren years ago. Where are they! What has happened?

Verse 54: “Your statutes have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage.... [we’re just pilgrims and sojourners] ...I have remembered Your name, O LORD, in the night, and have kept Your Law. This I had because I kept Your **precepts**” (vs 54-56).

Verse 127: “**Therefore, I love Your commandments above gold—yea, above fine gold. Therefore, I esteem all Your precepts concerning all things to be right, and I hate every false way**” (vs 127-128)

There is a proper hatred of sin! We need to understand that we have to hate those things, not imbibe in them just a little bit because it’s there. In this age, it is much more difficult for us than in ages past, because Satan the devil has many, many helpers bringing *his way* into every nook and cranny of every home, every apartment, everything that there is in the world.

A lot of things are snuck in on the premise that Fox News has: ‘fair and balanced.’ Well let’s understand something clearly, ***God is not fair and***

balanced! He does not give equal time to sin. Let's put it this way: Yes, He does, because **He punishes as 'equal time' with sin. But He blesses because of love and obedience.**

Let's see what it says about Jesus, and He was commended for this, prophesied that He would come as the Messiah. This also has to do with how things are going to be run during the Millennium.

Hebrews 1:8: "But on the other hand, of the Son *He* says, 'Your throne, O God...'" Was Jesus God? *Yes!* This is prophesied going clear back to Psa. 45. The Messiah, before He came in the flesh, was called God. In Isa. 9 He is called the 'Mighty God.'

"...is into the ages of eternity; a scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your kingdom.... [What is the rule of that?]: You loved righteousness and hated lawlessness... [iniquity] ...because of this, God, *even* Your God, has anointed You with the oil of gladness above Your companions" (vs 8-9).

There is a blessing and a reward, for hating evil, iniquity and lawlessness. It is hard for us to do so in this society, because we are living in a lawless society. The powers that be in the government and religions have compelled upon the societies to compromise with Truth and righteousness, and to accept sin on an equal basis, because you must be 'fair and balanced.'

Let's see how Paul is writing Colossians; you almost have to read the whole thing to get it all, but we don't have time for that. What I want you to understand is that Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians are the three most loving and spiritual Epistles of Paul. They were written by him when he was imprisoned in Rome; his first imprisonment, which was in a house, but nevertheless, he was still in chains.

Colossians 1:3: "We give thanks to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying for you continually since hearing of your faith in Christ Jesus, and the love that *you have* toward all the saints; because..." (vs 3-5). The reason your behavior is what it is, is because of *the hope!* You have to have that *hope!*

"...of the hope that *is* laid up for you in heaven... [which is coming when Christ returns] ...which you heard before in the word of the Truth of the Gospel; which has come to you, even as *it* also *has* in all the world, and is bringing forth fruit, just as *it is* among you, from the day that you heard and knew the grace of God in Truth" (vs 5-6).

Verse 8: "Who has also informed us of your love in **the Spirit.**" Very important!

- there is a *carnal love*
- there is a *social love*, of just getting along with people
- there is a *religious love*, which may be above social love
- there is a *spiritual love*, which is the love that comes from God

Spiritual love is what we are to have. *Love in the Spirit.* So, it is the Spirit to give us *faith, hope and love.*

Verse 9: "For this cause we also, from the day that we heard *of it*, do not cease to pray for you..." Brethren, I pray for you every day:

- prayers for those who are sick and in need
- special prayers for those who are in trials
- special prayers for those who have afflictions and difficulties

Every day!

"...and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding" (v 9). Paul didn't want them looking to him for every itty-bitty, teeny-weeny thing. To be **"...be filled...in all wisdom and spiritual understanding."** For what? *So they can make their own decisions! So they can live their own lives!*

Verse 10: "That you may walk worthily of the Lord, unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work and **growing in the knowledge of God.**" What does that do?

Let me stop here and just say this: There are things that we know, but God wants us to come to the point of **knowing that we know!** There is a distinct difference! If you just know, someone could possibly talk you out of that. But if you *know* that you *know*, *no one's going to take it from you!*

I'll show you what we mean, I will show you the difference. This is important to understand, because this will distinguish between *true Christians* and those who are *false or pseudo-Christians*, and there are many of them out there. You can tell who they are by just listening to them talk. Not too far in their conversation they're going to let you know that the laws and commandments of God have of been done away. Those who believe that are *false Christians.*

Now, they may have a pseudo-love. They may be very sanctimonious, they may be very enthused and what they are doing, **but they are false Christians!** The sign of God is the true seventh-day Sabbath, not Sunday; Sunday never has. Today they have a lot of singers that have rock bands and so forth, so it's more of an emotional rock concert type of thing with the name of Jesus thrown in.

1-John 2:3: “And by this *standard*...” I added the word *standard*, because the Greek there is ‘en toutoo’—which means *by this*. You have to furnish the word as to what it is, because ‘en toutoo’ means ‘*by this*’ and then the question is: What? So, you furnish the word.

Verse 3: “And by this *standard* **we know** that **we know** Him... [How do *we know* that *we know*?]: ...**if we keep His commandments.**” There you go!

I’ll tell you one thing, ***you can never have spiritual strength unless you keep the commandments of God!*** God’s Spirit is where there is obedience! God’s Spirit is not where there is disobedience. It’s God Spirit that gives us strength.

Verse 4: “The one who says, ‘I know Him’...”

- I know the Lord!
- Brother, do you know the Lord?
- Welcome to our church on Sunday.
- Where do you live?
- Oh my, we have a wonderful band.
- Oh wait until you hear the choir.
- Wait until you see our preacher prance back and forth on stage, and purr a wonderful hymn to us.

“...and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the Truth is not in him” (v 4).

What is Truth? *Jesus said, ‘Your Word is the Truth!’* That’s an all-inclusive statement. He didn’t say, ‘Almost all Your Word is the Truth. Well, 99% your Word is the Truth.’ ***NO!*** He said, ‘***Your Word is the Truth.***’

In seeing a lot of these worship services where they’re singing songs and their arms are in the air and swaying back and forth. Well, you can go to some Sunday-keeping churches, and they have ‘praise singing’ and they carry on for 45 minutes. Then they have a 10-minute sermon and they’re done. All of this is an emotional participation to get you involved into it, and you are hooked emotionally. *First of all, God wants you to understand things spiritually and intellectually, then proper emotion comes.* The false way of the world is emotion first. Do you love the Lord in your heart? It’s an emotion! ‘Listen to our wonderful music.’ And if you’re in some churches, they have ‘follow the bouncing ball’! And that’s, I think, very hypnotizing.

The Psalms also indicate that you raise your arms to God, so there’s a proper way of doing it and a proper emotion in doing it. But if you stand there waving your arms back and forth for 40 minutes, and

singing these songs like the way that they sing them, you have to question if that really from God. The bottom line is that ***you have to keep the commandments of God,*** and it says ***the commandments of God are Truth!***

Verse 5: “On the other hand, *if* anyone is keeping His Word... [we shift from commandments to ‘word,’ which then becomes all-inclusive] ...**truly in this one the love of God is being perfected....**”

Why? *Because this is the love of God that we keep His commandments!* Then this gives us the understanding on how to love each other, and love God, and so forth.

“...By this *means* we know that we are in Him.... [If someone says, ‘Well, I’m a Christian! All right, here’s a test]: ...**Anyone who claims to dwell in Him is obligating himself also to walk even as He Himself walked**” (vs 5-6).

- Which day did Jesus keep? *The Sabbath Day!*
- Which Holy Days did He keep? *God’s Holy Days!*
- Did He walk in love? *Yes!*
- Did He walk in Truth? *Yes!*
- Did He loved righteousness and hate iniquity? *Yes!*

That’s how *we are to walk!*

Notice what all of this does when we put it all together. What does it do for us spiritually? ***We need to be strong in the Lord!***

Colossians 1:11: “Being strengthened with all power...” Whatever you need to see you through, whatever your circumstances are, ***God will give that!*** He will give it to you *when* you need it, provided that you’re doing like the wise virgins.

“...according to the might of His glory, unto all endurance and long-suffering with joy” (v 11). Regardless of what comes! Whenever it gets tough and you need to endure and things look like they’re totally upside down and ought not be upside down, then remember the Scripture that says: ***all things work together for good to those who love God and are called according to his purpose!*** Everything will work together for good.

Many times we don’t see the good, until we come out on the other side of the trial and look back. Many times we can see God’s hand in it *after* we have gone through it, when we couldn’t necessarily see it when we were going through it. I know I’ve experience that, and I know all of you have, too.

Verse 12: “Giving thanks to the Father, Who has made us qualified for the share of the inheritance

of the saints in the Light.” In other words, always keeping your mind on the goal. What is God going to do for you? *That’s how you remain strong!*

Verse 13: “Who has personally **rescued us** from the power of darkness...” This is quite a verse because here in the Greek the word *rescued*, in the middle of voice verb, which means that God has had a personal hand in rescuing us from the power of darkness. So, in that you need to ask: **Why am I here in the Church of God?**

- understanding His Word
- understanding the light of God’s Word
- understanding the Truth of God’s Word

and you’re not out *there*, that is in the world, in darkness? ***Because Christ rescued you!***

Think about that the next time you watch some of these spectacular rescues on television whether it’s about a storm in the sea or flood, and you see some spectacular things take place.

“...and has transferred *us*... [we’re not there, yet, but we are transferred] ...unto the kingdom of the Son of His love” (v 13). The *King James* says ‘translated.’ You haven’t been translated, you been *transferred*. You are now under the authority of the Kingdom of God, and that’s what it means. Then it goes on showing all about Christ. Let’s go through this and read this. This becomes important when we come down to Col. 1:27, *the hope of glory*; you have seen the steps involved in building up to it.

You just don’t come along and have hope because you say you have hope. NO! ***Hope is a concrete spiritual substance or power that God has given you so that in all circumstances you have hope!***

1. He has rescued us
 - He has given us knowledge
 - He has given us His power
2. He has rescued us from Satan the devil!
3. Verse 14: “In Whom we have redemption through his own blood... [we’ve been redeemed] ...even the remission of sins.”

Not just going to a priest in some little dark closet, and you say, ‘father I have sinned.’ *My child what are your sins?* NO!

Verse 14: “In Whom we have redemption through His own blood, *even* the remission of sins; Who is *the* image of the invisible God... [Christ; *through Christ*] **...the firstborn of all creation**” (vs 14-15).

That doesn’t mean that He was the first created thing of God. Because if you’re the first created thing you’re not firstborn, and Jesus was not the first son of Adam and Eve. He couldn’t of been

their firstborn, but *He was the firstborn of the virgin Mary* was He not?

We are to follow Christ and become a spiritual creation through Christ. Christ was the Firstborn from among the dead for the creation of the sons of God that God is doing now. And that’s what it means.

- How important is Christ?
- How important is it when we pray and study?

That’s why we need to know who Christ was and who He is and what He’s doing.

Verse 16: “Because by Him were **all** things created...” How can He be the firstborn if He created all things, if you’re saying He was just born of the virgin Mary?

“...the things in heaven and the things on earth, the visible and the invisible, whether *they be* thrones, or lordships, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him and for Him. And **He is before all, and by Him all things subsist**” (vs 16-17). ‘He upholds all things by the word of His power’ (Heb. 1).

Verse 18: “And He is the Head of the Body, the Church; Who is *the* Beginning, ***the Firstborn from among the dead***...” He was the beginning the firstborn of all who are created through the process of conversion and the resurrection. That’s the whole meaning of it.

“...so that in all things He Himself might hold the preeminence. For it pleased *the Father* that in Him all the fullness should dwell” (vs 18-19).

Here’s why we have *hope*, and it’s not based on a positive attitude. It’s based on:

- the Truth of God
 - the Word of God
 - the Spirit of God
- that gives us:*
- a hope
 - a strength
 - a determination
 - a spiritual conviction

that comes no other way! We’re going to have to have that spiritual conviction.

Verse 20: “And, having made peace through the blood of His cross, by Him to reconcile all things to Himself; by Him, whether the things on the earth, or the things in heaven.”

Here is where we begin to see how He is showing that we understand *the hope*, because we look back at where we have come from.

Verse 21: “For you *were* once alienated and enemies in *your* minds by wicked works; but now He has reconciled *you*... [reconciled you to God the Father] ...in the body of His flesh through death, to present you ... [this is the goal] ...Holy and unblamable and unimpeachable before Him” (vs 21-22). That’s accomplished by:

- the grace of God
- forgiveness
- remission
- redemption

all of those good things, but God wants us to be:

- Holy
- unblamable
- believable
- unimpeachable

before Him! That’s why in the sermon series The Keys to Answered Prayer, *every day we ask God to forgive us our sins!*

There is something we need to do, because we talked about *endurance* little earlier:

Verse 23: “If indeed you **continue**...”—which was a dividing line between the five wise and the five foolish virgins. The five wise continued, the five foolish did not.

“...in the faith grounded and steadfast... [if you’re steadfast, you’re strong in the Lord] ...and are not moved away from **the hope of the Gospel**...” (v 23).

What is “...the hope of the Gospel...”? ***Everlasting life in glory, to reign as king’s and priest with Christ!*** “...and not moved away from the hope of the Gospel...”

That has to come through the resurrection! That’s why all of those who believe in going to heaven, don’t understand the Truth of God. Ask them what *their hope* is. The hope of the Catholic is to make it to heaven, and to have a beatific vision of God, which is described as looking upon a bubbling mass of fire! Or looking at the sun! **NO!** How? *God has something concrete and real for you!*

Verse 23: “If indeed you continue in the faith grounded and steadfast, and are not moved away from **the hope of the Gospel**, which you have heard, **and which was proclaimed in all the creation that is under heaven**...” That is a prophetic statement reaching down to our time.

“...of which I, Paul, became a servant. Now, I am rejoicing in my sufferings for you... [you can have hope in suffering if you understand the goal] ...and I am filling up in my flesh that which is behind of the tribulations of Christ... [Jesus told him how much He would have to suffer for him, to serve

Him] ...for the sake of His body, which is the Church” (vs 23-24).

Notice how this ties in about everything that I’ve talked about in the sermon up to this point.

Verse 25: “Of which I became a servant, according to the administration of God that *was* given to me for you *in order* to complete the Word of God.” This tells us that he knew he was going to help finish writing the Word of God. That’s why we have 14 epistles from the Apostle Paul.

Verse 26: *Even* the mystery... [it’s only revealed to those who have the Spirit of God] ...that has been hidden from ages and from generations, but **has now been revealed to His saints.**”

Stop and think for just a minute about all that you understand about the Word of God, and:

- the hope
- why we are here
- the purpose of God
- the plan of God

All of these things that have been given to us in a really overwhelming way at the end. It wasn’t understood in ages past, it was gradually partly understood, but in the end-time we really understand it.

It reminds me of the joke about the evangelist who had an evangelistic campaign, and he had a tent meeting and there was a terrible storm, and only one man showed up. So, the evangelist decided to go ahead and preach to this one man in the full fury and power of his evangelizing. He got done and he went down and he talked to this one man—who happen to be a farmer who had his overalls on—and he said, ‘What did you think of the sermon?’ He said it was mighty powerful, but ‘you didn’t have to dump the whole load of hay on me’!

I think of it this way: Today, you can get the ‘whole load of hay,’ and you better be thankful that you can, and apply yourself to it.

Verse 27: “To whom God did will... [the purpose of God] ...to make known what *are* the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; **which is Christ in you**...” The very fact you have the Holy Spirit of God, is the greatest hope that there is because, you will be resurrected.

“...**the hope of glory**” (v 27). If we have that hope, ***there is nothing that can take us from God! There is nothing that can pull us away!*** We’ll see some other things next time, in how we can:

- strengthen our minds
- strengthen our hearts
- strengthen our thinking

Ask God to help us be able to ***think!***

I remember that many years ago I was driving down the road. It was a time of great trial and difficulty in my life and for my wife and our family at that time. I was driving down the road, when I was a loan broker going out to look for loans—and cold call and solicit loans—and all that sort of thing. I remember praying. I just said, ‘O God,

- help me to think
- help me to think right

so that I can understand!

We all need to do that! We need to ask God to help us *to think* so we can:

- *think* with His Spirit
- *think* with His Word
- *think* with His Truth

That gives us hope!

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version* by Fred R. Coulter

Scriptural References:

- 1) Matthew 25:1-8, 5, 9-12
- 2) Luke 22:25-34
- 3) John 21:14-17
- 4) 1 Peter 5:1-4
- 5) Acts 24:14-16
- 6) Psalm 119:49-56, 127-128
- 7) Hebrews 1:8-9
- 8) Colossians 1:3-6, 8-10
- 9) 1 John 2:3-6
- 10) Colossians 1:11-27

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- John 6
- Matthew 16
- Acts 2-10
- 2-Corinthians 11
- Isaiah 9
- Hebrews 1

Also referenced: Sermon Series:

The Keys to Answered Prayer

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Be Strong in the Lord II

(Trust in God)
Fred R. Coulter

Let's understand something about the Word of God and why it will stand. First of all, we know Jesus said that He didn't come 'to abolish the Law or the Prophets.' We know that Paul wrote that 'all Scripture is God breathed.' That's very interesting from this point of view, because breath is likened also to the power of the Holy Spirit. But breath is what you use when you speak. So, it is God-breathed and inspired.

I just want to bring it up, because today so many people have believed the lie. What I would like you to do is take a day or take an afternoon or take a couple of hours and write down at on the top of a piece of paper *all the lies we believe*, and just enumerate them out. It will be very enlightening for you to have a greater focus on how much of what we count as the reality of the world, is not reality in fact. *It is a created artificial reality!*

Also, how much of it is created and artificial due to everything that we see in the world. People believe that the Bible is like any other ordinary piece of literature, written by the drive-by media filled with lies, *but it's not*.

We want to go through and realize how we need *to be strong in the Lord*, and it's going to be a combination of God's Word and God's Spirit, because we are on the verge or the cusp of terrible and horrendous things that are going to happen. This is why I'm giving this short series on *To Be Strong in the Lord*. I've got a stack of things that portend the future that is going to come down hard, and it's going to be very difficult for a lot of people to handle.

I want you *to be strong in the Lord first*, so when you hear some of the things that are coming down, then you won't be fearful. Because in bringing them out, I am not going to try and put a fear guilt trip on people, but to state the facts of the Bible so that we *know and are prepared spiritually and mentally*, and hopefully as much as we can physically, too, for what's coming down.

I think the stock market (at the giving of this sermon) is just a little kind of breath of bad news. The stock market dropped in one day 400 points, and because the Fed pumped in a lot of extra money, it came back 300 points. The Chinese have threatened to use the nuclear option on the dollar, which is that we're going to bail out of dollars entirely. I don't think we're going to grasp what kind of effect that that's going to have on the world, on America and on each one of us.

When it happens, we must first be prepared *spiritually*. Not only with the Spirit of God in us, but also that the Spirit of God within us *we have stirred up and we are strong* so that we can endure the things that are going to come and not get despondent. When they come it's not the end, there is a whole lot more to come after that.

2-Peter 1:19: "We also possess the confirmed prophetic Word..."—the whole Bible up to that point. Confirmed means that *it was confirmed by the inspiration of Christ!*

"...which you do well to pay attention..." (v 19). What happens when everything is nice and convenient and everything is fine and working well, you take a lot of things for granted that are essential. Just like today we arrived at our meeting place, and the water is supplied by a pump from a well and the pump is not working. Which means the bathrooms don't work, and we had to improvise to get some water for just that little thing. It brought to our mind how quickly we need water and how essential it is.

But people become lackadaisical and Laodicean and don't pay attention to the Word of God and don't study the Word of God, and it becomes old hat to them. Like one man said to me one time, 'What are you going to do when you come into the Church and after five years you know everything in the Bible?' I said *what a misconception!*

The Bible is designed and inspired by the mind of God and *you will never know everything in the Bible throughout your entire lifetime!* And it's such that we, as human beings, just because of the way that our minds function the way that we work, we must constantly renew the information that is there and renew God's Spirit, and that's why we have the Sabbath. So, Peter says, "...pay attention..." I guess they say today, 'Listen up!'

"...as to a light shining in a dark place..." (v 19). The dark place is the world, and the light is the Word of God.

"...until the day dawns..." (v 19)—the return of Christ. So, we have to keep at it until the return of Christ.

"...and the morning star **arises** in your hearts" (v 19)—the resurrection. When you are resurrected you will shine as the stars of heaven.

Here's how we're able to do this, v 20: "Knowing this first..."—Greek 'protos'—*primary, the basic foundational underpinning* of all the Scriptures

that we are to know.

“...that no prophecy of Scripture... [any utterance of Scripture] ...originated as anyone’s own *private* interpretation” (v 20).

This is where so many, many people, including those within the Church—brethren and ministers—go astray; they bring their own private interpretations. You’re to let the Bible interpret the Bible, and let the Word of God tell us what it is. And there’s a way to do that. That’s why we have the 14 Rules of Bible Study in *The Holy Bible in It’s Original Order, A Faithful Version* (Appendix A).

Verse 21: “Because prophecy was not brought at any time by human will, but the Holy men of God...”

What are Holy men of God? Monks off somewhere in a monastery? *No!* Moses was a Holy man of God. He was filled with the Holy Spirit. All the men of God who wrote the Scriptures had the Spirit of God, and in writing it **God directed their minds**, because it’s God breathed.

“...spoke... [and wrote] ...as they were moved by *the* Holy Spirit” (v 21). *God used these men* in such a way, that they spoke and wrote **for Him**, not for themselves, not for other human beings, but **for Him!** When we understand that:

- we realize that Jesus Christ is ‘the same yesterday, today and forever’
- we have the words of God here
- we realize how important they are for us at any time in history

not just for us today, but ***even in the end-times when there are troubles coming!*** A lot of people can be ‘glad time’ institutional Christians, when everything is going good.

“...moved by the Holy Spirit.” What does that do as far as the Word of God is concerned? What does that do? In doing the Bible project and going through the Old Testament and everything, it has certainly brought out the fact that as Jesus said, ‘Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words won’t.’ That’s what it says right here:

Matthew 24:35: “The heaven and the earth shall pass away, but **My words shall never pass away.**” Why? *Because when God speaks it is, and it is true!* There is no lie in it.

Let me just tell you something that’s important to understand, which is this: The way you can tell a false ‘Christian’ *worldly* preacher is that one of the first things he will say is, ‘God didn’t mean what He said.’ In other words he saying that God is a liar!

Now, the epistle to the evangelist Titus by Paul, and this is what we really need to grasp; Titus 1:1: “Paul, *a* servant of God... [Paul says in Galatians ‘and not of men’!] ...and *an* apostle of Jesus Christ, according to *the* faith of God’s elect and *the* knowledge of *the* Truth that *is* according to Godliness; in *the* hope of eternal life, which **God Who cannot lie** promised before the ages of time” (vs 1-2).

Let’s also understand that within the Word of God it contains many blessings for love, faith and obedience. But also half the promises of God are the guarantee that if you sin as an individual, the penalty is going to come upon you if you don’t repent. If you sin as a family or a nation it is going to come upon you because God is in charge of everything everywhere at all times. When we grasp that point, this will give us

- more faith in God
 - more understanding of the Word of God
- and we can truly go before God and ask Him to:*
- strengthen us
 - help us
 - encourage us

Because of what Paul said—what he taught what he believed, and his faithfulness to God—it eventually cost him all those who were supposed to be converted in Asia. Because he says in 2-Timothy, ‘All in Asia have deserted me.’ That’s quite a statement! There will be times when you have *to be strong in the Lord* that you’re going to have to stand alone. If you do things to please people, many people will come and associate because of the pleasing of people.

What Paul wrote is quite a thing, and this adds to the Word of God. This is where we need to come in our lives individually and every elder and teacher and minister needs to come in his life in relationship to what he teaches. Now, it doesn’t mean that you have to be hostile and obnoxious toward people. I suppose there may be an occasion when that is necessary because of the hostility and obnoxiousness of people coming toward you.

Galatians 1:1: “Paul, *an* apostle, not *sent* from men nor *made* by man, but by Jesus Christ and God *the* Father, Who raised Him from *the* dead.”

Consider this fact concerning the New Testament: Paul wrote the most epistles: 14. He also supervised Luke in writing the Gospel of Luke and the book of Acts. This counts for two-thirds of the New Testament. That’s important to bear in mind because only eight men were responsible for writing the New Testament. That becomes very important to grasp.

With this attitude that we are going to read, do you think for one moment that Paul would’ve written

anything contrary to the will of God? the Word of God? the inspiration of God? **No!** As evidenced in here, he did not do that. When he got challenged with it he said, 'I am what I am by the grace of God,' not of what he did himself.

Verse 2: "And all the brethren who are with me, to the churches of Galatia: Grace and peace *be* to you from God *the* Father and our Lord Jesus Christ, Who gave Himself for our sins, in order that He might deliver us from the present evil world..." (vs 2-4). That's the whole process of:

- conversion
- salvation
- growing
- overcoming.

"...according to the will of our God and Father" (v 4).

So, the very fact that you're converted and have God's Holy Spirit and understand God's Word, ***it's according to the will of the Father***, not because of any great thing that any of us individually have done. Let's understand something. The most that we, and anybody, can claim concerning the Word of God is that ***it's built on Christ and the apostles, and with God's Spirit He will teach us what we need to know!*** Yes, we need teachers, and teachers need to be responsible and preach the Word of God.

Verse 5: "To Whom *be* the glory into the ages of eternity. Amen." Here Paul sets the stage for what he's going to bring in the rest of this epistle.

Verse 6: "I am astonished that you are so quickly being turned away from Him..." Isn't this what happens? We've seen it, and it is rather astonishing how people can do that.

"...Who called you into *the* grace of Christ, to a different gospel, which *in reality* is not another Gospel... [there is only one] ...but there are some who are troubling you and are desiring to pervert the Gospel of Christ" (vs 6-7).

How do they do that? *By changing the words of God!* You know all about the worldly holidays, getting rid of the Holy Days of God. Rather than take the challenge of God and obey and prove the Word of God, they throw it out and say that Sunday, Christmas, Easter and all of this sort of thing, and make God serve with *their* sins.

"...but there are some who are troubling you and are desiring to pervert the Gospel of Christ. But if we, or even an angel from heaven, should preach a gospel to you *that* is contrary to what we have preached, LET HIM BE ACCURSED! As we have said before, I also now say again. If anyone is preaching a gospel contrary to what you have received, LET HIM BE ACCURSED!" (vs 7-9).

Stop and think about the Christendom of this world, and how it began in its full-fledged form under Constantine, a pagan Roman emperor. The truth is that *he was never converted* and was not even baptized until he was ready to die. Think about all of the curses that have come upon the followers of Orthodox Christendom. I'm not going to include all the other cursed religions of the world; don't even have to mention them. They're already cursed because they never accepted Christ, but here they profess to accept Christ. Look at all of the curses that have come upon them. And the greatest curse that comes upon them is *being cut off from God* and not understanding the Word of God and not knowing of what they strongly affirm.

Years ago I wanted to find out what it was like at a Catholic Mass. I decided to go to a Catholic Church. This was down in Pasadena. One Sunday a friend of mine and I went over there to a Catholic Church and went in and we sat down and went through the whole thing that they did. It's totally contradictory to the Word of God from the get go, the whole setting of it. Their buildings are filled with idols and statues and little coves where they burn candles for the dead, and you light a candle and a prayer goes up.

How can a candle convey a prayer to God any greater than if you pour your heart out to God in your own prayer? *Can't do it!* That's no different than the Tibetan Buddhists who have prayer wheels. They're insane as could be in their religion. They don't practice anything they just walk around and hit all the spinning prayer wheels, and the prayer wheels send prayers up to God. ***Utter nonsense of men!*** That's all part of being accursed from God because they are unwilling to follow the Word of God.

Verse 10: "Now then, am I striving to please men, or God? Or am I motivated to please men? For if I am yet pleasing men, I would not be a servant of Christ." Quite a profound statement! A good check for every teacher and elder. If you're trying to please people, are you really a servant of Christ?

Verse 11: "But I certify to you, brethren, that the Gospel that was preached by me is not according to man." Remember, Paul is responsible for two-thirds of the New Testament. Keep that in mind when you read that.

Verse 12: "Because neither did I receive it from man... [he didn't bring it from Judaism or from paganism] ...nor was I taught *it by man*; rather, *it was by the revelation of Jesus Christ*"—which is now recorded in the Bible for us. That's why the Word of God is not going to perish. That's why when things in our lives—troubles and difficulties where we are living—come along, we need the Word of God to

strengthen us. We need the Spirit of God to strengthen us, *because we're going to have to stand!*

Let's see about 'the day of trouble,' because there's going to be troubles coming. What about Galatians in relationship to the seven churches in Rev. 2 & 3 and the problems enumerated in Galatians and those enumerated in the seven churches in Rev. 2 & 3?

I would have to say, that there would probably be a good corollary between Galatians and Thyatira, if you read the message to the Thyatirans. Yes, they're going into a gospel that's perverted. What did the Thyatirans do? *They allowed that 'woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce My servants to commit fornication and to sacrifice things to idols!'* I would say Galatians comes very, very close to that.

That would be an interesting study. Go through all the Epistles of Paul and take the seven churches of Rev. and kind of outline the things that are there in the seven churches of Rev. Then take the Scriptures that you find in Gal. and 1st and 2nd Cor. and I would have to say 1st and 2nd Cor. probably would fit into the Laodicean Church with all their false teachings, lukewarmness and all of that sort of thing. That would be an interesting study in itself.

The truth is that leaving Christ from the Truth to embrace error is not like flipping a coin. It's more like we have discussed, you're following the light then you turn around, you're still in the light but you're walking away so it's a process. This is what Paul is talking about here, it starts with the process of pleasing people *rather than pleasing God*.

There're are going to be days of trouble that are going to come:

- What do we do?
- How do we handle it?
- Where do we turn?
- *We've got to be strengthened in God!*

Psalm 20:1: "May the LORD answer you..." This is a plea to God to hear anyone in the day of trouble. At the end-time we have 'the beginning of sorrows.' Isn't that a lot of trouble? Then that's going to evolve into the Tribulation. We are facing times, and we don't know when it's going to come. We don't know how far down the road these things are going to be. But nevertheless, the day of trouble is coming.

I daresay that all of us have experienced a day of trouble in our own lives, even while we've been Christians. I know I have, you have, every one of us. So, here's a prayer.

Verse 1: "May the LORD answer you in the

day of trouble, the name of the God of Jacob set you on high"—Who was the One Who became Jesus Christ. So, we look to God to help us.

Verse 2: "May He send you help from the sanctuary, and strengthen you out of Zion. May He remember all your offerings and accept your burnt sacrifice. Selah" (vs 2-3). In other words today all the works that you do:

- your prayer
- your study
- your yieldedness to God
- walking in God's way

those are the sacrifices that we give today.

Verse 4: "May He grant you according to your own heart and fulfill all your plans." What is the thing that we have to have in our heart continually? *Seeking the Kingdom of God* as we covered in the sermon series: *Keys to Answered Prayer*. You always start out with God the Father, His will in heaven and earth and seeking the Kingdom of God.

Verse 5: "We will shout for joy in your victory, and in the name of our God we will set up banners...." Always remember this: ***In spite of all the difficulties our victory is going to come through Christ!*** When it says set up your banners, that means the banners of victory. Of course, the victory will come with the resurrection. That's why Christ says, 'Don't take thought about your life, what other men can do to you.' Yeah, they can take your life; they can kill the body but they can't take your life. What are they going to do when they see you resurrected?

"...May the LORD fulfill all your prayers. Now I know that the LORD saves His anointed..." (vs 5-6). Let's understand something else here. ***Everyone who has the Spirit of God has been anointed from God; that is the anointing of God for each one of us!*** Not the king who is anointed, but if he's anointed king then he is held more responsible as being king.

"...He will answer him from His Holy heaven with the saving strength of His right hand" (v 6). This reminds me of a story of a Seventh-Day Adventist German in WWII who was drafted into the Weimar. He couldn't get out of it, so God gave him grace and favor in the eyes of his superiors. He said, 'I keep the Sabbath and I can't work on Saturday.' All during the war they put him in the Transportation Department and worked it out that he did not have to work on Saturday Sabbath. He would come in and do mechanical work on the trucks and so forth on Sunday.

In the midst of one of the most wicked armies, wicked regimes, terrible oppression of killing and things, was God able to save? *Yes, He was!* Likewise,

with us!

Verse 7: “Some trust in chariots...” Today it’s cars. And you see this latest ad with Mercedes-Benz. ‘I love you, I love you,’ laying on the hood of the car and stroking it and petting it! It’s only going to cost you \$70,000 for that car anyway; you better love it!

“...and some in horses, but **we will remember the name of the LORD our God**. They are brought down and fallen, but we have risen and stand upright. Save, O LORD; let **the King** [God] hear us when we call” (vs 7-9).

Now let’s see how *we get strong in the Lord*. It is a process! It’s not something that all of a sudden you believe in God, you believe in Christ and now you have perfect faith in everything. No, it doesn’t work that way.

I think it’s interesting if you would study the book of Deuteronomy and go through it, that you will find that it is the most spiritual of all the books of the first division of the Bible being the Law. Let’s see how we are strengthened.

Deuteronomy 11:1: “Therefore, you shall love the LORD your God, and keep His charge and His statutes and His judgments and His commandments always.”

When trouble comes, don’t give up on God. Trouble and trials come and they come from God so that He can test our heart, our mind and our attitude and see what we’re going to do.

Verse 8: “Therefore, you shall keep all the commandments which I command you this day, **so that you may be strong...**” Keeping the commandments of God in spite of all the circumstances around gives you spiritual strength.

“...and go in and possess the land where you go to possess it” (v 8). We’re going into the Kingdom of God, not the land.

Verse 13: “And it will be...”

Part of the things that I stressed in the sermon series: *Keys to Answered Prayer* was that you claim the promises of God. And you rightfully can come claim it because you’re not demanding of God, because He’s already promised it. So, if you claim the promises of God in a humble, repented, yielded, yet, strong attitude, God will bless you.

“...**if** you will hearken diligently to My commandments which I command you today, to love the LORD your God and to serve Him with all your heart and with all your soul” (v 13).

That’s the commitment! That is why, and we need to understand that *it is damnable and accursed*

thing to do for any minister, to make people follow him as a person! As one man in the *Journal* recently wrote, the only way you’re going to have salvation is if you’re with me! **NO! The only way you’re going to have salvation, is if Christ is in you and you love God!** Tactics like that—and that is a tactic—take you away from Christ. Just step back, watch what happens, take the long view, and just realize that *if it’s contrary to the Word of God it can’t be right regardless of how good it sounds!*

Verse 16: “Take heed to yourselves...” This is the whole thing that’s important. We have to be honest with ourselves and police ourselves; it’s not up to the minister or anyone else to police you. That’s where the world has it wrong. They expect the police to make people keep the law. They can’t do it. They get more police and what you have is more and more lawbreakers. So, they have more and more police. And in a lawless society, you have more and more lawbreakers. That’s contrary to what God wants. **God wants you to police yourself, to live your life before Him with His Word and His Spirit in you, that you are connected to God!** So, we have to:

Verse 16: “**Take heed to yourselves that your heart may not be deceived**, and you turn aside and serve other gods, and worship them” (v 16). That’s precisely what Paul was talking about there and Gal. 1.

Verse 17: “And the LORD’S wrath be kindled against you...” If there’s any one thing you don’t want, you don’t want God mad at you! But if you’re:

- in a repentant attitude
- trusting in God
- Christ in you
- loving God
- loving the brethren
- loving your neighbors
- doing the things that please God
- studying His Word
- putting it in your heart and mind

then God will be there with you!

“...and He shut up the heavens...” (v 17). This is what we are going to see, because we’re going to be facing this; so we might as well just put a little introduction into the problems that are coming right here.

“...so that there will be no rain...” (v 17). God said that He’s is going to

- rain in one place
- blow in another place
- mildew in another place
- flood in another place

- drought in another place
- fires in another place (Deut. 28)

If that isn't our evening news, I don't know what is.

"...and so that the land will not yield her fruit, and you perish quickly from off the good land which the LORD gives you. Therefore... [here's what we do]: ...you shall lay up these My words in your hearts and in your souls, and bind them for a sign upon your hands so that they may be as frontlets between your eyes" (vs 17-18).

Now today it's written within our heart and in our mind, because what is important is that all of us, after learning and studying the Word of God and we go out for the next week:

- that we all can stand before God
- that we can all individually love God
- that we can all individually keep His commandments.

That's what God wants, and that you have this relationship with God.

Verse 19: "And you shall teach them to your children, speaking of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up."

This is really quite a tremendous chapter, Deut. 11, when you come to understand it.

(go to the next track)

Psalm 35—this is how you fight your enemies. You have to do what you can do, but if God delivers you from your enemies, don't take it into your hands to go beyond that. For example there was a woman I heard of, and I think she was even in the Church, that there was a man who broke into her apartment and was stealing things. When she came home she scared him off. Rather than be satisfied with the fact that God delivered her, maybe she lost some of her goods, yes, but she went out and chased him down and he killed her. So, after God has done things for you, don't go out and take matters into your own hands!

Psalm 35:1: "Contend, O LORD, with those who contend with me..." Remember this: ***If God is for you who can be against you!***

"...fight against those who fight against me" (v 1). Does God have a better way of taking care of the enemy than we do? *Yes, indeed!* Remember that *you're never going to change the society through the ballot box!* You're never going to bring righteousness into the world because people have 'moral' values. Never happened!

You're never going to get rid of the conspiracy of Satan that has cast a pall over all nations

and is thoroughly into all religion, governments, business and so forth. Only Christ can do that.

Verse 2: "Take hold of shield and buckler, and stand up for my help." Ask God to help you; *He'll intervene!* It may be a tough battle; it may be a protracted battle.

Verse 3: "Also draw out the spear and the lance against those who pursue me; say to my soul, 'I am your salvation.' Let them be ashamed and brought to confusion, those who seek after my soul; let them be turned back and humiliated, those who devise evil against me. Let them be as chaff before the wind; and let the angel of the LORD drive them away. Let their way be dark and slippery; and let the angel of the LORD pursue them" (vs 3-6).

Just stop and think for a minute, how God literally did this during the days of Jehoshaphat. And how the Assyrian armies came down—also during the days of the Hezekiah—and were ready to conquer Judah, and how Hezekiah, especially, and Jehoshaphat took it before God. In the case of Hezekiah he laid the very letter of threat from the Assyrians right before God at the temple. He read it and said. 'Yes, God, true he has done all these things.

The Word came to him, 'I will fight the battle for you, you won't have to lift a hand.' What happened? *They got up the next morning and went out there and all the 185,000-man army of the Assyrians were dead!* The king of Assyria fled back to Assyria because he didn't have any more armies, and he went into the house of his god and his two sons killed him for being so incompetent as to allow that to happen. ***God took care of it!*** Then they were how many weeks bringing in the loot and burying the bodies. So, there's a good example of that.

Psalm 34—here it's good to also read this into the record. How we can be strong in the Lord. And ***to be strong in the Lord is to trust in the Lord***, look to Him to help us, and so forth.

Psalm 34:1: "I will bless the LORD at all times... [good times, bad times, in between times] ...His praise shall always be in my mouth. My soul shall make its boast in the LORD; the humble shall hear and be glad. O magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt His name together" (vs 1-3). When trouble comes here's what we we're to do, and this is where our strength is:

Verse 4: "I sought the LORD, and He answered me, and delivered me from all my fears." You don't have to be fearful. This is why I'm going through this, before I bring many of the things that are going to be quite astounding and fearful, indeed, when you hear them. You are going to see them, and you're going to have to live through them. But God will

protect you and be with you.

Verse 5: “They looked to Him and were radiant... [enlightened] ...and their faces were not ashamed. This poor man cried, and the LORD heard, and saved him out of all his troubles” (vs 5-6).

Remember: ***A sign that God is with you is not the absence of troubles!*** Some people think that if you're God's why do you have troubles? ***No!*** The answer is ***you are delivered and saved out of all your troubles!*** God does His part; we do our part. We also have to be ‘wise as a serpent and harmless as a dove.’ Here's another thing that helps you *be strong in the Lord* when you understand that God has to take care of the enemy. ‘The angel of the Lord encamps about them that fear Him and delivers them’ (Psa. 35)

Whatever your troubles take them to God. And here's another key that's important, too: While it is good to seek wise counsel, *no man, minister, brethren or anyone in the world can save you in the place of God. **God alone is going to save you!*** It also falls into we have the things we need to do. So, if we say, ‘O God, bless me with a good crop’ and you never sow the seed and get out there and work, then don't say, ‘God, I asked for a good crop and You didn't give it to me.’ His answer is, ‘*You're the one to sow, and I'm the one to make it grow!*’

Verse 8: “O taste and see that the LORD is good; blessed is the man who takes refuge in Him.” That's where were going to focus.

Verse 14: “Depart from evil...” What is that? ***Repentance!*** That's why every day in our prayers we ask God to forgive us our sins, which is *repentance*.

“...and do good; seek peace and pursue it. The eyes of the LORD are upon the righteous, and His ears are open to their cry” (vs 14-15). God will hear!

Sometimes the problems are so deep and so complicated that even though you're praying and God is in there deliberating step-by-step, you won't see the results of it until sometime down the road. But keep at it.

Verse 16: “The face of the LORD is against those who do evil.... [do not ever envy the evil or the wicked] ...to cut off the memory of them from the earth. The righteous cry, and the LORD hears, and delivers them out of **all** their troubles” (vs 16-17).

One of the biggest difficulties that people have is that when troubles and difficulties come, *they blame God!* It's His fault! ***NO!*** It's the fault of the way that the world is, and Satan the devil and other people, not God's fault. Here's what we need to do.

Verse 18: “The LORD is near to the brokenhearted and saves those who are of a contrite

spirit.” The whole purpose of all of the things we go through, is for us to realize and understand that ***self is vanity!*** We need ***God, His Spirit and His way!***

Verse 19: “Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the LORD delivers him out of them all.” Trusting in God is where your strength comes from:

- you love God
- you believe God
- you have faith in God
- you have to trust God
- trust God that He will do His part
- you trust God that He will help you do your part.

Sometimes we have to ask God: ‘Lead me with Your Spirit so I know how to do my part.’

Psalm 40:1: “I waited patiently for the LORD...” God is not going to necessarily do it immediately unless you need immediate help. Be patient! I know a lot of people say, ‘Well, one of my faults is that I'm not patient.’ That's a fault of everybody! We have to learn it. Patience is the first step of endurance!

“...and He inclined unto me and heard my cry. He brought me up also out of a horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a Rock, and established my steps.... [when the deliverance finally comes]: ...And He has put a new song in my mouth, *even* praise to our God; many shall see and fear, and **shall trust in the LORD**” (vs 1-3).

Read the whole book of Esther. Look at the terrible circumstances that developed, how bad they became and seemed to get worse and worse, even to the threat of the extermination of all the Jews within the Persian realm. How did God deliver them? *By the hand of Mordecai and the courage of Esther*, against implacable foes!

How did the deliverance finally come? *The king couldn't sleep one night!* What do you do when you can't sleep? *You get up and read!* So, he got up and he read. He said I haven't read the chronicle of the kingdom lately; bring it to me. He started reading the chronicle of the kingdom, and he saw that Mordecai saved him from a conspiratorial assassination by some of those who were closest to him. He called his servant in there and he said, ‘Has anything been done to this man in saving my life?’ And he said, ‘No my Lord.’ So, the king thought on that. The next morning Haman, the enemy of the Jews, who got the order signed to exterminate them, came into the king and he was hoping to really get all the blessing and action of everything going on. So, he came in and the king said, ‘Haman I need your advice. Tell me what the king should do to the one whom he

favours.' Of course, Haman said—thinking that's got to be him—'Put him on the king's horse, put his robe of authority upon him and have someone take him through the city and say, *this is the one whom the king honors.*'

The king said to Haman the Agagite, 'Good, you do that to Mordecai, because he saved my life.'

So, God will work things in ways that we have no way of understanding. And as a result of that, the Jews have the Feast of Purim.

"...many shall see and fear, and shall trust in the LORD" (v 3). Didn't that happen? What did it say because the Jews were delivered? *Many converted to Judaism because they didn't want to be on the wrong side of God!*

Verse 4: "**Blessed is the man who makes the LORD his trust** and does not respect the proud, nor those who turn aside to lies." Isn't that exactly what we just discussed? Then the rest of it goes right into a prophecy of Jesus Christ.

Psalms 115 is really quite a Psalm. In going through the Psalms for the Bible project I was struck at how many difficulties and problems that David had. Yet, he was one in whom God delighted.

Psalms 115:1: "Not unto us, O LORD, not unto us, but unto Your name give glory for Your mercy and for Your Truth's sake." That needs to always be the focus of what we do in whatever circumstances we are in.

Verse 2: "Why should the nations say, 'Where now is their God?' [Where is He?] ...Our God is in the heavens; He has done whatever He has pleased. Their idols are silver and gold, the work of men's hands. They have mouths, but they do not speak; they have eyes, but they do not see; they have ears, but they do not hear; they have noses, but they do not smell; they have hands, but they do not handle; they have feet, but they do not walk; they do not make a sound through their throat. The ones who make them are like them, and so is everyone who trusts in them" (vs 2-8).

You can take this part of this Psalm and you can superimpose this on the way that the world is today around us. They have all kinds of idols, which are the works of their hands.

Verse 9: "O Israel..." Put your name there. Just like it is, 'O Israel, love the Lord your God with all your heart, mind, soul and being.'

"...**trust in the LORD**; He is their **help and their shield**. O house of Aaron..." (vs 9-10). We can say to the ministry today, though we're not the priesthood of Aaron, the same principle applies,

because what was the priesthood to do but to teach the people.

"...**trust in the LORD**; He is their **help and their shield**. O you who fear the LORD, **trust in the LORD**; He is **their help and their shield**" (vs 10-11).

Here's what happens, v 12: "The LORD has been mindful of us; He will bless us; He will bless the house of Israel; He will bless the house of Aaron. He will bless those who fear the LORD, both small and great. The LORD shall increase you more and more, you and your children. May you be blessed of the LORD Who made the heavens and the earth" (vs 12-15).

God has brought us to a tremendous relationship with Him! Never forget that. *He's called us to the greatest calling that we can have, in eternal life and spiritual glory for all eternity!* Always keep that in mind when troubles, difficulties and trials come.

Verse 16: "The heavens, even the heavens, are the LORD'S; but the earth He has given to the children of men." Then here is another little Scripture which proves the point: *as long as there's life there's hope!*

Verse 17: "The dead do not praise the LORD, nor do any who go down into silence. But as for us, we will bless the LORD from this time forth and forevermore. O praise the LORD!" (vs 17-18). Quite a Psalm on trusting in God; that really inspired me.

Psalms 71 talks about when we get old and gray that God won't forsake us, and there are many of us reaching that point. I know Jim Hyles wanted me to look at a video that I did clear back in 1988, and he put it on a DVD for me. It was about the ACLU and all the problems, all the different things that they were supporting. When I saw the video, I saw myself much younger.

At that time the way my hair grayed, it grayed on the sides, and then came up toward the crown of my head, so at that point I had that skunk streak right down the middle of my head! One time there was a woman who came up to me and she was very serious, and she said, 'Do you tint your hair? *Because I had that skunk streak!* And I said 'No, I don't tint my hair.' Now, today I'm white headed! And someone said, 'Well at least you have hair!'

Psalms 71:16: "I will go in the strength of the Lord GOD... [that's how we are to do it] ...I will speak of Your righteousness, even of Yours alone. O God, You have taught me from my youth... [however long you been in the Church] ...and until now I have declared Your wonderful works. But now also when I

am old and gray-headed, O God, do not forsake me..." (vs 16-18).

No, God won't forsake you—old and gray, weak and rusting, falling apart—that's just the way that the human body has been designed. It's designed to wear out and die. Everybody who ate nothing but organic food all their lives, and drank the purest water possible all their lives, *died!* We are to do the best we can in eating and drinking, that is true. We need to **trust in God** to not forsake us when we're old and gray.

Comment was made they died that's true, but they didn't have heart attacks and diabetes and all of the cancer and all the modern diseases that we have today, which are additional curses upon us.

"...until I have declared Your strength to this generation, and Your power to everyone who is to come. And Your righteousness, O God, is very high, You Who have done great things. O God, who is like You?" (vs 18-19).

Verse 1 is the introduction to this Psalm. So, if you're discouraged because you're getting old, read this, believe it, ask God for help. If there are things you can do, ask God to lead you to understand what you need to do. And do the best you can.

You're going to die, even those who eat organic foods and things like this, still come down with diseases and so forth. That's not the answer to everything. But the comment was made that their dad died in his sleep and that's the way to go. I think with today's so-called modern medical methods, they don't let people die when it's time for them to die. They crank them up and keep them going and collect tens of thousands of dollars while they keep their physical bodies going. So, there is a balance.

But I need to tell you one other account. I forget the name of the man, and I forget the name of the king. But this was in England. There was a man who was the longest-lived man in England. He had a very simple diet, he ate all the vegetables and everything that he grew. He ate the lamb that he raised, took care of himself and he lived to be 157-years-old. He lived through the reigns of the 11 kings.

Finally, the last king to celebrate his 157th birthday invited him to the palace to eat with him. He went to the palace and ate with the king, and drank with the king, and, of course, it was over a process of a couple of days. He went home and three days later died. The king's food killed him! Now you know why Daniel didn't want king's food.

Psalm 71:1: "In You, O LORD, have I taken refuge; let me never be put to shame." Ask God to lead you, guide you, give you the understanding, so

you're not put to confusion.

Verse 2: "Deliver me in Your righteousness... [not our own] ...and cause me to escape... [it may be with the skin of your teeth] ...incline Your ear unto me, and save me. Be my strong Rock of refuge to which I may always go..." (vs 2-3). *Always go to God!* Never let prayer be the last thing you do. Let prayer always be the first thing that you do!

"...You have commanded to save me; for You are my Rock and my Fortress. Deliver me, O my God, out of the hand of the wicked, out of the hand of the unrighteous and ruthless man, for You are my hope, O Lord GOD, my trust from my youth" (vs 3-5). Then he recounts that this was even from his mother's womb.

All of these things are **to strengthen us spiritually in the Lord**. We need to be fortified in spirit, in mind, in everything so that we can withstand the troubles and difficulties that are going to come.

Psalm 118:5: "I called upon the LORD in distress; the LORD answered me, and set me in a large place.... [What a relief!] ...The LORD is on my side; I will not fear.... [if you're first on God's side] ...What can man do to me?" (vs 5-6).

Matthew 10:28: "Do not be afraid of those who kill the body, but do not have power to destroy the life..."

Psalm 118:7: "The LORD is for me as my Helper..." God may even intervene and bless other people and cause them to help you, in whatever way you need. I think about it many, many times this way. How many people does God have to bless in the world, so that there are enough brethren who can give tithes and offerings to whatever church they are in for the carrying on the work of that church, regardless of what they are doing? We won't make any judgment value on it.

But consider where you work, consider what you do, consider where your income comes from etc. etc. etc. There's always someone else there, who is doing something so that God can bless you, and it will be a benefit to you. God is active with many, many people doing many things, just out in the carnal world, so that we can live, that we can have the opportunity to love God and worship Him, trust Him and serve Him, etc.

"...therefore, I will look in triumph upon those who hate me" (v 7). Don't take it in your hands to do it, *let God do it!*

Verse 8: "**It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in man**. It is better to trust in the LORD than to trust in princes. All the nations surround me, but in the name of the LORD I will

destroy them” (vs 8-10). That is a direct prophecy of Christ at His return. They’re all going to submit! Quite a thing!

Just think about how God has used America as a blessing to the whole world to fulfill His promise that he gave to Abraham, that in you shall all the nations of the world be blessed. That’s going to expand out through the Millennium when Christ is here, and Abraham is here, and then it’s going to be magnified even more. But what does Israel always do with the blessings that God has given? *They always corrupt themselves by their lovers.* (Ezek. 16:31^[transcriber’s correction])

The reason that so many things are going to come upon America, is because of the blessings that God is given America, and how we have taken it to turn it into, as it were, *a rejection of God after God has given it, and to pursue lovers of other nations that they may be our friends.* They are all going to end up being our enemies, *because we’ve excluded God!* So, that’s why I’m giving what I’m giving, because *we need to be prepared*, because that’s coming down the road.

Now let’s see how we are to get our heart and our mind. Israel was going in and Joshua was given charge to help lead the Israelites into the ‘promised land,’ and it was going to be a lot of fighting, blood, guts and gore, but God was going to bless them and fight their battles for them. Here is the attitude that we need to have so that

- we can be strong in the Lord
- we can have courage in the face of danger
- we can have wisdom in the time of trouble
- we can have the blessing of God to be with us
- we can be provided a way of escape, which God will give us

Joshua 1:5: “No man shall be able to stand before you all the days of your life.... [God held that up right to the end] ...As I was with Moses, *so I will be with you. **I will not fail you nor forsake you.***” That’s why *never, never blame God* when troubles come. *Never blame God!* He’ll help you out of it.

Verse 6: “Be strong and of good courage...”—regardless of the circumstances. Remember what happened when they sent the spies into spy out the land, and only Joshua and Caleb came back and said, even though these are strong and mighty cities and giants are there, they’ll be like grasshoppers before us because of God. And the other ten said, ‘Oh no, we can’t do it!’ So, ***regardless of the circumstances don’t get discouraged or despondent!***

“...for you shall divide for an inheritance to

this people the land, which I swore to their fathers to give it to them.... [the goal for us is eternal life in the Kingdom of God] ...Only be strong and very courageous... [this ties right in where we began in Deut. 11] ...so that you may observe to do according to all the Law, which My servant Moses commanded you....” (vs 6-7). To do all that My servant Jesus Christ, My only begotten Son has given and commanded you to do.’

“...Do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, so that you may prosper wherever you go” (v 7). Spiritual prosperity and blessing is the goal! Not physical; the physical will come as God desires to give it to us.

Verse 8: “This Book of the Law shall not depart out of your mouth...” Now, we have the whole Bible today as never before, and you can apply it to that.

“...but you shall meditate therein day and night...” (v 8). In other words, it’s going to guide you in all your thoughts, all your actions, everything that you do. It doesn’t mean that you become a religious nut. It means that you become right-minded before God with His laws and His commandments and the teachings of Christ, and the teachings of Christ through the apostles and New Testament, and just add all of that together.

“...that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it, for then you shall make your way prosperous, and then you shall have good success. Have I not commanded you? **Be strong and of good courage. Do not be afraid, neither be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you in all places where you go**” (vs 8-9).

And remember this: *You have the Spirit of God in you!* Does He go with you wherever you go? *Yes!* That’s what to remember.

Let’s see what Jesus told the apostles, and notice how similar this is to Joshua 1. There’s a certain parallel here, too. Just as Joshua was going to take the children of Israel into the ‘promised land’ into an area they had been before, so also the apostles were going to start in Jerusalem and go out and be witnesses into all the world.

John 16:33: “These things I have spoken to you, **so that in Me you may have peace....**”

- peace of mind
- peace of understanding
- resolution of conflicts

“...In the world you shall have tribulation. **But be courageous! I have overcome the world**” (v 33). ***God will give us the victory!***

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version* by Fred R. Coulter

Scriptural References:

- 1) 1 Peter 1:19-21
- 2) Matthew 24:35
- 3) Titus 1:1-2
- 4) Galatians 1:1-12
- 5) Psalm 20:1-9
- 6) Deuteronomy 11:1, 8, 13, 16-19
- 7) Psalm 35:1-6
- 8) Psalm 34:1-6, 8, 14-19
- 9) Psalm 40:1-4
- 10) Psalm 115:1-18
- 11) Psalm 71:16-19, 1-5
- 12) Psalm 118:5-6
- 13) Matthew 10:28
- 14) Psalm 118:7-10
- 15) Joshua 1:5-9
- 16) John 16:33

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- 2-Timothy
- Revelation 2; 3
- Deuteronomy 28
- Esther
- Ezekiel 16:31
- Deuteronomy 28

Also referenced:

- Appendix A: 14 Rules for Bible Study (*The Holy Bible in Its Original Order*)
- Sermon Series: *Keys to Answered Prayer*

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Be Strong in the Lord III

(Prepare and Trust God in Everything)

Fred R. Coulter

If I go back to when I was baptized, that's 1960, and we've been living in the end-times all the way through those years. We've seen ups and downs, good and bad, we've seen everything that Christ tells us is going to happen there in Matt. 24 and Mark 13, all those things we've seen come and go.

Yet, we're still quite a ways from what appears to be the end, and when the end comes what is it going to be like? Mike and I were talking about that, and we're thinking, in going through the prophecies—especially in Jeremiah—how bad it was back then, and what is it going to be today?

Let's just look at one Scripture we've gone over before many, many times. It was a warning and a call to repentance for them at that time. But prophecies have a way of having applications in people's lives at any time through history, especially so when we consider our understanding of who Israel in prophecy is, or who Israel in the end-times are—the 12 tribes—and the blessings that God has poured out upon this nation, and we look and see where it is heading.

It kind of heads in these things incrementally; it doesn't happen all at once. Let's see what it was like here and then let's ask:

- What is it going to be like in our day?
- Why do we need to be strong in the Lord?

Jeremiah 7:1: "The Word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying... [he was a priest so he could stand right there in the temple and let them have it] ...'Stand in the gate of the LORD'S house, and proclaim there this Word, and say, "Hear the Word of the LORD, all Judah, who enter in at these gates to worship the LORD"" (vs 1-2).

If we can take this and sort of superimpose this upon America, where we have the largest number of churchgoing people on Sunday. I've got an article that shows that even some of these evangelists demand \$10,000 a speaking engagement. Then you look at their lives multiplied over and over again. So, as we read these things let's see how they can apply to us.

Verse 3: "Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel..." Remember that before God does anything *He gives a chance for repentance!* That's what this is.

"... 'Amend your ways and your doings, and I will cause you to dwell in this place. Do not trust in

lying words....'" (vs 3-4).

And if that's not true... I mean, if you follow the political scene as it is today, WOW, that's something! Or the religious scene! How that Christ did everything, all the Law is done away, and all you have to do is just come to this church and you'll be in the rapture and you'll make it.

"... 'The temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD are these.' For if you thoroughly amend your ways and your doings; if you thoroughly execute judgment between a man and his neighbor; *if* you do not oppress the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, and do not shed innocent blood in this place, nor walk after other gods to your hurt" (vs 4-6).

What do we have? *All of these things are the sins that they were doing then, and the very sins that are happening today!*

Verse 7: "Then I will cause you to dwell in this place, in the land that I gave to your fathers, forever and ever. Behold, you trust in lying words that cannot profit. Will you steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely, and burn incense to Baal, and walk after other gods whom you do not know; and then come and stand before Me in this house which is called by My name, and say, 'We are delivered to do all these abominations'?" (vs 7-10).

So, I answered Mike with another Scripture here in Jeremiah, which I have used quite often to show the mercy of God. In answering the question: How bad can it get?

Jeremiah 5:1: "Run to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem, and see now, and know, and seek in her open places... [in other words, search out the whole town] ...if you can find a man... [one man, now that's how bad it was] **...if there is one who does justice, who seeks the Truth; and I will pardon her.**"

So in talking about this, Mike asked me: How bad do you think it's going to get? I thought, down here in Southern California perhaps an example of how bad it can get, may be the worst parts of East L.A.: run by gangs, no police force, the police don't go there, everyone does evil; you have murder, gangs, drugs. If that expands out even more in the nation, perhaps that may give us an idea of what it's going to be like.

We need to be prepared! We need to be

strong *mentally, spiritually and also physically* as possible! But let's focus on the *spiritual*. What we need to do to really have a mindset so that when some of these disasters happen we can maintain our equilibrium, maintain our relationship with God, and understand what we need to do. The strength in any of these things comes because you have prepared; ***you have prepared spiritually!***

I think in this society there are going to be a lot of people totally unprepared! There are some physical things we need to do, that is true. But I tell you what, you're not going to store up, say a years worth of food, and sit there in quiet contemplation without someone knowing that you have something somewhere. If they know that you have something somewhere, they're going to try and find that somewhere so they can have something that you have, and they will not be too nice about it!

But as we see these things come along, what we need to do is ***really have a concerted effort of growing in strength spiritually!***

Timothy is talking about the faith that his mother and grandmother had, and he said he was convinced it was in God:

2-Timothy 1:6: "For this reason, I admonish you to stir up the gift of God that is in you by the laying on of my hands." God has given us His Holy Spirit. But it is something that must be:

- used
- worked
- stirred up
- constantly renewed

That's why we have Sabbath every week, because spiritual things do not remain in a physical mind, without the Spirit of God uniting with our spirit and we actively use God's Spirit. So, *stir up the Spirit of God*, "...the gift of God that is in you..."

Verse 7: "For God has not given us a spirit of fear..." It's going to be difficult when fearful things happen, to not completely fall apart.

"...but **of power, and of love, and of sound-mindedness**" (v 7). This is something we do daily:

- through prayer
- through study
- through yielding to God
- through living God's way

and all of that combined. This gives us *the strength spiritually* and *the ability to see the problems* that come along. Know that these things are going to happen, and yet, not get discouraged and say: Why is God going to let this happen? Why is God going

to do this?

Well most people in America do not count the murder of little children in the womb in a most gruesome and horrible way as a great thing anymore. But ***God counts it as one of the worst things in the world!*** Plus all the other sins, plus all the things that have taken place.

Let's see how we can be strengthened. Here's how David did it. Think about this, and think about everything that's in the world. Of course, we all have to live in the world—don't we? We all go out there and we work in the world and we're around people in the world. What is going to happen when this occurs?

Psalm 12:1: "Help, O LORD, for the Godly man ceases..." There are still a number of people today trying to do good. But what's going to happen when this day arrives?

"...for the faithful disappear from among the children of men. They speak falsehood each one with his neighbor; with flattering lips and a double heart they speak" (vs 1-2). Of course, most of the world lives in a make-believe reality created by television, music, and lies of the society. When the reality hits, what are they going to do?

God is going to do this, v 3: "The LORD shall cut off all flattering lips, *and* the tongue that speaks proud things." If I were some of these politicians, I'd be mighty afraid. In looking at the political scene, at least in my lifetime, I have not seen such an array of political midgets seeking to become President of the United States. Remember, the nation will get what it deserves, and I'm afraid it's going to be Hillary.

Verse 4: "Who have said, 'With our tongue we shall prevail... [whether it's lies, flattery, whatever, we're going to make it] ...our lips are our own; who is lord over us?' 'For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, I will now arise,' says the LORD. 'I will set him in safety from *him who puffs at him*'" (vs 4-5).

Here is a promise of protection from God, right here. We need to claim that protection and ask God to watch over us. We're not at the hundred percent level. I wonder, if you could put it on a percentage basis, what percentage the society is right now as God would look at it? We'll just have to see as it goes along.

Why does this happen? Verse 8: "The wicked walk on every side when vileness is exalted among the sons of men." That tells us exactly what the political situation is everywhere.

Let's see what we need to do. We need to

make a determined effort, every one of us. It is a spiritual and a mental determination. Psalms 108—here's what people need to do. Since we have gone along, and we have seen this within the Church, many of the things that I've read about and have described that happened within the Church, what happened when the vilest of men were raised to the top of the Church? *Same thing! God judged, yes, He did!*

I've heard people say it many times, and I think it's true, as it happens to the Church it parallels what's happening in the world, kind of goes hand-in-hand—doesn't it? *Yes!* Because of that, people have been hurt mentally, spiritually, and emotionally—disillusioned by hypocrites, disillusioned by liars from the pulpit—they all back away.

They say all right, I've got to protect a little place for myself. The commitment that was asked for before was to an organization and two men. That's the wrong application of the commitment. This is sort of a protective device that is a normal response to give yourself a buffer so that no one can come close and cause you personal problems any longer.

So, what we need to do, we need to take that reaction, and we need to apply it in a little different way. We need to apply it to serving God. We need to apply it with a mental and spiritual resolve.

Psalms 108:1: "O God, **my heart is fixed...**" That's where the strength is going to come from. *It's going to come from God!*

- God is always true
- God is always right

God is the One Who will:

- protect you
- watch over you
- strengthen you

in whatever your circumstances are!

Verse 12: "Give us help from trouble, for vain is the deliverance of man. Through God we shall do mighty things, for it is He who will tread down our enemies" (vs 12-13). Of course, the final victory is going to be through Christ.

Psalms 112:1: "Praise the LORD! Blessed is the man who fears the LORD, who delights greatly in His commandments." We can put there: *everything that God stands for, not just His commandments!*

Verse 3: "Wealth and riches shall be in his house... [those are promised to us in the coming kingdom] ...and His righteousness endures forever. To the upright there arises light in the darkness; he is gracious and full of compassion and righteousness.

It is well with the man who is gracious and lends freely; who conducts his affairs with justice. Surely he shall not be moved forever... [if there are some things that you slip in, you're not going to be moved forever] ...the righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance" (vs 3-6).

Who's doing the remembering? *God is!* That's why I've said many, many times before, ***when all else fails remember that God loves you!***

- God has called you
- God is dealing with you
- God wants you in His kingdom
- He hasn't called us in vain

He's called us to do the things that please him, in spite of everything that is all around us.

Verse 7: "He shall not be afraid of evil tidings..." We're going to see plenty of them. I couldn't help thinking of the families there with the mine cave-in in Utah, and all the efforts that they're doing with the continual shifting of the mine and everything. It takes some kind of special person to go down in the mine and mine coal or whatever it is. I don't think I have the type of personality that would really do well at that. But nevertheless, we're going to see difficulties in things that come.

And financially, the market falls and the Fed is able to rescue it. But what's going to happen when they won't be able to rescue it? What are we going to do?

- if you don't love God
- if you don't believe God
- if you haven't set your mind and heart first

Then it's going to be very discouraging and you're going to wonder: Where is God?

"...his heart is steadfast, trusting in the LORD" (v 7). So, ***you trust in Him at all times!*** 'The angels of the Lord are encamped about those who fear Him and trust Him!' We're going to need the help of angels about us when these evil days come.

Verse 8: "His heart is established... [fixed, established, trusting] ...he shall not be afraid until he sees his desire upon his enemies."

Now let's look at the opposite of this: the person who is not fixed, who is not steadfast. This is something you have to prepare for. You just don't say, 'All right my heart is fixed.' ***No!*** It's a commitment that is always reinforced and built and you grow in it.

And just a little aside on James 1:1. If you write a letter and send it to someone, do you know where they are if you send it to them? *Of course!*

What did James do?

James 1:1: “James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes, which are in the dispersion: Greetings!” Where did it go? *Everywhere there were synagogues of the Jews that were known!*

Verse 2: “Consider *it* all joy, my brethren, when you are beset by various trials.” That can only come with a spiritual attitude and understanding. That ***‘all things work together for good for those who love God are the called according to His purpose.’***

Verse 3: “Knowing that **the testing of your faith produces endurance.** But let endurance have its perfect work... [don’t cut it off; don’t cut it short] ...so that you may be perfect and complete, not lacking in anything” (vs 3-4)—spiritually. *Our whole lives are those things where God is working and dealing with us:*

- to help us
- to mold us
- to bring us closer to Him
- to help us develop the character and mind of Christ

“...so that you may be perfect and complete, not lacking in anything.”

Verse 5: “However, if anyone lacks wisdom, let him ask of God...” God is going to do it. That’s why there needs to be prayer involved.

“...Who gives to everyone freely and does not reproach *the one who asks*; and it shall be given to him. But let him ask in faith, not doubting at all because **the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven by the wind and tossed to and fro**” (vs 5-6).

Now, there’s nothing more unstable than water. It can be humidity as a vapor, it can be liquid as a glass of water, but the water is subject to whatever forces are against it: be it the wind, be it the tide, or whatever.

That’s why we had the tsunami’s when we had the earthquake there in the Indian Ocean some years ago. “...driven by the wind and tossed *to and fro*.” You can’t be one way one day and one way the next day.

Verse 7: “Do not let that man expect that he will receive anything from the Lord. ***He is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways***” (vs 7-8).

- there is the opposite of having your heart fixed
- there is the opposite of establishing your way with God

We don’t want to be double-minded and unstable!

I was talking to someone about all of these Hollywood people that are narcissistic, and all they want to do is just serve themselves and have their own way. Whatever the press says that’s what they want, if they can get the photo op, or they can get the name recognition or whatever, that’s where they go. That’s a good example of being *unstable in all of your ways*.

Let’s see how God dealt with a couple of His prophets. Anyone who wants to be a prophet, you better think about it. Here’s Jeremiah, he’s probably 17 or 18, and had a 40-year ministry altogether. God called him and said, ***‘I formed you in the womb, I’ve created you for a purpose, I’ve sanctified you, and I want you to do what I tell you to do.’*** So then, Jeremiah answered:

Jeremiah 1:6: “Then I said, ‘Alas, Lord GOD! Behold, I do not know how to speak; for I *am* a youth.’.... [which means under 20] ...But the LORD said to me, ‘Do not say, “I *am* a youth,” for you shall go to all that I shall send you, and whatever I command you, you shall speak” (vs 6-7).

Jeremiah’s example is very important, because he went through all the extremes of corruption, to the destruction and captivity of Judah, lived through it, and then was able to take the daughters of the king to Ireland. He had a long ministry ahead of him. It’s just like us, once we start our Christian walk, we don’t know what lies ahead. *He didn’t either!*

God says, v 8: “Do not be afraid of their faces; for I *am* with you to deliver you,” said the LORD. And the LORD put forth His hand, and touched my mouth. And the LORD said to me, ‘Behold, I have put My words in your mouth’” (vs 8-9).

Very similar to Isaiah who saw the vision of God’s throne, and he said, ‘who will go?’ Isaiah said, ‘send me, Lord.’ Then one of the angels took a coal off the altar and touched his lips and said your clean, now go speak the Word of the Lord.’

Verse 10: “See, I have this day set you over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant.”

Now then, after God told him what was going to happen, v 16: “And I will pronounce My judgments against them regarding all their wickedness in that they have forsaken Me, and burning incense to other gods, and worshiping the works of their own hands.... [we do that today] **...You, therefore, must gird up your loins, and arise, and speak to them all that I command**

you....” (vs 16-17).

We’re going to have to virtually do the same thing in the end-time. We’re going to have to endure the things that come along. The reason I’m going through this is because I don’t think, even though we can read some of the things that are coming, we have a full enough comprehension to realize how mentally and spiritually we need to be fortified. But nevertheless:

“...Do not be dismayed... [discouraged or frustrated] ...at their faces...” (v 17). He did get discouraged. You read a little later on he said, ‘O God, why did you call me to do this? This is so terrible!’ God said, ‘You’re going to be spared.’ Sometimes the circumstances can look really, *really*, **really** bad, and the circumstances can tend to get you down. But don’t let them get it get you down.

“...lest I confound you before them. For, behold, I have made you a fortified city this day...” (vs 17-18). This is the mental resolve that He gave Jeremiah, that we’re going to need.

“...and an iron pillar, and bronze walls against the whole land.... [talk about ‘You and me, Lord, this is it’] ...against the kings of Judah, against its rulers, against its priests, and against the people of the land. And **they shall fight against you; but they shall not overcome you. For I am with you,**” says the LORD, **“to deliver you”**” (vs 18-19).

In some cases, by the skin of his teeth. But God still delivered him! *Yes, He did!* This is how we need to have this kind of **mental resolve**. Now, some people call that hard-headedness, but *it is actually spiritual strength*, because still within you have *feeling, compassion and mercy*. When Jeremiah saw all that was going on, he said, ‘*Oh, my eyes are like rivers of water*, when I see all these things going on, and what’s going to happen to them.’

Ezekiel 3:1: “And He said to me, ‘Son of man, eat what you find. Eat this scroll, and go speak to the house of Israel.’ So, I opened my mouth, and He caused me to eat that scroll. And He said to me, ‘Son of man, cause your belly to eat, and fill your belly with this scroll that I give you.’ Then I ate it; and in my mouth it was like honey for sweetness. And He said to me, ‘Son of man, go! Go up to the house of Israel and speak to them with My words. For you *are* not sent to a people of a strange speech and of a difficult language, *but* to the house of Israel; not to many people of a strange speech and of a difficult language, whose words you cannot understand. Surely, if I had sent you to them, they would have hearkened to you. But the house of Israel will not be willing to hearken to you, for they will not be willing to hearken to Me; for all the house of Israel *are* of a hard forehead and a stubborn

heart. Behold, I have made your face strong against their faces and your forehead strong against their foreheads. I have made your forehead as an adamant stone, harder than flint. Do not be afraid of them or dismayed by their faces, for they *are* a rebellious house” (vs 1-9).

I tell you, that’s something! That’s the kind of resolve that we are going to need. Why? Let’s see some of the things that we are going to face, we’ve been facing them. Isn’t it interesting that when we talk about prophecy and the things that come along, we always come back to Matt. 24, because that is the framework on which everything in the end takes place?

Jesus talks about false prophets, nations rising against nations, and earthquakes in different places, Matthew 24:10: “And then shall many be led into sin... [the whole society is being led into sin, incrementally step-by-step] ...and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another.” That sure sounds like today, hating one another.

That’s why we need the love of God; that’s why we need the love of each other! Brethren, when it’s all over and said and done, remember that those of us who have God’s Spirit, we are all that we have, that’s it! We’ve got to love each other, take care of each other and be concern for each other, especially in the days that are ahead.

Verse 11: “And many false prophets shall arise, and shall deceive many; and because lawlessness shall be multiplied...” (vs 11-12). I can understand how it’s going to be multiplied, with all the things we have to multiply it, all of the media, all of the things that we have at our fingertips for anyone.

“...the love of many shall grow cold.... [that’s why we need the love of each other] ...But **the one who endures to the end, that one shall be saved**” (vs 12-13).

But let’s see something that’s important. Why we need to have the kind of attitude that I’ve been talking about.

Verse 21: **“For then shall there be great tribulation, such as has not been from the beginning of the world until this time, nor ever shall be again.”**

How long we have to go we don’t know. But I tell you what, we’re going to face worse things than what we read up there with Jeremiah and Ezekiel. How many of us are going to pass from the scene before then, we’ll just have to wait and see. We don’t know, because He also said that you don’t know the day, you don’t know the hour. But we need to be strengthened with God, and strengthened

in His might and His way in order to do the things that God wants us to do.

(go to the next track)

Now let's come back to the book of Psalms, and let's see that ***being strong in the Lord is trusting Him!*** Regardless of what our circumstances are, regardless of what comes along, we need to trust God in everything. Now, it'll generally work out differently than we think.

Psalms 56:1: "Be gracious unto me, O God, for man would swallow me up..." Sometimes you feel like that just out in the world, especially if you're stuck in traffic and can't go anywhere.

"...fighting all the day, he oppresses me. Those who lie in wait for me would trample me, for many are those who proudly fight against me. When I am afraid... [so when you start getting afraid] ...***I will trust in You***" (vs 1-3). That's where it has to be, *trusting* God! Trust is ***faith in action!***

Verse 4: "In God I will praise His Word; in God I have put my trust; I will not be afraid. What can flesh do to me?... [some of these are prophecies relating to Christ] ...All day long they pervert my words... [I didn't know they had the drive-by media back then] ...all their thoughts are against me for evil. They stir up strife; they hide themselves; they watch my steps as they wait for my soul. Because of iniquity cast them out. In Your anger cast down the people, O God. You number my wanderings, O put my tears into Your bottle..." (vs 4-8). In other words remember all of my anguish and everything I'm going through.

"...are they not in Your book? When I cry out to You, then my enemies will be turned back. ***This I know because God is for me***" (vs 8-9).

Remember this: ***Regardless of the circumstances, God is never against you!*** Even in the most terrible trial that you may go through, or the most unusual circumstances you may come across. ***God is for you!*** That's why He's called you. Let's look at it this way: Did God call us to fail? *No!* *God has called us to succeed at the greatest thing that He has for those whom He calls: to be in the first resurrection!* God is *for* us.

Verse 10: "In God—I will praise His Word; in the LORD—I will praise His Word. In God I have put my trust; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?" (vs 10-11). Jesus said, "The worst they can do is kill the body." *After that, it's all in God's hands!*

Verse 12: "Your vows are upon me, O God; I will give thank offerings to You, for You have delivered my soul from death. Have You not kept my feet from falling, so that I may walk before God

in the light of the living?" (vs 12-13). Just look at that as the resurrection. Just look at that as a tremendous and wonderful thing that God is going to do.

Psalms 57:1: "Be gracious unto me, O God..." If you are in a terrible difficult trial, and it's more than you can handle ***then you need to trust in God!*** If it's such that you are overwhelmed ***then claim the promises of God!*** Here's what God told Moses when he wanted to see his glory.

Exodus 34:5: "And the LORD came down in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the LORD. And the LORD passed by before him and proclaimed, 'The LORD, the LORD God, merciful... [when we ask God to have mercy on us, He will have mercy on us] ...and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth'" (vs 5-6).

The way that you approach God, is to take Scriptures like this, and incorporate them in your prayers and *claim the promise*. God says he's merciful.

- Oh God be merciful
- You promised that You would be
- You're a God of Truth who cannot lie
- You're a God of love Who has called us and Who is for us
- Who has given us the greatest hope of any people on earth

Verse 7: "Keeping mercy to the thousandth generation, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but Who will by no means clear *the guilty*..." That is the unrepentant; God's going to take care of the sins of other people.

When you ask, how can God allow this, whatever it may be, God is doing it *to show His power*. So, if they don't repent then God sooner or later will come. Look at what Israel did here at this point and look what Aaron did at this point, in making the golden calf and causing the children of Israel to worship the golden calf. And He's saying, ***'I will forgive!'***

You don't like to compare sin, but sin is sin. However, have any of us done what they did? If God forgave them, will He forgive us? *Yes, indeed!* That's why we're to ask God's forgiveness every day.

Psalms 57:1: "Be gracious unto me, O God, be gracious unto me; for my soul trusts in You; yea, ***in the shadow of Your wings I will make my refuge*** until these great troubles pass by. I will cry to God Most High, to God who fulfills His purpose for me" (vs 1-2).

Remember, *we have nothing we didn't receive!* Everything physical *and* spiritual all comes from God, likewise for everyone in the world. Does God provide breath, air, water and food for everyone in the world? *Yes!* That's just an extension of God's love even to those who despise Him and hate Him.

Verse 3: "He shall send from heaven and save me; He rebukes him who would swallow me up. **Selah**.... [stop, think, meditate] ...God shall send forth His mercy and His Truth. My soul is among lions; I lie among those who breathe out fire, the sons of men whose teeth are spears and arrows, and their tongue a sharp sword.... [notice what he does]: ...Be exalted, O God, above the heavens; let Your glory be above all the earth. They have prepared a net for my steps; my soul is bowed down; they have dug a pit before me; into the midst of it they have fallen themselves. **Selah**. **My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed;** I will sing and give praise" (vs 3-7).

That's the attitude that we need to have to be strengthened in the Lord.

I know in going through all the Psalms many, many times, it has really helped and strengthened me in my life. We all need to be strengthened. We all have the weakness of flesh. We all have sins and problems and difficulties. God made us that way, that's just the way that life is. But God is there to help. God is there to intervene. Now, if you're in real trouble, and you really feel bad, do like this:

Psalms 61:1: "Hear my cry, O God; attend unto my prayer. From the end of the earth I cry to You when my heart is overwhelmed; lead me to the Rock higher than me... [to Christ] ...for You have been a shelter for me, a strong tower against the enemy. I will dwell in Your tabernacle forever; **I will take refuge in the hiding place of Your wings.** **Selah**" (v 1-4).

Of course, we are going to abide in the tabernacle of God forever. What does Rev. 21 say? '*Behold the tabernacle of God is with men.*' Men made perfect. Our goal is to dwell in New Jerusalem.

Psalms 70:1: "Make haste, O God... [sometimes you need God's intervention immediately] ...to deliver me; make haste to help me, O LORD. Let them be ashamed and confounded, those who seek after my soul; let them be turned backward and put to confusion, those who desire my hurt. Let them be turned back for a reward of their shame, those who say, 'Aha, aha!' Let all those who seek You rejoice and be glad in You; and let those who love Your salvation say without ending, 'Let God be magnified'" (vs 1-4).

This is how we're going to be strengthened for the things that are going to take place in the future.

I've got a little white box up here, and in little white box I've got a whole stack of news reports. Some of the things that are going to be cut loose, the stage is already set. What I'm going to do is go back and look at the incrementalism of how it took place, and how we came to where we are today.

Psalms 11:1: "**In the LORD I have taken refuge**... [always] ...how *then* can you say to me, 'Flee like a bird to your mountain'?.... [some things you can't get away from] ...For lo, the wicked bend their bow; they make ready their arrow on the string, so that they may secretly shoot at the upright in heart. If the foundations are destroyed, what can the righteous do?" (vs 1-3).

That pretty well helps answer that there are going to be times worse than it's ever been since there was ever a nation. And we're going to live into that time. We're going to have ***to be strong in the Lord, trusting him in everything!*** An organization is not going to help you. As a matter of fact:

- organizations will fail you
- people will fail you
- schemes will fail you
- **but God will never fail you**

Verse 4: "The LORD is in His Holy temple; the LORD'S throne is in heaven. His eyes behold; His searching gaze tests the children of men. The LORD tries the righteous, but His soul hates the wicked and the one who loves violence.... [God is going to take care of them] ...Upon the wicked He shall rain snares, fire and brimstone; and a scorching wind shall be the portion of their cup" (vs 4-6). Which is also a prophecy of *the seven last plagues!* God is going to take care of it.

Verse 7: "For the LORD is righteous, He loves righteousness; the upright will behold His face." He is:

- watching over us
- being with us
- preserving us
- helping us

1-Peter 5:6: "Be humbled, therefore, under the mighty hand of God..."

I suppose living back in the Midwest has some benefits, though I don't like those tornadoes. And they have some storms back there that my wife continually reminds me that it puts the fear of God in you. Maybe that's why that's the 'Bible Belt' back there, who knows. But I tell you what, some of

those displays of an awesome power of God, humbles you! *Yes, it does!*

So, “Be humbled, therefore, under the mighty hand of God...” Let’s put it this way: You can yield to God in trust, in faith, in love and grow in humility through that. **OR** You can be humbled through circumstances that take you down, because you didn’t do the former. But nevertheless, here is the key:

“...so that He may exalt you in due time... [God will take care of you in due time] ...casting all your cares upon Him, because **He cares for you**” (vs 6-7).

Here is the struggle that goes on when you’re in a difficulty, problem and trial that you are going through. This we’re going to have to face on a daily basis when we come to the real upheaval that’s going to occur. Satan is ‘Johnny-on-the-spot’ to offer you *his* way. That’s why you have to know to choose **God’s** way.

Verse 8: “**Be sober!**.... [that is realistic of everything] ...**Be vigilant!**....” *Being on guard!* By the way, the word for, ‘keep the garden’ for Adam, was to **guard** it. He wasn’t very vigilant was he? “...**Be vigilant!**....” Not sleepy, not folding hands. What is the Proverb? ‘*A little sleep, a little folding of hands, and so shall your poverty come upon you.*’ Not only physically, but spiritually, because He cares for you.

“...For your adversary *the* devil is prowling about as a roaring lion, seeking anyone he may devour. Whom resist, steadfast in the faith... [that is trusting God] ...knowing *that* the same afflictions are being fulfilled among your brethren who *are* in the world” (vs 8-9).

Whenever I’m going through difficult times, I always remember this, v 10: “Now, may the God of all grace, Who has called us unto His eternal glory in Christ Jesus... [always focused on the goal] ...after *you* have suffered a little while, Himself **perfect you, establish, strengthen, and settle you**.... [that’s the whole purpose of it] ...To Him *be* the glory and the power into the ages of eternity. Amen” (vs 10-14). Quite encouraging words!

When you study through the Apostle Paul’s life and everything that he went through, he came from the two extremes: From being a hateful enemy of God and the people of God, God called him, converted him, and made him one of the hardest working apostles of all. When you figure the whole New Testament together, his 14 epistles, plus Luke wrote under his supervision for the books of Luke and Acts, you’re dealing with little less than two thirds of the whole Bible written by Paul.

If Paul couldn’t be honest, no man could,

after all that he went through, and when he was called, remember, God told Annas in Syria, ‘You go down there to Saul, he’s down at this house, and he’s blind. I want you to lay hands on him because I’ve chosen him.’ Annas said, ‘Lord, he’s wreaked havoc with the Church.’ God says, ‘He’s a chosen vessel of Mine.’

Notice that He didn’t send any of the apostles there. He just sent Annas. Annas baptized him. And part of it was, that he was going to preach the Gospel to the children of Israel, and to the Gentiles, and Paul was going to suffer in his life greatly!

That humbled Paul; that made him effective and it made him a vessel of God’s Spirit. That really is a fantastic thing related in the Epistles of Paul when you read them.

- there is God Spirit
- there is conviction
- there is belief
- there is humility

that comes through all that Paul experienced. We find it manifest re in Eph. 3. Paul is talking about the great plan of God, which is been hidden from the ages past.

Ephesians 3:7: “Of which I became a servant according to the gift of the grace of God, *which* was given to me through the inner working of His power. To me... [notice how all of these things brought Paul to the humblest position possible] ...who am less than the least of all the saints, was this grace given, that I might preach the Gospel among the Gentiles—even the unsearchable riches of Christ” (vs 7-8).

But notice his attitude: He considered himself ‘less than the least of all the saints.’ A true example of what Jesus said, ‘**He who is going to be great among you is going to be the servant of all!**’

I remember that as an upside down pyramid. They like to have the corporate pyramid with a great mucky muck at the top. Well, Jesus said, ‘He who was the greatest is going to be the servant of all.’ So I look at that as an upside down pyramid, and Paul probably felt right down at the bottom of that upside down pyramid. That’s what the Spirit of God does.

Verse 9: “And that I might enlighten all *as* to what *is* the fellowship of the mystery that has been hidden from the ages in God, Who created all things by Jesus Christ; so that the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known through the Church to the principalities and the powers in the heavenly *places*, **according to His eternal purpose**...” (vs 9-11). God has called you according to **His** purpose. ***This is what’s going to strengthen***

us in the times ahead!

“...which He has wrought in Christ Jesus our Lord, in Whom we have boldness and *direct* access with confidence through His *very* own faith.... [Christ’s faith in us] ...So then, I beseech *you* not to faint at my tribulations for you...” (vs 11-13). He didn’t have a pity party when he was in jail. He said, look I’m going through this for you.

“...which are *working* for your glory. For this cause I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of Whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that He may grant you... [this is what Paul’s prayer is to give to us] ...according to the riches of His glory, **to be strengthened with power by His Spirit in the inner man**” (vs 13-16).

- that’s how we’re to be strong in the Lord
- that’s where it’s going to come from
- that’s where we’re going to have our minds fixed

that’s how we are going to be:

- the brazened wall
- the pillars of iron
- the rock of flint

against all the evil that’s going to come

Verse 17: “That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith... [Christ in you the hope of glory] ...*and* that **being rooted and grounded in love**... [love of God, love the brethren, love of neighbor] ...you may be fully able to comprehend with all the saints what *is* the breadth and length and depth and height... [to have a full understanding of the plan of God.] ...and to know the love of Christ, which surpasses *human* knowledge; **so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God**” (vs 17-19).

That’s what God wants! *That will give you strength regardless of whatever the circumstances are in your life!*

- He will help you
- He will bless you
- He will be with you
- He will strengthen you

At the resurrection you’re going to be filled with all the fullness of God. Now, here’s a promise:

Verse 20: “Now, to Him Who is able... [that means has the *power*; Greek: ‘dunamis’] ...to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that is working in us, to Him *be* glory in the Church by Christ Jesus throughout all generations, *even* into the ages of eternity. Amen” (vs 20-21).

So, that’s how we are to be strengthened in the Lord! When we see the fearful things that are

going to come,

- trust in God
- be strong in the Lord
- fix your heart

God will be with you!

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in It’s Original Order, A Faithful Version* by Fred R. Coulter

Scriptural References:

- 1) Jeremiah 7:1-10
- 2) Jeremiah 5:1
- 3) 2 Timothy 1:6-7
- 4) Psalm 12:1-5, 8
- 5) Psalm 108:1, 12-13
- 6) Psalm 112:1, 3-8
- 7) James 1:1-8
- 8) Jeremiah 1:6-10, 16-19
- 9) Ezekiel 3:1-9
- 10) Matthew 24:10-13, 21
- 11) Psalm 56:1-13
- 12) Psalm 57:1
- 13) Exodus 34:5-7
- 14) Psalm 57:1-7
- 15) Psalm 61:1-4
- 16) Psalm 70:1-4
- 17) Psalm 11:1-7
- 18) 1 Peter 5:6-14
- 19) Ephesians 3:7-21

Scripture referenced, not quoted: Mark 13

FRC:po/bo
Transcribed: 1-14-16

Be Strong in the Lord IV

(Children of God vs Children of the Devil)

Fred R. Coulter

We're going to approach this from a little different point of view. What sort of sprung this in my mind was a special on CNN: Christian Warriors. All the Protestants are getting involved, and I think it's quite astonishing that it shows the schizophrenic problems that Protestantism has. They come to church and say:

- you've been freed from the Law
- God has abolished the Law
- you don't have to keep the Law

Then they go out in the community and say that you must keep the Law, the part that they want you to keep, which is really educational from the point of view that they fail to realize that you have to have all the Bible, all the Scriptures, all the Truth applied. Not going through and taking little bits here and saying, 'Okay, we agree with this, let's run with this.' or 'We agree with that, let's do that.'

There was even one community that they showed—I just watched the start of it—that is calling the town Ave Maria. It's in Florida. They built a church and now they're building a town around there. What they're going to do is resurrect the old Catholic Medieval society. That's what they're going to do; where the pope reigns supreme! They eventually ended up with those who didn't agree with them, they were heretics and they ended up with the Inquisition.

- everyone wants to be religious
- everyone wants to have their own version of things
- everyone has to have their own doctrine

As God says, 'Why do you take My name and cast My Law behind your back?'

They all want to come and reform the society in the image of *their* doctrinal beliefs, rather than try to have a society that reflects the laws and commandments of God.

Gal. 3 will help us understand some of the problems and difficulties that they have, but also help us understand how we can be *strong in the Lord!*

Galatians 3:22: "But the Scriptures have shut up all things under sin..." This is why God has to call; all are under sin, which means they're all under judgment to God. This is why we have things in the world the way that they are.

Just like these Baptists—I think it's Vision

America—that fail to realize that once you come to Christ, you don't do away with law, you *perfect* it. You don't eliminate it, you make it *spiritual*. God wants as many people converted as possible—and we understand this through the meaning of the Last Great Day and the second resurrection, which the world does not understand. Once you leave:

- the Sabbath
- the Holy Days
- the laws of God
- the words of Christ

and selectively pick out what you want, then you are a victim of Satan. He comes and says, 'Aha! There's no resurrection, you go to heaven!' The Catholic version of the kingdom is that the Kingdom of God is the reign of the pope; the Kingdom of Heaven is where the souls go when you die; or hell or purgatory, one of the two.

So, God has shut it all up under sin, and unless God calls them and opens their minds, the best they're going to have is partial understanding in different things, only as they agree with the Word of God.

No man can provide anything good, except that it is based in the Law of God whether they know the Law of God or not. It's just like with evolutionists. They must begin with nothing, but they always begin with something. Then all of a sudden Voila! you've got the creation. So, likewise with the Word of God.

You can't begin with part of it—agree with part of it and accept part of it—because it's going to get you in trouble. That's why everything that human beings do comes to corruption, regardless of the best intentions, the most sincere devoted law-abiding people in the world.

"...so that by *the* faith of Jesus Christ..." (v 22). Now we're talking about something entirely different. It's not faith that we generate. It's not belief that we cling to. *If you believe* that there is a God, *if you believe* that there is a Creator, James says, 'You do well. But even the demons believe and tremble.' But to have the faith of Christ is entirely different.

"...the promise might be **given to those who believe.**" (v 22). This is a whole new thing, because this is with the Spirit of God. This is not commandment-keeping vs no commandment-keeping. This is the carnal mind, even though it may be decent and 'religious'—because men are a

combination of good and evil—vs the goodness that comes from God and His Spirit.

Verse 23: “Now, before faith came...” What day did *the faith* come on? *Pentecost with the Holy Spirit! Faith without the Holy Spirit is carnal belief!* There are a lot of people who have carnal beliefs in many different things.

“...we were guarded under law...”—protected by keeping the commandments in the letter of the Law. That protected you and guarded you so that you can receive the physical blessings from God. That’s why there are ‘good’ people in the world who keep part of the Law. They are law-abiding. They’re decent if they know some things about Christ, they are generous, kind and good.

But the Law in the letter was to give us certain benefits. We know that from reading the Old Testament. It’s important to understand that *if you are going to be strong in the Lord* you’ve got to be strong in the Lord *spiritually*:

- with His faith
- with His Truth
- with His Spirit
- with God dwelling in you

It’s a completely different way of doing things from the world.

Just like some people have said when they argue about the Ten Commandments... Remember the Ten Commandment controversy with Judge Roy Moore? Protestants got all upset over it. Some commentators made the remark: Whose version of the Ten Commandments are you going to believe? The Protestants? The Catholics? The Jews? *They vary considerably!* When the Jews read the Ten Commandments, it excludes Christ. When the Catholics read the Ten Commandments, it excludes the second commandment and splits the tenth. When the Protestant read the Ten commandments, Sabbath means Sunday.

You’ve got to have *God’s version* of it! It was to lead us and teach us. There’s nothing wrong with begin guarded under the Law.

“...having been shut up unto the faith that was yet to be revealed” (v 23). Paul is referring back to Deut. 5. Just like there is no such thing as *almost* pregnant, a woman either is or isn’t. Just like with the faith of Christ, you either have the Spirit of God *in you* or you don’t. One little caveat: There is a space in between where the Spirit of God can be *with* you to lead you to Christ, provided that you follow the lead and repentance that God will give.

Verse 24: “In this way, the Law was our tutor...”—teacher. The King James says

schoolmaster, and when people read that they think that’s harsh and mean. Have you ever heard of the book: *All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten* by Robert Fulghum.

Every decent thing you need to know about life—the physical world—you should know by the time you have your full-fledged graduation from kindergarten with cap and gown, which some do today.

It was “...to lead us to Christ...” [to show us that we need God; that’s what the Law/tutor was to do] ...that we might be justified by faith” (v 24). Rom. 3 explains all about being *justified by faith*.

People really, really misunderstand v 25: “But since faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor.” They say, ‘We don’t need a schoolmaster.’

Once you graduate from whatever level of school you attain, do you throw away everything that you have learned? *No!* You use it! If you’ve gone to college—and whatever your degree is, let’s say it’s engineering—why did you get that degree? So, when you get out of school and out from underneath the teachers you can throw it all away? or Did you learn it so you can get a job and be an engineer?

Whatever the skill—teaching, computers, any of the trades... I’ll just tell you this right now: I would advise every single young man to learn a trade, because that’s where the money is going to be in the future, because they don’t have the trade schools that they used to have. If you want to make lots of ‘big bucks’ don’t waste your time going to college, go to a trade school and you can make lots of money faster, without the huge debt that those going to college are confronted with.

Doctors, by the time they graduate from college, do their internship and setup their practice, are in debt \$700,000 from the get-go.

When you are no longer under a tutor, that doesn’t mean that you have dismissed everything you have been taught. But since faith has come, you have graduated from a tutor, so that now Christ *in you* and *the faith of God* will lead you! The Holy Spirit will *lead and guide you!*

The interesting thing about being led by the Holy Spirit is that we must make the choice and ask God to help do what God wants us to do *spiritually*. Then the Holy Spirit will lead us. That’s worth a whole sermon in itself, so we won’t get involved in that right now.

“...we are no longer under a tutor, because you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus” (vs 25-26). Now you’re in a whole different

category:

- you have the Spirit of God
- you are the children of God

Just like it says in 2-Cor. 6, God says, ‘I will dwell in them and walk in the them.’ Is that not in a totally different category than people in the world trying to be ‘religious’ and trying to be ‘good’ and trying to live by the letter of the Law.

What was the first thing that Jesus did when He came? When He began teaching He taught *the spiritual application* of the Law, which is now graduate school or living. Let’s see where Deut. 5 helps explain it. When did you learn to add and subtract? *Probably before you went to school!* What is the first thing you learned to do? *Count!*

Our grandson gets on the phone and he counts! He counted all the way up to 50 for grandma. He knows how to count, and he knows his numbers; he’s just four. He knows his ABCs and he can sing the song.

Do you still use it? *Yes!* Every time you write something, you use the alphabet that you learned when you were four-years-old. But when you write, do you do things at a level that a four-year-old cannot understand because he hasn’t learned? *Yes! Of course!* It’s the same way with anything else.

Here is an account of the giving of the Ten Commandments that God gave. It’s the second account by Moses.

Deuteronomy 5:15 “...Therefore, the LORD your God commanded you to keep the Sabbath Day.” Because Protestants do not keep the Sabbath, they do not understand the value of it, or the spiritual value of the Sabbath.

Yes, even some people in the Church of God do not use the Sabbath in the way that they ought to, and do not recognize that it is the day of great fellowship with God the Father and Jesus Christ with us, and fellowship with each other where we learn to love God and love each other.

Yet, they want to oppose on the society that you better not have any adultery, no murder... They take *part* of it. God says, ***‘No! All of it!’***

Those were the words that were spoken and the people said that they can’t handle it, ‘we don’t want God to speak to us.’

Verse 27—they told Moses: “You go near and hear all that the LORD our God shall say. And you speak to us all that the LORD our God shall speak to you, and we will hear *it*, and do *it*.” They said that because they couldn’t stand the voice of

God. Just like today!

- if you say to the Catholics and Protestants that you’ve got to keep the Sabbath and Holy Days
- if you say to the Jews that Jesus really is the Messiah
- if you say to the Muslims that Allah is not the true God
- if you say to the Hindus that they are steeped in satanism
- if you say to the Buddhists that all they do is worship a fat-bellied, bald-headed squatting man, with his hands pointing toward heaven

or

- some woman with a dozen arms
- those less than that worship snakes, dragons and everything like this

They can’t stand to hear the Word of God!

- Why?
- What is the carnal mind? *Enmity against God and not subject to the Law of God!*

What God is doing here is using this to give a lesson and a prophecy.

Verse 28: “And the LORD heard the voice of your words when you spoke to me. And the LORD said to me, ‘I have heard the voice of the words of this people, which they have spoken to you. They have well *said* all that they have spoken.’” They’re well-intended.

You show me one person that’s not well-intended, even a murderer after he’s committed a murder and is in prison, reporters go in to interview him and say, ‘Why did you do this?’ The reporters come out and says, ‘Well, he/she is really a nice person.’ But they were still murderers!

Very few people—some few do—are so absolutely dedicated to evil, yet, in dedication to evil, they think they are doing good. That’s the total deception of human nature.

- this is why Christ had to come
- this is why the Holy Spirit had to come
- this is why we need the Word of God
- this is why we need the spiritual understanding of it

Verse 29: ***“Oh, that there were such a heart in them...”*** You cannot have a spiritual heart or mind unless four things happen:

1. repentance
2. baptism
3. the receiving of the Holy Spirit of God

4. the circumcision of the heart

Those four things *must* take place! Without that human nature—a mixture of good and evil:

- human nature well-intended
- human nature that is ‘every way of a man is justified in his own sight’

—rather than looking at and understanding God, finding God and understanding His Word.

Unless there is conversion of the heart by those four things... Protestants, especially fundamental evangelicals who believe in dispensationalism—which is a myth—say that all you have to do is believe, you don’t have to be baptized, and you will be saved. ***A lie!***

That’s the very reason that Jesus was baptized, to show that if He did it to fulfill all righteousness, you had better likewise do it or you are not even getting out of the kindergarten sandbox of understanding the Word of God.

“...that they would fear Me...” (v 29). He also says in other places ‘and love Me.’ So, first you *fear God* and then you learn to *love God*. Unless you fear God and fear the penalty for sin, you’re not going to repent. Until you repent, you cannot learn the love of God.

There’s a lot of love that people can learn: carnal love, sexual love, friendship love and things like that in the world, but that’s not based on the Spirit of God. You can’t take those kinds of love and substitute it for the love of God and the Spirit of God. This is what happens in all the ‘religions.’

“...and keep all My commandments always...” (v 29). If you want a very interesting study, go through and see how many times God says ‘*ALL* My commandments.’ I think you’ll be surprised. If God says it once, *He means it*; if He says it more than once, *that’s that much more*. And the multiple times that He talks about it means all the more. That’s the whole story of the Bible, from one end to the other.

“...so that it might be well with them and with their children forever!” (v 29).

The schizophrenic ‘Christian warriors’ today want to go out and impose upon society—which would be good; there would be certain blessings to come from it if they would be obedient in the letter of the law; yes there would be a benefit—but that cannot be substituted for conversion.

Let’s see what God says about the commandments even under the letter. If you’re under a tutor or instructor does the instructor have the best interest at heart? even if it’s a good

instructor for the students? What do they want to see the students do? *To learn to be proficient, to progress, to come to a point of graduation, to come to adulthood! To make them well equipped!*

That’s what God was doing with Israel! Read all of Deut. 28—everybody loves the first 15 verses, but from there to the end they don’t like.

Deuteronomy 4:1: “ And now, O Israel, hearken to the statutes and to the judgments which I teach you, in order to do them, **so that you may live...**”

Let’s understand that whenever people do not do what God has commanded, even in the letter of the Law, what happens in many cases? Not all, but many? *Their lives are cut short!*

It’s like we saw a tragic thing on ‘meth.’ This young couple, nice looking couple, never got in trouble and were always obedient at home. They went out to a party on a Friday night. (If they kept the Sabbath they wouldn’t be at a party on Friday night, but that’s just an aside.)

It was in North or South Dakota in the middle of the winter. They decided to try ‘crystal meth,’ which is absolutely the strongest thing and more profound than cocaine, and they took a lot of it. They got lost and were out in a snow storm driving. Their minds were crazy. They didn’t know where they were and they started hallucinating and thinking that someone was after them. They got on the phone and called 911 and the operator asked where they were, and they said they didn’t know. They’re out in the country, off the road, way away from everybody. ‘We don’t know, come and get us.’ *Where are you?*

To make a long story short, the boy finally decided that he needed to go get help. He didn’t know where he was or what he was doing. Had they stayed in the car they might have lived. But he went out, stumbled someplace, fell down and died. He was frozen by the time they found them. The girl went out another way when he didn’t come back and likewise died.

That’s a gruesome example, but what does that teach since we’re talking about tutors, schoolmasters and teachers? ***It teaches you that the wages of sin is death!*** If you don’t keep the commandments of God—and what is the main commandment all young people need to remember?—*honor your father and your mother!*

When they got out to this party, they decided to dishonor their father and mother, to disregard even practical sound carnal thinking in the world. And because someone enticed them to take these drugs, this ‘meth,’ their lives were snuffed out,

which means they didn't live.

The purpose of the commandments in the letter is so that a carnal society can have at least a decency of peace and a tranquility in the community. But they didn't!

So, God said that If you do it, "...and go in and possess the land, which the LORD God of your fathers gives *to* you. You shall not add to the word, which I command you; neither shall you take away from it, **so that you may keep the commandments of the LORD your God, which I command you**" (vs 1-2). God says that He wants you to learn a lesson from this because you saw what He did in the incident of Baal Peor.

Verse 6: "And you shall keep and do *them*, for this is your wisdom..." Protestants think that if you keep the laws of God you're dumb and stupid. 'Why do you have to be under a schoolmaster'; they look at it that way. *No!* It is a spiritual application of the laws of God.

Moses was saying that even the carnal letter of the Law, "...this is **your wisdom and your understanding** in the sight of the nations, which shall hear all these statutes and say, 'Surely this great nation *is* a wise and understanding people'" (v 6).

The Vision America likes to say that if we get back to what the founding fathers did... Listen! The founding fathers diminished and took away from the Word of God. A lot of people say that the Constitution of America is the best form of government. *No, it is not!* Look what happened over 200 years later. What is the best form of government? *Christ in you! You govern yourself as led by Christ and the Holy Spirit!* If that were true everywhere—which is going to be in the Millennium—you're not going to need police, you're not going to need prisons, you're not going to need any of those things.

Because they started out close to God when the nation began, because they kept the commandments—except the Sabbath, which was the Achilles heel to take them down later—*God blessed them!* It was also God's time to bless the end-time descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and the two grandsons: Ephraim and Manasseh. God said that He would bless them.

What is said of America? Just like it says in the Bible, *that you become like Ephraim and Manasseh!* Or that you become like Israel, because God blessed them! Even with the laws and commandments of God—part of them—they were somewhat close to God. Not as close as they ought to have been, but somewhat close to God.

Verse 7: "For what nation is so great whose God *is* so near to them, as the LORD our God *is*, whenever we call upon Him?" We could apply this to the United States of America and Great Britain before their decline and fall because of sin. I have a book called *The Late Great U.S.A.* by Jerome R. Corsi Ph.D. and the late Great Britain, because God's hand of judgment is upon us now!

We started out well, and for carnal people I think that's about as close to God as they could get.

Verse 8: "And what great nation has statutes and judgments that *are so* righteous as all this Law, which I set before you today?" Then what does Moses do?

Verse 9: "Only **take heed to yourself** ..." The battle of human nature is always, *always*, something you need to watch every day! Sometimes every hour! Sometimes, if it's tough, every minute! *The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak!* That's why we have the Sabbath every week. Think if you didn't have the Sabbath every week, where we all come together and learn. I learn, you learn, and what I teach has to be with the Word of God. Not what I think or want to do, but what does the Word of God say?

If I don't teach the Word of God, if I add to or take away from, then where does that put me?

Deuteronomy 5:32: "And you shall be careful to do as the LORD your God has commanded you. You shall not turn aside to the right hand or to the left."

Make that another Bible study. Look at the right hand or the left, don't turn aside. You find that everywhere throughout the Bible. Why? *Because human nature is just that way!* It never fails!

Verse 33: You shall walk in all the ways which the LORD your God has commanded you so that you may live..." Protestants say that if you do that you're putting yourself under bondage. *No, you're not!* The Law is not bondage, *sin* or *law-breaking* is bondage.

"...and **that it may be well with you...**" (v 33). God wants it to be well, but we have choices that we have to make.

"...and you may prolong *your* days in the land which you shall possess" (v 33).

Deuteronomy 6:1 "Now, these *are* the commandments, the statutes, and the judgments which the LORD our God commanded to teach you..." Moses didn't say anything that God didn't tell him to say. Not a word!

What was the main thing that Moses did that

God didn't tell him to do? *God said to go to the rock and speak to the rock and it will bring forth water!* Moses went to the rock and he was so frustrated because of all of the dry mouth Israelites saying, 'Give us water! Give us water!' Moses got so mad he went up there and he *struck the rock and beat it with his rod!*

So, God said that because 'you didn't believe Me'—God still sent the water in spite of it... So, don't think because something happens and God responds that it's necessarily reflecting how good are. Moses was told by God that 'since you didn't believe Me you're not going to go into the *promised* land.' That's just something to think about.

"...so that you might do *them* in the land where you go to possess it, that you might fear the LORD your God, to keep all His statutes and His commandments which I command you, you, and your son, and your son's son, all the days of your life, and so that your days may be prolonged. Hear therefore, O Israel, and be diligent to *observe* it, **so that it may be well with you, and that you may greatly multiply**, as the LORD God of our fathers has promised you, in the land that flows with milk and honey. Hear, O Israel. Our one God is *the* LORD, *the* LORD. And you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might" (vs 1-5). Then this translates into the New Testament.

(go to the next track)

Let me just rehearse for you; we won't get into the details about it, but in Appendix W: The Two Jehovahs of the Old Testament (*The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*) explains the proper translation of:

Deuteronomy 6:4: "Hear, O Israel. Our one God [Elohim] is *the* LORD, *the* LORD." Showing two in the God Family.

Remember the four things that I mentioned; there must be *repentance, baptism, receiving the Holy Spirit and circumcision of the heart*.

When you read through some of these verses, stop and think about them and analyze them as you go and it will give you a greater message.

Romans 2:25: "For on the one hand, circumcision profits if you are observing *the* Law; on the other hand, if you are a transgressor of *the* Law, your circumcision has become uncircumcision.... [because it's the spirit of keeping the laws of God] ...Therefore, if the uncircumcised... [in the flesh] ...is keeping the requirements of the Law..." (vs 25-26).

What does this tell you about law-keeping? *You're to keep it, whether you're circumcised or*

uncircumcised! But the Protestants read that and glide right over it and never stop and think about it. Paul says to keep "...the requirements of the Law..."

"...shall not his uncircumcision be reckoned for circumcision? And shall not the uncircumcised, who by nature is **fulfilling the Law...**" (vs 26-27). All of this is part of *being strong in the Lord*.

"...judge you, who, with *the* letter and circumcision, *are* a transgressor of *the* Law? For he is not a Jew who *is one* outwardly, neither *is* that circumcision which *is* external in *the* flesh; rather, he *is* a Jew who *is one* inwardly, and circumcision *is* of *the* heart, in *the* spirit and not in *the* letter; **whose praise is not from men but from God**" (vs 27-29).

As one rabbi said, 'Jesus we can understand, Paul we can never forgive.' That's based right here. These are more than fighting words, these are killing words. That's why they were always after Paul. I think of this every time: If the Jews back then had helicopters and could go after Paul... They used every other means to way-lay him!

How is the circumcision of the heart? Obviously, it is spiritually in the mind, which then takes away the carnality and hostility of the mind.

{Note sermon series: *Colossians*} We are not going to go through and have a detailed study of it here, but we just want to cover the section concerning how you become circumcised in the heart and the spirit.

Colossians 2:10: "And you are complete in Him... [that brings you to Jesus Christ and God the Father] ...Who is the Head of all principality and power."

That's important to realize because Paul talks later on about the religions of men and worshipping of angels, which is mostly what the religions of this world are all about. Particularly those related to Catholicism, witchcraft and much of Protestantism. It's all getting into a mild brand of satanism, which then is Gnosticism, and Harry Potterism carries you right into the deeper things of Satan and witchcraft. Those things we need to understand.

Verse 9: "For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." So, you don't need Mary! That Catholic song, Ave Maria—which is Hail Mary—is what you would say is the anthem of that city. They're already into idolatry before they start.

Verse 11: "In Whom..."—through Whom, by Whom—Christ!

John 14:6: "Jesus said to him, 'I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life; no one comes to

the Father except through Me.”

- not Mary
- not Mohammad
- not Buddha

Through Christ! The true Christ, not a version of a Christ!

Colossians 2:11: “...you have also been circumcised with *the* circumcision not made by hands...” It is the changing of the heart with the spiritual addition of God’s Spirit *in you*.

“...in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ” (v 11). You’re able to overcome human nature. It’s a struggle as Rom. 7 says, and we do have to be diligent in doing it, but it is a process. It goes on and explains how you are circumcised in Christ:

Verse 12: “Having been buried with Him in baptism...” Baptism is a covenant death (Rom. 6); that’s why you’re baptized. You don’t come to Christ by reciting His name. You don’t come to Christ because some preacher says to raise your hand and you come to the altar and you’re saved.

You come to Christ because you die in covenant death of baptism! You *renounce* human nature. You *renounce* your way of living. *You fully accept God’s way!* Then He will give you of His Spirit, and you can grow in grace and knowledge and have the mind of Christ. “Having been buried with Him in baptism...”; it’s *with* Him. That’s why we have *conjoined* in Rom. 6

“...by which you have also been raised with Him through the inner working of God...” (v 12). When you come to Christ by faith, God is then working *in you!* You can’t be strong in the Lord unless Christ is in you and God is in you!

You can have all of the carnal Christians of the world out there being warriors for Christ to try and shove *their version* of the laws of God down people’s throats. It’s still going to end up in a carnal mess, because you’re leaving out the spiritual things, and you haven’t been called of God to true repentance!

“...Who raised Him from the dead. For you... [Paul is talking about before this process of baptism occurred] ...who were *once* dead in *your* sins... [the wages of sin is death] ...and in the uncircumcision of your flesh...” (vs 12-13). The circumcision of Christ is not a circumcision of the flesh. *It is a circumcision of the heart*, as Paul said and wrote in Rom. 2.

“...He has *now* made alive...” (v 13). Let’s stop and think for just a minute; very important. People always ask:

- Why does God allow this?
- Why does God allow that?
- Why couldn’t God stop this, that or the other thing?

The basic answer is this:

- Where were you when you should have known about God?
- Where were you when you had a Bible in your house and you never read it?
- Where were you when the conscious God gave you told you not to do thus and such?

God was wondering where you were. If you leave Him and abandon Him, you’re going to die! So, ***God looks at all people in the world*** that He has not called ***as good as dead in the flesh!***

So therefore, since there is a second resurrection, He’s going to undo all the tragedies, all the deaths, all the abortions, all of those things. {Note any sermons for *The Last Great Day*} He can let these great tragedies happen, but because men believe in an immortal soul, ***a lying doctrine of Satan the devil***, they feel as though that since these people have died, how could God allow this to happen? *Because He’s going to resurrect them later on, and it’s going to be a lesson for them to learn!*

Do you want to bring them all back into this evil world again? Example: You save all kinds of people to bring them back into an evil world. They’re going to die anyway! All are going to die! You need to understand that.

That’s why it says, v 13: “For you, who were *once* dead in *your* sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has *now* made alive...” Now you stand before God with a circumcised heart, with the Spirit of God in a repentant attitude, having pledged your life in a maledictory death of baptism, having your sins forgiven. ***Now you are uncircumcised in heart and mind!***

“...He has *now* made alive with Him, having forgiven all your trespasses” (v 13). Then He gives you the grace where you can continually come to God and receive forgiveness.

Verse 14: “He has blotted out the note of debt...” What you have in the *King James Version* is one of the worst translation—outside of 1-John 3—in the entire New Testament! This is where they go to say that Jesus nailed the commandments to the cross. If you believe that then there’s no such thing as the law of gravity!

“...the note of debt against us...” (v 14). The laws of God are *for* us, *for* our well being, *for* blessing. Sin is against us.

“...with the decrees of our sins...” (v 14). Even the pagan religions—even in the old ancient Chinese religion as well as the Greek religion—had this: You would keep a note or decree of your sins. Every year you would take this and go to the priest and do certain rituals and then they would burn this note of sin. So, this is what Paul is referring to here. You can read that in Alexander Hislop’s *the Two Babylons*.

“...which was contrary to us... [What is contrary to us? *Sin!*] ...and He has taken it away, having nailed it to the cross” (v 14). Symbolically, all sin was nailed to the cross: past, present and future **upon repentance!** If you don’t, then God has the second death in the Lake of Fire, which—if you look at a volcano and running lava—you will know that is very, very final!

The object and purpose of God in our lives is to not have our sins forgiven. He has something greater! Just like the object of a woman being impregnated with a child is not the impregnation, it is the birth; all the development and everything that goes with that. Likewise with us. God’s object in having our sins forgiven is to give us a clean slate so we can go forward:

- to receive the Holy Spirit of God
- to live under His grace
- to do His will
- to keep His commandment in the Spirit of God

So that we can grow in grace and knowledge and the strength of the Lord. We have a goal and a purpose. We don’t have a ‘religious calling.’ We have a goal and purpose that is eternal forever. This is what is important.

Now, we will see the inner-play here very similar to what Paul wrote in Col. 2.:

1-John 3:1: “Behold! What *glorious* love the Father has given to us, that we should be called the children of God!....” We’re also going to see that he also calls the others *the children of the devil*. We’re the children of God. Once we receive the Holy Spirit of God, our minds are opened, changed and God gives us of His Spirit for an absolute most binding spiritual reality of all, that we receive the Holy Spirit of God so that we can become the sons and daughters of God.

- that’s what it’s all about
- that’s why *we need to be strong in the Lord*

“...that we should be called the children of God!....”

Let me explain something here that the Protestants don’t have a clue. They read the *King James Version* and where it talks about adoption

(Rom. 8); so we are adopted. **NO!** That is not true!

An adoption is that you legally take and give your name to someone who is not of your own conception or begettal. Their genetics are entirely different. That is an adoption and done legally.

The true word in Rom. 8 is *sonship*. Here in 1-John 2 it is substantiated because the word *children* is ‘tekna’—meaning *your own begotten children*. In other words, children that have your own genes. We won’t get into a long drawn out discussion on how God does it, but let’s understand that we’re made in the image of God and we have genes and chromosomes that God used to make each one of us different and individual.

How God is going to use that at the resurrection only God knows. But I’m sure that He’s not going to dissolve them. I am sure that the genes and chromosomes that we have today can—with conversion—be part of the pattern that God is going to use to make us His sons and daughters.

That’s why this word ‘tekna’ is important. We are the children of God! Not adopted, not stolen, not taken care of, but the children of God, which puts us into a whole different category. So, when it says that the Law was to guard us unto Christ and be our teacher, now that faith has come this is what it’s all about.

All the neophytes go to the book of Galatians as the first book they study to try and understand the Bible. Almost all of them do; they want to understand Galatians. They should start in Genesis, not Galatians. Tackle the complicated Scriptures when you’re grounded in the fundamentals.

Same way with the book of Revelation. Some people like to go and start to understand Revelation. They don’t have a clue as to the rest of the Bible. Start in Genesis and go forward. This is very important for us to understand because we now have a:

- change of heart
- change of mind
- we are converted
- we have the Spirit of God

We are going to see, as we have in the series on *The Holy Spirit*. There are two aspects of the Spirit of God:

- the mind of Christ
- the begettal of the Father

“...For this very reason, the world does not know us because it did not know Him.”

1-John 2:3_[transcriber’s correction]: “And by this

standard we know that we know Him: if we keep His commandments.”

You could also put there that the world doesn’t understand us. They don’t know God. You tell someone that you:

- love God
- keep the commandment
- believe in Christ
- believe forgiveness of sin by grace
- keep the Sabbath and the Holy Days

It’s almost like taking two magnets and crossing their eyes. They can’t comprehend it.

- Are you a Jew? *No, I’m not a Jew!*
- Are you a Seventh-Day Adventist? *No, I’m not a Seventh-Day Adventist!*
- What are you? *I am a Christian!*
- How can that be?

Because Jesus said that *no one can come to the Father except through Him!*

1-John 3:2: “Beloved, now we are the children of God...” John wants us to understand that as long as you have the Spirit of God, God is looking upon you fait accompli, you are children of God!

God is not in the business of calling people so that they can commit the unpardonable sin and He can throw them into the Lake of Fire. That’s going to be a rare thing. That’s why before we get into all the things that are going to happen in this world—which *are* going to happen and they’re going to be devastating, fearful, awful, mind-blowing—I want you to be thoroughly grounded in God and in Christ, so that you’re *strong in the Lord* and you realize that this is not a fear trip.

Some Churches of God have the audacity and stupidity to say that ‘if you’re not in this church you’re going through the Tribulation.’ Well, what minister is going to decide that? Is he God? *No!* God is going to decide, you’ve got a usurper taking the prerogative and judgment of God! It’s like another man says, ‘If you’re not with my groups and just me alone you’re never going to be in the Kingdom of God.

God is going to decide who is going to be there, and you’re not going to make the judgment for God! You don’t have the secret doctrine for God. God has in His Bible, His whole Word. You’ve got to have it all. That’s what John is showing here. There are two categories:

- the children of God
- the children of the devil

“...and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be; but we know that when He is manifested... [Christ at His return] ...**we shall be like Him**, because we shall see Him exactly as He is. And everyone who has this hope in him...” (vs 2-3). The reason that we do what we do—

- change
- repent
- grow
- overcome
- keep the commandments of God
- study the Word of God
- let the Spirit of God come to us
- let the Spirit of God lead us

—is because of this hope!

Verse 3: “And everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, even as He is pure.” How do you purify yourself? *Through Christ, repentance and all the things that I have mentioned here!*

Here is the dividing line, v 4: “Everyone who practices sin is also practicing lawlessness, for sin is lawlessness.” *Sin is the transgression of the Law!* Lawlessness is worse. It’s not just sinning by breaking a law. ***Lawlessness in its truest sense is rejecting the Word of God totally!*** *In its religious sense, it’s picking and choosing what you will do and won’t do*, and then casting away the rest of the laws of God, which makes it lawless. Lawless is that *you decide* what is good and evil, which goes back to the Garden of Eden.

God has given His Word, and our decision is: Do we love **God** and keep His commandments? **or** Do we love **our way more** and go that way?

What did Jesus say would happen before His return? *Sin shall abound because lawlessness will multiply* (Matt. 24). That’s what you’re seeing in the world!

Verse 5: “And you know that He appeared in order that He might take away our sins; and in Him is no sin.”

If you’ve got a *King James Version*, forget about reading the rest of it, because you won’t understand it. It is absolutely, if not the first, it’s the second worst translated place in the *King James*. You need to get *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A faithful Version* (cbcg.org or afaithfulversion.org).

It says in (*KJV*) that he was *born of God*. No one is born of God now, because that doesn’t take place until the resurrection. It says that you cannot sin, because that’s impossible. The only way you cannot sin is if you have been transformed from flesh to spirit. In Christ there is no sin. *We can be*

sinless upon repentance, but we are not without sin! We still have ‘the law of sin and death’ in us. One is a standing before God, and one is the reality of the flesh.

Verse 6: “**Everyone who dwells in Him...**” The way that you’re going to be strong in God is that you are dwelling in Christ and Christ in you. It talks about dwelling in Christ and Christ in you (John 15).

“...does not *practice* sin...” (v 6). It could not mean *does not sin* because Rom. 7 tells us about the pull of carnal nature. You do things you don’t want to do. You have ‘the law of sin and death’ in you. But you don’t practice sin!

What happens when you sin, or the reality of sin comes, and God makes it known to you in your mind. You repent! Why? *Because you can’t practice it!* You can’t go on living in sin because God’s Spirit is going to convict you. That’s what it’s talking about.

“...anyone who *practices* sin has not seen Him, nor has known Him” (v 6). What is sin? *Transgressing the Law and lawlessness!* So, if a preacher stands up—you can identify all the liars in the pulpit—and says that God didn’t mean what He said. or Christ did away with the Law. He didn’t! Christ said He came to *fulfill*!

“...anyone who *practices* sin has not seen Him, nor has known Him” (v 6). They had ministers coming around back then saying you didn’t have to keep the Law, and say, ‘I’ve seen the Lord.’

Verse 7: “Little children, do not allow anyone to deceive you...” Once we have the circumcision of the heart, our mind is opened to Truth, to discern error, to discern deception.

“...the one who practices righteousness is righteous, even as He is righteous” (v 7) Note Rom. 8:1-3). God does not condemn us.

Let’s relate this to the sermon series: *Keys to Answered Prayer*. What do we pray for every day? *Forgiveness of sin!* We also pray for the Kingdom of God to come. We first honor God, then the kingdom to come, then His will be done on earth, and that means in our lives, as it is in heaven. Forgive us our sins! That’s how we are righteous and He is righteous.

Not that we can independently from God, independently of the Holy Spirit be perfect as Christ was perfect. That’s not what it’s talking about. But the way that God views us is called the future perfect: God looks upon us now as we will be at the resurrection. That’s evidenced in Rom. 8 where it says that ‘those whom He has called, those whom He has justified, and He has glorified.

Receiving the Holy Spirit gives us a bit of the glory of God, but the glorification comes at the resurrection. But the future perfect tells us that God looks upon it as accomplished, because just as Christ said when He died, ‘It is finished!’ It will be completed, all of it together, because that is a future perfect completed deed.

This is going to hurt some people, and all you good Protestants out there who think that you are good people, you who keep Halloween, Christmas, Easter, New Years—all the pagan holidays—and *you know* and *your preacher knows*, that all of these came from paganism.

Note book: *Occult Holidays or God’s Holy Days—Which?* That will be an absolute eye-opener for you, because there are millions of people who think they are doing the will of God and they are not. They are deceived! That’s why this verse becomes so important:

Verse 8: “The one who practices sin **is of the devil...**” Remember, there is a good side of the devil. There is a beautiful side of the devil. The devil will come to you with *his gospel*, which is the good news of lawlessness: *the laws of God have been done away*:

- you don’t have to keep the Sabbath
- you don’t have to keep the Holy Days
- you don’t have to observe the laws of clean and unclean meats

And on and on! That’s sin! If you do those things you are practicing sin! ***If you observe Sunday, you are practicing sin every week!*** You can’t find any place in the Old or New Testaments where God changed the Sabbath. You also believe a lie concerning which day is the resurrection. “The one who practices sin **is of the devil...**”

- Do you *know* the Ten Commandments?
- Do you *keep* the Ten Commandments?
- Do you *know* the commandments of Jesus Christ?

As He magnified it in the Spirit of the Law (Matt. 5-7) and through all the writings of the apostles: James, Peter, John and Jude, and the Apostle Paul.

- Are you keeping those?

“...because the devil has been sinning from *the* beginning. For this purpose the Son of God appeared that He might destroy the works of the devil” (v 8). Let’s see what John is building up to, because this is building up to really quite a thing to understand.

Verse 9: “**Everyone who has been begotten by God does not practice sin...**” What did Peter tell the ‘religious’ leaders when the apostles were

arrested? They were told, ‘Don’t you go out there and preach in this name anymore, because you’re filling Jerusalem with all of this heretical doctrine.’ Peter said, ‘Do you think it’s right? Who do you think we should obey? Men? or God?’ For that they were beaten.

You don’t practice sin, “...because His seed... [the seed of the Holy Spirit, the earnest of the Holy Spirit] ...*of begettal* is dwelling within him, and **he is not able to practice sin because he has been begotten by God**” (v 9).

- God will reveal your sins to you if you have the Holy Spirit of God
- God will convict you in heart and mind

If you turn back on the conviction of heart and mind, then you are taking the steps to committing the unpardonable sin.

Remember: ***As long as there is life, you still have choice and you can repent, there is hope!***

Verse 9: “Everyone who has been begotten by God... [the Father] ...does not practice sin **because His seed of begettal is dwelling within him, and he is not able to practice sin because he has been begotten by God.**”

Let’s use another analogy here: If a woman is pregnant, she’s unable to be impregnated until the completion of the birth of that child. Everything is sealed off. Likewise with God’s Spirit. ***He seals you with His Spirit!***

How can something happen to a physical birth? *An accident or an abortion!* Likewise spiritually! If you with predetermined malice turn your back on God, you will lose the Spirit of God. Just like if a woman has an abortion, or she has a miscarriage, that ends it.

We began with v 1 and we end with v 10: “By this *standard* are manifest the children of God and the children of the devil...”

- the devil has his children
- the devil has his servants
- the devil is called ‘the god of this world’
- the majority of people in this world serve him and his religions

There’s a dividing line! It’s like life and death! You either belong to Christ or you belong to the devil. It doesn’t matter what you feel in your heart and how good you may think you are.

- if you don’t love God and keep His commandments
- if you don’t love the brethren
- if you don’t love your neighbor as yourself

- if you don’t continually practice the righteousness of Christ

which means when you sin—because you can’t practice sin—you repent and God forgives you and you go on. All of that is implied here.

Verse 10: “By this *standard* are manifest the children of God and the children of the devil. **Everyone who does not practice righteousness is not of God...**”

- all of His commandments are righteousness
- the Spirit of God is righteousness
- keeping the commandments in the Spirit of God is righteousness

And the true righteousness above all of that is the love of God; that you love God with all your heart, mind, soul and being. Then you have the faith of God, the faith of Christ.

“...and neither is the one who does not love his brother. For this is the message that you heard from *the* beginning: that we should love one another” (vs 10-11).

Today true Christians are called ‘primitive Christians,’ that we are like the Geico caveman. Well, let’s put the shoe on the other foot. Those who do not love God and keep the teachings of Christ, as they were taught in the beginning by Him and the apostles, you are *primitive satanists*, because Satan sins from the beginning.

We will show in part five how that some of the most religious people in the world, who even profess Christ, but didn’t believe Him. Jesus said, ‘You are of your father the devil!’

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in It’s Original Order, A Faithful Version* by Fred R. Coulter

Scriptural References:

- 1) Galatians 3:22-26
- 2) Deuteronomy 5:15, 27-29
- 3) Deuteronomy 4:1-2, 6-9
- 4) Deuteronomy 5:32-33
- 5) Deuteronomy 6:1-5, 4
- 6) Romans 2:25-29
- 7) Colossians 2:10, 9, 11
- 8) John 14:6
- 9) Colossians 2:11-14
- 10) 1 John 3:1
- 11) 1 John 2:3
- 12) 1 John 3:2-11

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Romans 3
- 2 Corinthians 6
- Romans 7; 6
- Matthew 24
- John 15
- Romans 8:1-3
- Matthew 5-7

Also referenced:

Books:

- *All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten* by Robert Fulghum
- *The Late Great U.S.A.* by Jerome R. Corsi Ph.D.
- *The Two Babylons* by Alexander Hislop
- *Occult Holidays or God's Holy Days—Which?* by Fred R. Coulter

Sermon Series: *Keys to Answered Prayer*

FRC:bo
Transcribed: 1/14/16

Be Strong in the Lord V

(Overcome Self, Society and Satan)

Fred R. Coulter

Know your enemy! We're going to examine and how we can resist and fight against sin and overcome:

- *self*
- *society*
- *Satan*

Stop and think about it, those of us living in the end-time have so many things that busy us that there are a lot of people who never, never have time for God. That's why at the end-time you have what is called the Laodicean Church.

Let me read an e-mail that someone sent to me, which is very interesting that they pass on to different people in the world, and so forth. As I was watching the news, I saw on Fox News that they had a 10th anniversary celebration of Princess Diana. They made a big church deal out of it and had public services and they were singing the hymn: Follow the Great Redeemer. It panned the audience of people and about half of them were singing, and half of them were not singing, and I suppose in each half that there were people who were sort of muttering a little bit.

I thought about this e-mail that was sent. It starts out:

Subject: Proud to be His child

This is a wake up e-mail for me. Read it only if you have time for God.

So, whoever wrote this said to read it from beginning to end. It starts out this way:

God, when I received this e-mail I thought I didn't have time for this, and this is really inappropriate during work. Then I realized that this kind of thinking is exactly what has caused a lot of the problems in our work today.

We try to keep God in church on Sunday morning.

Or in the cases of the Church of God, on the Sabbath.

Maybe Sunday night...

Or we could say Friday night.

...and the unlikely event of a mid-week service. We do like to have Him around during sickness, and of course, at funerals.

However, we don't have time or room for Him during work or play, because that's the part of

our life that we think we can and should handle on our own.

May God forgive me for ever thinking that there is a time or place where He is not first in my life. We should always have time to remember all He has done for us.

Every time you breathe, **God** has made that possible!

If you aren't ashamed to do this, please follow the directions. Jesus said that 'if you're ashamed of Me I will be ashamed of you before My Father.'

Not ashamed? Pass this on only if you mean it!

You could say that this is a perfect Laodicean.

Yes, I do love God. He is my Source of existence and Savior. He keeps me functioning each and every day. Without Him I would be nothing, but with Christ He strengthens me.

This is the simplest test if you love God and are not ashamed of all the marvelous things He's done for you.

Do you have time to pass this on, or not? Make sure you scroll through on your computer screen to the end.

Easy vs hard:

Why is so hard to tell the truth, yet, so easy to tell a lie?

Why is it that we are so sleepy in church, but right when the sermon is over we're suddenly wide awake?

Why is it easy to delete Godly e-mail, yet, we forward all the nasty ones?

Of all the free gifts we receive, prayer is the very best one. There are no costs, but wonderful rewards; God's blessings.

Notes: Isn't it funny how simple it is for people to trash God and then wonder why the world is going to hell. Isn't it funny...

And we should put tragic, because it's not funny!

...how someone can say, "I believe in God" but still follow Satan, who by the way also believes in God.

Isn't it tragic how you can send a thousand jokes through e-mail and they spread like wildfire, but when you start sending messages regarding the Lord, people think twice about sharing them?

Isn't it tragic how when you go to forward this message you will not send it to many on your e-mail address list because you're not sure what they believe, or what they will think of you for sending it to them?

Isn't it tragic how I can be more worried about what other people think of me than what God thinks of me?

I pray for everyone who sends this entire message to their full address list. They will be blessed by God in a special way for them. Send it back to the person who sent it to you, to let them know that it was sent out to many more.

There was a survey taken on Fox News as to why different nations hate America. They hate us mostly because they can't understand why a nation would be so wrapped up in worshipping God—the majority of the people, and that means Jesus Christ and God the Father, howbeit the majority is on Sunday—because they have been 'liberated' from that sort of thing. They're all now secular.

Really, it's a hatred toward Christ and a hatred toward how God blessed this nation because of the blessings that came from Abraham. We are truly the last place in the world where the Gospel is preached, whether fully in truth or partially in truth.

The other thing they hate us for is because we're hard-working. We work 40 or more hours a week. They can't understand that because they work, if they can get away with it, four days. Some like to work three days and most work four days. In Europe they get nearly six weeks vacation. It's made them almost broke!

When we get down to the thing concerning this coming election, if it goes to Hillary we're going back to an Americanized version of communism, pure and simple! Instead of relying on God, the secularists want you to rely on the government, which is filled with corrupt men from the TOP to the bottom. There are varying degrees and kinds of corruption. I'm not talking about sexual corruption. There is:

- loyalty corruption
- treasonable corruption
- secret deals at the highest levels

though denied publicly, that are going on.

We, in the end-time have a lot to fight against, more than any other generation. Also, another thing that is true is that you need to understand that being a Christian is not easy.

If you lived in a country where everyone did the same thing, had the same laws, believed the

same thing... Israel started doing that, the 12 tribes of Israel, but God had to take 40 years and purge them in the wilderness before they finally got to the mindset that when they came into the 'promised land'—when Joshua brought them in—they were willing to follow God.

How long did it last? *As soon as Joshua and the elders died, everyone forgot about God because they were out doing their pleasures and things, what they wanted to do!* They soon got involved with the gods of the other lands, they were intermarrying when God said don't intermarry. That's the same sin that came before the Flood, and it wasn't demons and women before the Flood.

So, the whole situation is entirely different because now instead of living in a nation, the true believers are scattered in all nations throughout the whole world.

This creates special problems. Here is why it's different: If you live in a nation where everyone obeys the same laws, has the same rule of faith, the society will be—if they're obedient at higher level... You won't eliminate sin, but there will be less sin, crime and so forth.

When you do away with God, you end up with lawlessness, and that's where we are coming to, and that's why I wanted to give these sermons *Be Strong in the Lord* before I dump upon you all the things that are going to come.

You will be strengthened by the Feast of Tabernacles to know what is going to come and replace it. But here's how it's different.

Now the Gospel goes out into *all* the world, *all* societies, which have different laws, different norms, different gods and different ethics. Yet, we are to live within that society and be a light to the world, and show the kindness of God and the Truth. The Protestants have it that you show the goodness of God in a mushy self-righteous attitude.

Another way you show the righteousness of God is ***standing firm for the laws and commandments of God!*** That's what He's given us to show us how to conduct our lives.

Here's how it's been from the beginning and what Jesus is explaining to His disciples when He sent them out on their missionary trip. Starting with the preaching of John the Baptist, God was beginning to turn the whole nation of Judea upside down in preparation for turning the world upside down.

Now you no longer live in a society where everyone, as a norm, generally kept the laws of God. Now you live in a society where you keep them in

the spirit, and your loyalty is not to any government, but ***your love and loyalty goes to God and Jesus Christ, before anything else!*** That's why it is difficult for us!

- Once a Catholic always a Catholic. My mother and father were Catholics, if that's good enough for them, that's good enough for me.
- Once a Buddhist always a Buddhist. My mother and father were Buddhists, if that's good enough for them, that's good enough for me.
- Once a Muslim, always a Muslim...

Yes, let me have Jihad and kill everybody I can and I will show my righteousness that way.

No! That's not what God wants! Your love and loyalty is between you and God the Father and Jesus Christ. It's going to create conflicts in many cases in your daily life. It's going to create conflicts in how you view the society in which you live when you see the society's standard of living and God's demands on how we need to live.

Matthew 10:32: Now then, whoever shall confess Me before men, that one will I also confess before My Father Who *is* in heaven. But whoever shall deny Me before men..." (vs 32-33). You deny God in wicked works (Titus 1), as well as saying:

- I deny Christ
- I do not believe Christ
- the Bible is a pack of lies

Or as someone just gave me a clipping of 'Brother Robinson' of the Episcopal Church, the homosexual who was ordained as a bishop. Yes, it split the Episcopal Church. It should, because there are some people who don't go along with the homosexuality that he embraced. Now he's going to 'marry' his longtime partner and still be a bishop.

But it's ***not of God***, because he's serving Satan the devil! That's part of the society that we live in. This is why God demands this kind of love, obedience, faith and loyalty.

Verse 34: "Do not think that I have come to bring peace on the earth..." It began with His ministry. His ministry—we can look back on it now and say, 'Yea, wonderful, right and good. But viewed then He was a rebel, against the establishment. That's why they killed Him!

I did not come to bring peace, but a sword" (v 34). A different kind of sword. Not an Islamic sword to lop your head off. A sword of division that cuts deeper than anything. ***It separates you from everyone else!***

You are blessed if both husband and wife

are in the Church. Many are not. Here's the sword:

Verse 35: "For I have come to set a man at variance against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And a man's enemies *shall be those of his own household*. The one who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; and the one who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. And the one who does not take up his cross and follow Me is not worthy of Me" (vs 35-38). Totally different standard of behavior!

Verse 39: "The one who has found his life shall lose it..." That is if you find your life in the world, you're going to lose it.

"...and the one who has lost his life for My sake... in Christ and the way of God, to live God's way] ...shall find it" (v 39). You shall find eternal life.

Verse 40: "The one who receives you receives Me, and the one who receives Me receives Him Who sent Me." No longer are you dealing with a priest who 'represents' God. A true minister represents God the Father and Jesus Christ as long he's preaching the Truth. When you reject the Truth you're rejecting God, because that comes from God. It's an entirely different story. The stakes are a whole lot higher.

Because God is merciful and kind, even in goodness, v 41: "The one who receives a prophet in *the* name of a prophet shall receive *the* reward of a prophet; and the one who receives a righteous *man* in *the* name of a righteous *man* shall receive the reward of a righteous *man*. And *if* anyone shall in *the* name of a disciple give to one of these little ones to drink a cup of cold *water* only, truly I say to you, he shall in no way lose his reward" (vs 41-42).

Now let's see what sort of difference this is going to provide for us. Jesus is talking about John the Baptist in Matt. 11. This is why Jesus came and all the miracles that He did as the spiritual stamp of approval of God. God was going to destroy the nation that He created, of which the remnant was the Jews at that point. Later the blessing of the end-time would come to Ephraim and Manasseh, of which the greater part of that today is the United States of America. We need to keep that in mind.

Jesus was talking about John the Baptist because John was in prison and he heard about what Jesus was doing and he sent his disciples to Him.

Matthew 11:3: "Saying to Him, 'Are You the One Who is coming, or are we to look for another?' Jesus answered and said to them, 'Go and report to John what you hear and see: *The* blind receive sight, and *the* lame walk; *the* lepers are

cleansed, and *the* deaf hear; *the* dead are raised, and *the* poor are evangelized. **And blessed is everyone who shall not be offended in Me**” (vs 3-6). That’s particularly true in the Jewish society of that time, and is particularly true of the ongoing Jewish society scattered around the world that rejects Jesus Christ.

As a matter of fact, I was reading a very interesting article on how in the 1890s a Jewish man was reading the Old Testament and Isa. 53 was missing. He asked the rabbi why Isa. 53 was missing. ‘That’s because the Christians take that and apply it to that renegade Jesus.’ They actually removed it from some of their Scriptures. Amazing!

Verse 6: “**And blessed is everyone who shall not be offended in Me**”—because He *requires all of you!* Not just part of you, *all of you!*

Another thing to remember is that you cannot appease other religions to go along to get along. It’s like in the Netherlands, there was a Catholic priest who started out the prayer, ‘Our Father’ as ‘our Allah!’ So, they’re being Muslimized! ***They’re coming and they will not stop, they will not cease, because the people of Israel won’t repent!***

Verse 7: “And as they were leaving, Jesus said to the multitudes concerning John...”—because everybody goes to gawk and see, and that was something to see John: long hair, long beard, great flowing eyebrows and piercing eyes. If you looked at him it would pierce right through you. He told them all to repent! He called the leading ones from Jerusalem and the priesthood—the Pharisees and the Levites—***vipers!*** He got away with it because he was the son of a priest, but he didn’t get away with it totally. It was finagled for him to die.

People like to go to God, people like to go and see, “...‘What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken *by the* wind? But what did you go out to see? A man clothed in soft garments?...’” (vs 7-8). ***No!*** You went out to see a wild longhaired priest clothed in camel hair and he ate locust and honey.

Today you would call that ‘weird.’ And many people were offended because of John. Sometimes God does things just to show the complete difference that something greater is going to follow. That’s what He did with John.

“...Behold, those who wear soft *clothing* are in kings’ houses” (v 8). Yes, they have all the finest garments, all the matching colors, jewelry, crowns, shoes. Like Amelda Marcos, you open up her closet and 3,000 pair of shoes and she has ‘nothing to wear.’ The king has all of these garments. What will you wear to see the king? *Well, I’ve worn that*

once... Or the queen, ‘This is not quite the right perfume for me.’ Could you image talking this way to Queen Elizabeth? You would be run off.

Verse 9: “But what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and *one* more excellent than a prophet. For this is *he* of whom it is written... [Jesus is telling them Who He is; they all knew Mal. 3] ...‘Behold, I send My messenger before Your face, who shall prepare Your way before You.’ Truly I say to you, there has not arisen among *those* born of women *anyone* greater than John the Baptist. **But the one who is least in the Kingdom of Heaven is greater than he**” (vs 9-11). You think about that whenever you get a little discouraged. God has something so fantastic and great for you.

Verse 12: “**For from the days of John the Baptist until now, the Kingdom of Heaven is taken with a great struggle, and the zealous ones lay hold on it.**”

It’s not that you’re born into a ‘religious’ family and now you are a good person because that is a ‘religious’ family. It is not that you are born in a country where they all have the same laws and standards, and now you’re just fine with God because you’re living there. ***It is no longer who you are, it is what you are!*** You belong to God!

Verse 13: “For all the Prophets and the Law prophesied until John.” Let’s see the parallel of this. This tells us *why* it is more difficult. Being a true Christian is ***a struggle against self, society and Satan!*** It’s a constant warfare *spiritually* that must be empowered by

- love of God
- the Spirit of God
- the Truth of God
- with God’s Spirit within you

Luke 16:13—this is apropos today: “No servant is able to serve two masters... [that’s why you can’t compromise with evil] ...for either he will hate the one... [showing a process of time] ...and he will love the other; or he will hold to *the* one and will despise the other. **You cannot serve God and mammon.**”

- you cannot serve God and ***self***
- you cannot serve God in the wicked ***society***
- you cannot serve God and compromise with ***evil***

Verse 14: “Now the Pharisees, who were also covetous, heard all these things; and they ridiculed Him.” Notice Jesus answer, and is the reason that they hated Him. He told the truth!

Verse 15: “And He said to them, ‘You are

those who justify themselves before men...” Read any news and anyone caught in trouble. Everyone is right! We’ll talk about self and the deception of it a little later. You’re supposed to let God justify you, not your self.

“...but God knows your hearts...” (v 15). That’s one of the names of God: *the heart-knowing God!* God is not just looking down to a nation—though He does to the nations of the world because He has to judge them—but to each one individually, and God knows the heart!

“...for that which is highly esteemed among men is an abomination before God” (v 15). Those are strong words! You can apply this to anything. Look at the current morass of all of these young starlet women who are in the news, who are nothing more than walking wanton women seeking their own pleasure. Everything they do they justify themselves.

God says that it’s an abomination! The news justifies them. Look at the situation with the dog fighting with Michael Vick. Justifies himself. He has to admit what he did a little bit because he got caught so deeply. But they justified him because he was such a good athlete; he is redeemable and he should play football again.

Verse 16: “The Law and the Prophets *were* until John; from that time the Kingdom of God is preached, and everyone zealously strives to enter it.”

Here are the qualification to follow Christ. You never have these qualifications at all just to live in this society. He’s talking to those who followed Him; let’s see how this all came about. He was invited to eat at a Pharisees’ house on the Sabbath and so forth. After Jesus told them that none of them are going to be in the Kingdom of God. Whoa! *They thought they were the Kingdom of God*, of which the Roman Catholic Church thinks that it is today.

The Catholics view it as the Kingdom of God is the rulership of the pope over the Catholic Church. If you belong to the Catholic Church you’re in the Kingdom of God now. The Kingdom of Heaven is where the souls go that are righteous, when you die. In order to keep people held in fear, they’ve had to create purgatory and hell.

That’s not what God wants! When you watch any religious network you will find very few ministers bring this up, because they throw out the great welcome sign: Everybody Come! Here’s what Jesus said:

Luke 14:25: “And great multitudes were going with Him; and He turned *and* said to them, ‘If anyone comes to Me and does not hate...’” (vs 25-26). If you love God more than... And there is the sort of variance between your father, mother,

brother, sister and everything. They believe you hate them. So, you love God more than:

“...his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brothers and sisters, and, in addition, **his own life also**, he cannot be My disciple” (v 26). That’s the strongest Greek form of the complete inability to be His disciple.

You actually love them more if you follow Christ, because in the long run then you’ll be able to help them into the Kingdom of God in the second resurrection, if they don’t repent in this life.

And everything will be happy from then on and you just go and attend your local church, and ‘when the rapture comes you’ll be saved.’ **NO!**

Verse 27: “And whoever does not carry his cross...”—showing troubles, difficulties, trials, tests, anguish. That’s why you have to strive zealously to enter in. That’s why you always have to:

- combat the *self*
- combat the *society*
- combat *Satan*

“...and come after Me **cannot be My disciple**” (v 27)—the *impossibility* of it! Jesus said that He is ‘the Way, the Truth and the Life and **no one** can come to the Father *except through Me*.’

Recently there was an add on television trying to foster understanding and cooperation between ‘religions.’ It shows a Catholic praying with his hands together pointed to heaven, a Jew doing the same thing rocking back and forth at the Wailing Wall, a Buddhist doing the same thing rocking back and forth wherever he is praying. I don’t know if it showed a Muslim or not, but the Muslims pride themselves in that they do not commit idolatry; they have no idols ‘like those dirty Catholics and we need to behead all of them because they have all of those.’

And the Buddhists: Remember what happened in Afghanistan when the Taliban came in? Here’s this big Buddha carved into the side of a mountain and the Taliban went up there with dynamite and blew his belly and head clear out. Then the Americans said, ‘Well, we’ll rebuild this with concrete.’

The truth is that if you try to get everyone to co-exist and please each other without the Spirit of God, without the love of God, you’re false prophets daubing with untempered mortar, and it’s all going to fall apart. That’s what’s going to happen in the end-time. Then it says that you have to ‘count the cost.’

Here is the world we live in and what we are confronted with. Satan doesn’t think of it this way,

because he is the 'god of this world.' He is proud that he has all the nations of the world in the palm of his hands.

1-John 5:18: "We know that anyone who is begotten by God does not *practice* sin..." It doesn't mean you don't have sin, but you can repent of those sins. You don't live and practice sin!

"...for the one who has been begotten by God keeps himself... [and the only way he can] ...*by the power of God*, and the wicked one does not touch him." (v 18). It doesn't mean that he can't cause contrary problems and circumstance.

Here's what we need to know, and ask this question of yourself, and you have to answer it before God, v 19: "**We know that we are of God...**" Isn't that something? You know by keeping His commandments, and by His Spirit that is in you!

"...and *that* the whole world lies **in the power of the wicked one**" (v 19). Let's see how He accomplishes this.

Can you imagine, brethren, that for all these years, though we've had the Truth of God, most of the Bibles we've had—until we did *The Holy Bible in It's Original Order, A Faithful Version*—followed the pattern set by Jerome. So, the clutches of the Catholic Church, even in that much, reached into the Churches of God.

God made sure that they didn't get rid of Scriptures. Some versions added more, some versions took a little bit out, but they didn't eliminate the Scriptures altogether. God made sure that that was always there.

We need to understand how this society is the way that it is:

Ephesians 2:1: "Now, you were dead in trespasses and sins." This is before God calls us and up to the time that He calls us.

Verse 2: "In which you walked in times past... [notice the past tense] ...according to the course of this world... [this society] ...according to the prince of the power of the air..."—Satan the devil! That's why no single nation or community can ever, *ever*, *ever* set itself apart and create a righteous community on earth so that it will always be righteous, because Satan is always there and human nature is always there.

Granted, you can get away from some of the more evil things, but you can never create a truly righteous society because that's the business of Jesus Christ when the Kingdom of God comes.

(go to the next track)

The prince of the power of the air has a lot

of help now, and a lot of technology. That can be used for good or evil. But he's able to project sin everywhere in the world over and over again in this society that we are living in today. No society has ever been confronted with all of the imagery and sin coming right into your very own home via television, iPhones, cell phones, Black Berries, TV players, music that you can mainline straight into Satan and his music, pounding into your ears—or you could listen to Scriptures as you're going along, *true*. But nevertheless, all of those are there and you go out to just the ordinary store, your local supermarket, and what you have is various degrees of pornography on every magazine, and they're 99.99% geared toward women.

Satan knows—beginning with the Garden of Eden—that's who to get to first. That doesn't mean that women are sinners more than men, it just means that a woman's nature is easier to get to than a man's.

Hold on, we do use the Internet to get God's Word out, so those things I'm talking about are for good or for evil. They could also have a Bible for sale right there, or a children's Bible coloring book for sale right there. They could also have how to overcome self and sin right there. But they don't! They have how to indulge in self, how to indulge in sin, and it appeals especially to women because women know instantly. They have a view that men do not have. When they see another woman, they know exactly what she's wearing, whether it's color coordinated, whether she is skinny, fat, good looking or not, and all of vain good looking women all sort of cloister together and talk with each other and look down upon all of those ordinary kind of stout and somewhat fat women.

I've seen this happen over and over again; that's just the way it is. Men have their own secret little things that they do, too. Men have their clubs, sports and things like this. That's just the way that the world is.

What I've just said, don't think that's an attack upon women, but is that not the way that the society is. Satan knows this, and it's true, that's why God said:

Leviticus 19:29:^[transcriber's correction] "You shall not prostitute your daughter to cause her to be a whore, lest the land fall to whoredom, and **the land become full of wickedness.**"

When sexual freedom—so called, because it's actually sexual bondage—was given to women, women are the ones whom God wants to protect the morality of a society.

When the greater number of women are

given over to adultery, fornication and other sexual sins, the society deteriorates rapidly. Don't anyone think that I'm excusing men's sins. I'm not! But that's just a fact, and if you're not willing to look at facts the way the world is, then you don't really understand what is going on.

That's something that needs to be considered. Women know how to have all men's heads turned; the way they dress and what they expose. That's why God put the morality on the women, because if they are moral the men will be moral. If the women are not moral, the men won't be moral. So don't think I'm attacking women, because 55% of women have had many so-called partners. Every woman's magazine that you want to find going out of your local supermarket will have some article on how to compromise a woman's sexual morality, teaching them how to 'hook up' with men. That's where the word 'hooker' comes from.

Living in the world today, it all boils down to individual responsibility, but what I'm saying is that this is part of the society that is out there. Watch every television show and what do they have? *Everything against God!* What do all of the soap opera series do? *They're all involved in adulterous triangles!* Sooner or later! You're going to see more and more open sex on television, but there are 33-million women hooked on porn, to say nothing of the men.

Sex is the first tool that Satan uses to begin to turn people away from God. It starts at an early age. He's the 'prince of the power of the air,' and when that happens and you begin to think these thoughts then it is:

Ephesians 2:2: "...the spirit that is now working within the children of disobedience... [because as you think, so you are] ...among whom also we all once had our conduct in the lusts of our flesh..." (vs 2-3). We have *all* had sin, some to greater degrees or lesser degrees. We will see that sin is a part of human nature and what that does to the society.

"...doing the things willed by the flesh and by the mind... [all the sin, wretchedness and all the things that come along with it] ...and were by nature the children of wrath, even as the rest of the world" (v 3).

Here is our first defense against it, and we will see why, 1-John 2:15: "Do not love the world..." Who is the 'god of this world'? *Satan the devil!* We are to love God the Father and Jesus Christ *first!*

"...nor the things *that are* in the world..." (v 15). I don't know if you've seen this ad, I'm sure you have because I'm sure that Mercedes-Benz has

put it on every channel in the world. It starts out showing a woman hugging her Mercedes-Benz. 'I love you, I love you, I love you.' Then it shows a man, 'I love you, I love you, I love you.'

They worship the things that *their hands make*. Have you ever seen an ad saying, 'God, I love You, I love You, I love You'? *or* 'Jesus Christ, I love You, I love You, I love You'? No! But a car!

The obviously implication is that if you love any other car... Things that are in the world, whatever it is! And all of those who have all the wealth in the world and have all the things in the world, what have they found out? *They never satisfy!* And they strive for more and more. It's just like drugs, once you start you need more and more, until it comes to the point that it blows your mind, and you know you've got to stop! It's like Solomon said, 'All is vanity and vexation of spirit.'

Verse 16: "Because **everything that is in the world**—the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pretentious pride of physical life—is **not from the Father, but is from the world.**" We're not to model ourselves after the world.

Verse 17: "And the world and its lust is passing away, but the one who does the will of God abides forever."

With all of that, let's see what kind of world it has created and see the reasons for it. We'll put it all together, and combine everything that we have said together. The whole point is that in order to be *strong in the Lord* you have got to be able to have the spiritual strength and courage to fight and resist these things; to know the things that are right and wrong and avoid the things that are wrong.

That's why one of the greatest things that they have invented is the remote control for televisions. I use it all the time. No one can watch television with me, because if there's an ad I don't like, I'm out of here. Even when I'm driving in the car, when a commercial comes on, down goes the volume. I don't listen to commercials. I don't need all that nonsense in my mind. A lot of these commercials that are on television I don't need to see them. We'll talk about what needs to be done and especially for men.

2-Timothy 3:1: "Know this also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.... [*They are here!*] ...for men..." (vs 1-2). Men are not to be slighted in all of this just because I happen to bring out the sins of women, and women sort of 'raise the flag': 'you're against women.' *No I'm not!* The Bible talks more about the sins of men than women.

Verse 2: "For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, braggarts, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without

natural affection, implacable, slanderers, without self-control, savage, despisers of those who are good, betrayers, reckless, egotistical, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God" (vs 2-4). I just read to you the evening news and society! Lovers of self and lovers of pleasure!

Do we not have more things, more gadgets, more boats, more planes, more clothes, more sports! You've got so many sports that you watch, rather than God!

Verse 5: "Having an outward appearance of Godliness, but denying the power of *true* Godliness. But *as for you*, **turn away from all these**." That's a start of what we need to do.

Verse 6: "For from *men such as these* come those who are worming their way into houses, and are gaining control over empty-headed *gullible* women given over to *various* sins, *being* driven by all kinds of lust. *They are* always learning but *are* never able to come to *the* knowledge of *the* Truth" (vs 6-7).

Now let's look at the complicity of human nature. Here are some Scriptures that we should have memorized:

Proverbs 14:12; 16:25: "There is a way, which seems right to a man, but the end thereof is the way of death."

Jeremiah 17:9: "The heart *is* deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?"

Jeremiah 10:23: "O LORD, I know that the way of man is not in himself; *it is* not in man who walks to direct his steps."

That's why all the humanism in the world, rejecting God and His laws and commandments is going to fail. Look at the political system in any nation of the world. It may have some degrees of success, but it eventually fails. Look at all the ancient empires of the past. Where are they? *Archeological wonders of destroyed temples and ruined civilizations, and underground cities as they have it today.*

Romans 8:7: "...the carnal mind is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God..."

What lies in the human heart? What did Jesus say lies in the human heart? When Adam and Eve said that they wanted evil and we want to choose our way, God said, 'All right, I'll put a little bit of evil in you. Now let's see how you do.' That's called 'the law of sin and death.'

Let's see what Jesus said is the innermost driving force of all human beings that affects the society.

Mark 7:20: "And He said, 'That which springs forth from *within* a man, that defiles the man.'"

Everything about you comes from the inside out. Yes, the outside going in can affect you in two ways:

1. you agree with it, you accept it, you adopt it, you live by it and make it part of you
2. you reject it as not right and evil and don't go by it

We have choices of everything that we do. But here is why all societies go wrong. Let's understand that when there was Cain and Abel, there probably not many sisters and brothers of Adam and Eve around at that time. *Josephus* says that they had 56 children, so you cannot say that the society affected Cain to make him kill his brother. That came from within and motivated by Satan.

Verse 21: "For from within, out of the hearts of men... [that also includes evil thoughts] ...go forth **evil thoughts**..." A lot of evil thoughts sound pretty good: 'Let's go to a ball game on Friday night. That's good, that's fun, yes, let's do it.' *No!* That's breaking the Sabbath!

There are a lot of evil thoughts that appear good, so you have to sort it out, what is the end thereof? Notice after evil thoughts, what comes next? *Sex sins!*

"...adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickednesses, guile, licentiousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness; **all these evils go forth from within, and these defile a man**" (vs 21-23).

That's our human nature. That the nature of every human being on earth. Whatever degree they follow God's way, they have a little semblance of civilization. But in most cases where they don't, you have evil, evil societies. If you think ours is here in the United States of America, you ought to compare it to some of the other societies of the world that are in the grips of Satan the devil.

Let's take this on a personal level and how our choices are affected and how our choices affect what we do and affect God.

Proverbs is written for young people, men and women. We have choices. Sometimes we do things that are dumb and stupid and we escape without too much of a problem. If we learn the lesson we can go on and not do that.

I remember one man who said that when he was a boy he wanted to find out what would happen if he dropped a match into a can of gasoline. It was a

five-gallon can of gasoline. It had a little spout on it and he took the cap off the spout, lit a match and dropped it in, but it went out. Had it not gone out, he'd no longer be here.

Another man said that when he was a kid he took a 22 shell and he attached it to a board and then pressed down on the board hit where the firing pin was supposed to go, and yes, it went off and it blew up. It wasn't like in a barrel of a gun where the projectile would go out, it just blew up in pieces, and didn't hurt him.

In both cases they lucked out. Let me just say this, and we all know this as adults; young people growing up have yet to learn this. Most kids, if they are taught right from wrong when they are little, they grow up and are relatively decent until they start hitting the teens. Then when they hit the teens they are beginning to mature into adults. They are neither children—though some of their behavior is still childish—nor adults. With this new sense of development and observing the faults of adults, which they didn't see in the same perspective that they did before, now feel empowered to go choose their own way.

This can happen as early as 12 on into 13-17; dangerous, dangerous years because you feel more adult than you do a child. Plus, you also have all of the sex drives now beginning to pound in your body and in your mind, which did not affect you when you were a little child.

All of this presents you with problems and choices. Years ago when they were taught to honor father and mother they did not have nearly the problem. Nevertheless, I know, you know and everyone else knows—and even all the young people know—that when you get with your friends apart from your parents, you always do things that you wouldn't do at home. Nearly always!

Note that 30-40 years ago it wasn't so bad. You had the wild boy or girl and it was an exception. Today, 80% are wild, because that's how they're taught in school. That's what they feed into their minds with their music. That's because they have kicked God out of the society.

Here we have why all young people need to study the Proverbs. And all adults need to study the Proverbs to get your head screwed on right. If you don't, you're going to reach a point that there will not be help.

Delores and I saw a special on dying for 'meth'; once you get into that, regardless of the age—man or woman, child or adult—and get hooked on it, most of them say once you take it, once is enough. Satan's way is 'try it, you'll like it.'

It actually is so caustic to the system it changes the physiognomy of the face and of the body, knocks out all the teeth. They showed a dentist opening a 'meth mouth.' Dentists are making a fortune on it now: rotten teeth, missing teeth, gaunt, can't think, hooked! Barely able to function, set to die at an early age.

What I want to do is show you the consequences of the way that the society is today. It still affects people in the churches today, because they're coming out of this, and some are going back into it.

Proverbs 1:24: "Because I called, and you refused... [this is wisdom coming from God, even just basic wisdom of right and wrong] ...to hearken, I stretched out my hand, and no one paid attention; but you have despised all my counsel..." (vs 24-25). Think of our whole society:

- you can't mention God
- you can't pray to God
- you can't praise God

You can't even stand up and say when someone says, 'Why are you successful?' *Because I believe in Jesus Christ!* They look at you as a strange freak.

This is a true story: because of the educational society today, since they don't want to have one valedictorian, because that would hurt somebody's feelings and after all we don't want to hurt anybody's feelings today. So, they had many, many, and each one had to write a thesis, so is one girl wrote her thesis, and it had to be approved by the school. She gave her speech along with her thesis, in which she didn't mention Christ in it at that time, but when she gave her speech she added it in and they withheld her diploma for graduating.

There's no knowledge of God in the land! That's what we read! Sin has consequences for everybody, and sin affects your neighbors and your society, and the region and province, state or country in which you live. It affects it!

When people come to the point that sin rules, and righteousness is ridiculed, and everyone is bent on sin, then there comes a point of no return.

The reason I'm mentioning this is not only to help those to keep them from sinning because of the transgression that we so easily fall into, but also to help us understand that only God, with the return of Christ can change the world. But nevertheless, we are all held responsible for our conduct. There comes a time in anybody's life—man or woman, young or old—whether you accept the Truth of God even in the good principles of the world called Proverbs or not.

Here's what happens, v 25: "But you have despised all my counsel and would have none of my reproof. I also will laugh at your calamity..." (vs 25-26). No one is going to help you.

"...I will mock when your fear comes; when your calamity comes like a storm, and your destruction comes like a whirlwind, when trouble and pain come upon you, then they shall call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me" (vs 26-38).

We can just witness two things to show that that is true: 9/11 and Virginia Tech—the massacre that happened there.

Verse 29: "Because they hated knowledge and did not choose the fear of the LORD, they would have none of my counsel; they despised all my correction. Therefore, they shall eat the fruit of their own way and be filled with their own devices" (vs 29-31).

- this is why God calls us out of the world.
- this is why God offers repentance

You cannot regard the laws and commandments of God, and all the counsel of God.

Verse 32: "For the waywardness of the simple shall slay them, and the complacency of fools destroys them..... [Amazing! Quite a society that way!] ...But whoever hearkens to me shall dwell safely and shall be secure without fear of harm" (vs 32-33). Because you will know how to go against evil!

- we've seen human nature
- we've seen individual sin
- we've seen society's sin
- we've seen some of the things that Satan the devil does

We have all of these things multiplied and expanded upon us in this age, such as never, never before. If you lived in the time of say Lewis and Clark, and you wanted to get away—there were always Indians, bears and things like that out there—you could go away someplace nice and quiet. Just think of it: no television, no traffic, no deadline to meet. You could sit down and watch the creation of God, praise God for the great things that He has done. Satan wouldn't be there.

Everyone would like to have that setting, but I'm telling you it's not the 1800s! Someone said that he went up into the mountains in Colorado just like that and it was really, really nice. You always remember that.

Comments were made that there was this television show showing this man who went out into

the wilderness and had his Bible and his own little worship place and he would get out his Bible and read and stand out there and sing with a loud voice and one time this woman came by and started to make fun of him. It took a little while and then she understood why he was doing that. Today, we have a lot of people just the opposite; they're not in the wilderness in the woods, or in the mountains, ***they're in the wilderness of sin in the cities!***

You don't have a private place upon a rock to look out and see the heavens and everything around, but you have a place to live—an apartment—and you can do the same thing there. You can study your Bible, you can sing your songs. Don't stir up your neighbors or have the whole neighborhood against you, because ***it will all come down to your personal conduct in order to be strong in the Lord!***

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version* by Fred R. Coulter

Scriptural References:

- 1) Matthew 10:32-42
- 2) Matthew 11:3-13
- 3) Luke 16:3-13
- 4) Luke 14:25-27
- 5) John 5:18-19
- 6) Ephesians 2:1-2
- 7) Leviticus 19:29
- 8) Ephesians 2:2-3
- 9) 1 John 2:15-17
- 10) 2 Timothy 3:1-7
- 11) Proverbs 19:12; 16:25
- 12) Jeremiah 17:9
- 13) Jeremiah 10:23
- 14) Romans 8:7
- 15) Mark 7:20-23
- 16) Proverbs 1:24-33

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Titus 1
- Isaiah 53
- Malachi 3

FRC:bo
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Healing

Fred R. Coulter

Now, let's come to the next section, which is *Healing*. Now, today, many people have in mind, concerning healing, such as: healing campaigns, healing revivals—and you've seen the reports on television, how many of these have been exposed as frauds; where they have actually used high-tech microphones and ear-receptors so that different ones in the audience would communicate to the one preaching and it would seem that he diagnosed the disease of the person by name, as if it were by a miracle; but it was all a fraud. It was all fed into his ear by someone else in the back of the audience there, who was one of the greeters to find out what information they had. And they always had them fill out an information form; so they had everything right there. And it's not one of these where you get up and shout, yell and scream. and fall on your back, and you blither and blather and things like that.

Healing comes from God! Let's read about it here. Let's come to the section and we'll read the statement of belief on healing: (*Beliefs of the Christian Biblical Church of God*, pg. 21 throughout).

The Scriptures reveal that God sometimes allows sickness to come upon individuals for a special purpose. With this exception, the sickness that we suffer is the result of physical or spiritual sins.

Now, physical sin is where you break a physical law. Now if you fall you have broken the physical law of gravity and it's caught up with you, and maybe you fell and broke your arm or broke your leg or whatever. Now, God has put into the body of every individual the healing process for things like that; because God loves His creation, and God is no respecter of persons. He knows that things like that will happen with everyone.

Now today, when I'm bringing this study on healing: the other day I was using a razor knife to cut something and I cut my finger, so I've got a cut right on my finger. And thanks to God, the healing process is there and it's coming along fine. So, when you break a physical law, there will be a physical result that will happen; which is called sickness. Sometimes it is a spiritual sin. When your spiritual sins get so bad, then God will bring special curses upon people for their spiritual sins—and you can read that in Deut. 28:15-on—where God says that these are the curses that 'I will bring upon you for disobedience.'

Divine healing is God's forgiveness of those sins. God the Father personally

intervenes when He extends healing to those who call upon Him in times of sickness or injury. This Divine intervention can be directed toward anyone at any time, as God wills, because Jesus Christ paid the price for healing from every sickness with the stripes of scourging that He received before His crucifixion. When we are healed by God, our sins are forgiven through the stripes of the sufferings of Jesus Christ. Miracles of healing are often granted.

And I know, I have seen miracles of healing. Now miracles do not take place all the time. But they do happen occasionally.

The Scriptures teach that one who desires to be healed by God should call for the elders of the Church to anoint him or her with oil in the name of Jesus Christ... [And, as we saw, the lay on hands] ...and to pray for God's healing and intervention. Trusting God in faith for healing is a personal matter between each individual and God.

Now let's look at the Scriptures concerning that. Let's come to Exodus 15—here we're going to see that one of the names of God—and you need to understand this: Whenever you read of the Lord God in the Old Testament, you are reading about the one Who became Jesus Christ. So all the covenant names of God in the Old Testament, refer to Jesus Christ. God the Father was not revealed until Jesus Christ came to reveal Him.

Exodus 15:23—we're going to see something here that's very important for us to understand. "And when they came to Marah, they could not drink of the waters of Marah because it was bitter. Therefore the name of it was called Marah. And the people murmured against Moses, saying, 'What shall we drink?' And he cried to the LORD. And the LORD showed him a tree. And when he had cast it into the waters, the waters were made sweet..." (vs 23-25). So this shows that there are times when natural processes, which God has already created, God will certainly use and honor and bless. And He says in Psa. 103, that He made herbs for the service of man.

Today, we've gotten away from those things, which God has created, and have gotten into a lot of sophisticated medicines which they're finding are going to have long-term deleterious effects against people and build up immunities against bacteria.

Now we have incurable bacteria because the immune systems have been so destroyed by having so many drugs, which are based not upon the natural methods, but upon chemical methods.

So God here not only used the natural method, but gave His blessing upon it—didn't He? *Yes!* "...There He made a decree and a law for them, and there He proved them. And he said, 'If you will diligently hearken to the voice of the LORD your God, and will do that which is right in His sight... [now here are some of the conditions for healing]: ...and will give ear to His commandments, and keep all His laws, I will put none of these diseases upon you, which I have brought upon the Egyptians; for I *am* the LORD Who heals you'" (vs 25-26). Which means, *I am God, your Healer!*

So healing is a Divine intervention. Now, we can call upon the promises of God. Let's come to Psalm 103—God promises that He will heal. It is a matter of faith of the individual; and a matter of faith of the elder who anoints—both of them are involved. Now sometimes God will let us go through things because we do things which are detrimental to our bodies, not realizing it; and sometimes God will let us go through things as sort of a discipline for us so that we will understand that the body that we have is the temple of the Holy Spirit.

One thing we need to understand in the process of healing, which is this: God is determined that our physical life is limited. Some people live longer than others. Some people are more healthy than others. Sometimes it has to do with what you received as an inheritance from your parents—that has a lot to do with it. Sometimes it has to do with the food that you've eaten. And if you've grown up eating a lot of junk food and your health is not good, well then, God certainly would expect you to correct and remedy that; because He made the good and wholesome food; men have taken it and degenerated it. And so, we're creating degenerate human beings and sickly human beings—some of them cannot even fend off even a common cold anymore. And we have people whose immune systems that are now so bad that they get what are called 'environmental diseases' or 'environmental reactions' where they can't even live in their own homes because of all the chemicals in it; that their immune system is so low that they can't fight off the toxins leeching out from the chemicals in the home: out of the rug, out of the wall, out of everything. So, you have all of those factors which you need to consider.

But we still have these promises: Psalm 103:1: "Bless the LORD, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His Holy name. Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits.... [Again, this ties right in with diligently seeking God and

listening to His voice, and doing the things that are right and pleasing to God.] ...Who forgives all your iniquities, Who heals all your diseases" (vs 1-3). So there we have a promise; but the promise is also based upon obedience. Like Jesus told the man whom He healed: 'Go and sin no more lest the worst thing come upon you.' So we have that altogether there. So He gives the promise of healing.

Matthew 8—and here it shows some of the healings that Jesus performed. Now let's understand this: Jesus didn't heal everyone. He healed all those that came to Him, but not everyone who came to Him. Jesus had the capacity to raise the dead; but He only raised three in His three-and-a-half year ministry. Matthew 8:1: "When He came down from the mountain, great multitudes followed Him. And behold, a leper came and worshiped Him, saying, 'Lord, if You will, You have the power to cleanse me.' Then Jesus stretched out *His* hand *and* touched him, saying, 'I will. Be cleansed.' And immediately *he* was cleansed *from* his leprosy" (vs 1-3). ***God healed.***

Verse 16: "Now when evening had come, they brought to Him many possessed with demons... [and there is casting out of demons; a proper way] ... and He cast out the spirits by *His* word, and healed all who were sick; so that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying, '*He* Himself took our infirmities and bore our diseases.'" (vs 16-17). So Jesus carried those upon Himself.

Now, let's come to Matthew 9:27: "Now as Jesus was traveling from there, two blind *men* followed, crying and saying, 'Have pity on us, Son of David!' And after coming into the house, the blind *men* came to Him; and Jesus said to them, 'Do you believe that I have the power to do this?' They said to Him, 'Yes, Lord.' Then He touched their eyes, saying, 'According to your faith be it to you.' And their eyes were opened. And He sternly warned them, saying, 'See that you do not let anyone know *it*'" (vs 27-30). Well, with that kind of thing they were so excited they went out and told everybody. And I imagine everyone was wondering about that.

Now, we are healed through His stripes. Let's come to 1-Peter 2:24—this is one of the very reasons why Jesus went through the horrible crucifixion that He did. 'By His stripes you were healed.' And we will see here that Peter writes: 1-Peter 2:21: "for to this you were called because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow in His footsteps Who committed no sin; neither was guile found in His mouth; Who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; *when* suffering, He threatened not, but committed *Himself* to Him Who judges righteously;

Who Himself bore our sins within His own body on the tree... ['stauros'—*stake or cross*] ...so that we, being dead to sins, may live unto righteousness; **by Whose stripes you were healed**" (vs 21-24). So it is by the stripes of Jesus Christ.

Now we find that back here in the Isaiah 53—a whole chapter given to the crucifixion and suffering of Jesus Christ. We'll just cover the verses which then apply to the healing of sickness and disease. Isaiah 53:4: "Surely He has borne our infirmities, and carried our sorrows.... [Sorrows can also mean *pain*. Grief can mean *sickness*. He has born our infirmities.] ...yet we esteemed Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But He *was* wounded for our transgressions; *He was* crushed for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace *was* upon Him; and **with His stripes we ourselves are healed**" (vs 4-5). So that's what Peter is quoting there.

And another thing to understand concerning the Word of God, which is very important: You cannot separate the New Testament from the Old Testament. The Old Testament is in itself incomplete. The New Testament is in itself incomplete and built upon the foundation of the Old Testament. And the thing that is important to realize concerning the Old Testament is that ***the New Testament interprets the Old Testament***. Many people have it the other way around.

Now let's continue on here. We covered those things concerning laying on of hands, so let me just mention, we have two more in-depth tapes on healing, which you can write for. So, you can send in for those and that will cover many more Scriptures and give you a much more detailed instruction concerning healing and anointing, which then will add a little bit more concerning laying on of hands.

Scriptures from *The Holy Bible In Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*

Scriptural References:

- 1) Exodus 15:23-26
- 2) Psalm 103:1-3
- 3) Matthew 8:1-3, 16-17
- 4) Matthew 9:27-30
- 5) 1 Peter 2:21-24
- 6) Isaiah 53:4-5

Scripture referenced, not quoted:
Deuteronomy 28:15-on

Also referenced: Sermon series: *Healing*

The Love of God God's Love Toward Us

Fred R. Coulter

Now we've come to the section in the Belief's booklet, *The Love of God*—and as I mentioned, I hope everyone would go back and review the whole series on the Love of God, and if you haven't been able to finish it to go ahead and see what you can do to do so. This is the important thing: When I was over in Denver, we were talking about prophecy, and a lot of people want to know and understand about prophecy. And just a little diversion before we get into this: How are people going to understand prophecy? Is studying prophecy the major key to understanding prophecy?

I'm not saying not to study prophecy, but is that the major thing? And in our discussion, it was brought up that Daniel was a man well-beloved of God. Why was he well-beloved of God? *Because he loved God.* And he was given the major prophecy of the Old Testament—wasn't he? Now then, who was given a greater prophecy than the prophecy of Daniel? *John!* And John was the disciple whom Jesus loved. And John was the one who wrote more about the love of God than anyone else. So the key to understanding prophecy is not going to be just studying prophecy. You can study prophecy day and night, but if you don't love God you're not going to have an understanding of it.

Now have we all been through that experience, too? Where there wasn't the love of God, but there was a study of prophecy? And how many of them came to pass? *Very few indeed!* So you see, the whole fulcrum of everything, that everything that God does, is based upon His love; and if you want to put it as kind of a teeter-totter, love is the thing that holds everything up. And the love that God has for us *comes down to us.* It's not something that we have inherently within us.

Beliefs of the Christian Biblical Church of God, (pg 6 throughout): (**Audio begins here**)

The love of God is revealed in that the God Family created mankind in Their image and Their likeness and gave them dominion over the entire earth, which They had bountifully created for them. God the Father's profound spiritual love is fully manifested to mankind through His overall plan as revealed in the New Testament in the life, death and resurrection of His Son Jesus Christ. In His supreme love, God the Father offers every human being the opportunity to be born into the God Family through the resurrection from death,

becoming a literal child of God the Father, with the same form and spiritual composition as God the Father and God the Son. God's love and reconciliation is now extended to those He is calling, and will be extended to all mankind according to His plan. God the Father's love is manifested toward those He has called now through His grace and mercy which He daily bestows through Jesus Christ, His continuing intervention and blessings, and the care with which He chastens them.

Now, each one of these, you could take each sentence and you could almost have a sermon on each one, as you go along. And as we mentioned, we'll get into it in some detail, but we can't, obviously, go back and go through the series of love.

Now, being created in the image and likeness of God is one of the most wonderful things that we could even begin to comprehend and understand. That God would do such a wonderful thing. And there's a profound purpose for that. Not only that we are going to enter into the God Family, but also that God could come and that He could become flesh and then become the Savior and the Reconciler—through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ—of all mankind.

First of all, let's look at some of the Scriptures. Let's go to Psalm 145, because God's love is very profound—and it's not just to us—there are degrees of love even to the world. Let's see how David responded back to God, because of God's love. Psalm 145:1: "I will extol You, my God, O King; and I will bless Your name forever and ever. Every day I will bless You; and I will praise Your name forever and ever. Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised; and His greatness is unsearchable" (vs 1-3). That's quite a statement when you stop and think about all of God's plan. Here we are at the end-time, having all of the Word of God, having the knowledge of the Word of God, the knowledge of God's plan—even to a greater degree than some of the prophets, and even David and some of the apostles. So that's quite a thing— isn't it? When you think about that, that God is letting us understand some of the greatness; and even beyond that, Paul said we're 'looking through a glass darkly.' So it's still unsearchable—almost unfathomable.

"One generation shall praise Your works to another and shall declare Your mighty acts. I will speak of the glorious splendor of Your majesty and

of Your wondrous works. And men shall speak of the might of Your awesome works; and I will declare Your greatness. They shall pour forth the memory of Your great goodness and shall sing of Your righteousness. The LORD is gracious and full of compassion; slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.... [These are all aspects of God's love that He extends even to His whole creation.] ...The LORD is good to all, and His tender mercies are over all His works. All Your works shall praise You, O LORD; and Your saints shall bless You. They shall speak of the glory of Your kingdom and talk of Your power.... [*that's the whole focus of our whole life—*isn't it? *Of our calling; of everything that we do.*] ...To make known to the sons of men His mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of His kingdom" (vs 4-12).

Now, let's go to Matthew, the fifth chapter, and let's see something else about the love of God—how God extends it to all His creation. Now in different degrees, different forms, God provides the whole earth for all of mankind. What a beautiful thing that is! ***Whether the people know God or not, God has given the whole earth to them.*** And that's a tremendous blessing, brethren. I mean, lots of times you look down, or you read about the evil in the world and things like that, and sometimes you think, *boy, He ought just destroy the wicked instantly!* Wipe them off the face of the earth. Well, God hasn't done that has He? *No, because God is love!* His love is not so that they can continue in evil, but His love is so that perhaps maybe they can repent. That's what it's for.

Matthew 5:43—and this is a whole challenge of Christian behavior, here: "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.'.... [When we get down to what Christ did, we will see that's what He literally fulfilled.] ...But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, so that you yourselves may be the children of your Father Who *is* in heaven... [So the requirement's a lot higher for us—isn't it? *Yes, indeed!*] ...for He causes His sun to rise on *the* evil and *on the* good.... [Because He is love—that is the very characteristic of God; and He's given it to all mankind.] ...and sends rain on *the* just and *on the* unjust. For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not the tax collectors practice the same *thing*? And if you salute your brethren only, what have you done *that is* extraordinary? Do not the tax collectors practice the same *thing*? Therefore, you shall be perfect, even as your Father Who *is* in heaven is perfect" (vs 43-48).

So right here Jesus sets the whole goal. And

what is the perfection of what God wants us to have and to be? *To be as God is; to have the love of God.*

Now, let's see how God expressed this. Let's go to John 3:16, and this shows the love of God, which is very profound—and something that keys the whole plan of God. And I know that when you have a church where there is not love, they avoid this verse like a plague, because somehow it sissifies them. But no it doesn't! If the love of God sissifies man, then you would have to say that God is sissified—wouldn't you? *Because God is love*, so that could not be a true statement.

John 3:16: "For God so loved the world... [that means *the whole world*. That doesn't mean just the Church. That doesn't mean just the people that He has called at this time. Because God has subjected the same thing in hope.] ...that He gave... [So this is showing that the love of God *comes down to us*. God gave—this is 'agape' love.] ...that He gave His only begotten Son, so that everyone who believes in Him may not perish, but may have everlasting life." So the love of God comes to us.

The love of God is also a spiritual gift. The thing that I want to really emphasized here is: Lest any of us get to thinking that God just loves us and God hates the world. *No!* God hates sin, but he doesn't hate the world. He loves the world. And in His time, in His plan—as we know through the Holy Days—then He's going to save the vast majority of those that He has created. And that's all through His love. And it takes God's patience and love and mercy to do so; and to carry out His plan and to work it in the way that He has.

Let's go to 1-John 3:16—these two key one to the other, exactly the same. "By this *very act* we have known the love of God... [We are to see and know and understand it through this.] ...because He laid down His life for us: and we ourselves are to lay down *our* lives for the brethren." So this comes into the love of the brethren, which we'll cover a little later. So the two come together—don't they? *Yes!*

When did He lay His life down for us? Let's go to Romans, the fifth chapter. Because Jesus practiced what He preached. Jesus came to a world that hated Him. Jesus *came to His own* and they didn't receive Him. Jesus *came to His own* and taught the love of God and they hated Him and crucified Him.

Romans 5:6—and this is God's love to us: "For even when we were without strength, at the appointed time... [and that means that the set time in God's plan] ...Christ died for *the* ungodly. For rarely will anyone die for a righteous man, although perhaps someone might have the courage even to die

for a good man. But God commends His own love to us because, when we were still sinners, Christ died for us.... [He didn't wait until we were righteous, because there's no way you can be righteous without the mercy and love and forgiveness of God.] ...Much more, therefore, having been justified now by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if, when we were enemies..." (vs 6-10). Christ died for His enemies! He epitomized it—didn't He? When He was on the cross, what did He say? '*Father, forgive them for they know not what they do.*' Now is that not a complete fulfillment of what we read in Matt. 5: 'Love your enemies, pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you'? *Yes it was*, there they were putting the nails in His hands and in His feet. And He said, 'Father, forgive them, they know not what they do.'

"For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of His own Son, much more *then*, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life" (v 10). To a tremendous and glorious and wonderful purpose in the plan of God. That's really why we're here. That's why God made us. Brought us into this kind of relationship. Brought us into this kind of calling.

Let's come back here to v 1 and show the whole process *how the love of God comes to us* and why we go through trials and difficulties. One of the things that will help you develop love more than anything else is to be in as it were kind of in the same position as Christ—in degree albeit a whole lot less than He was. Now let's continue on with our study of God's love toward us and how we receive the love of God; that the love of God comes to us first through Christ. He is the full expression of the love of God to us in every form and fashion. He is the example. His life sets the pattern. He did exactly as He said there in Matt. 5. He came to save the world, not condemn the world. Let's see how this love of God comes to us. This is why it is through much tribulation that we enter into the Kingdom of God, which means then, it is through much tribulation that you grow in grace and knowledge and love.

Romans 5:1 "Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through Whom we also have access by faith into this grace... [Now let's understand something concerning love and grace: *the two go hand-in-hand*. So when you get done reviewing the series on *love*, review the series on *grace* and then that section that we had in the book of Romans, too.] ...in which we stand..." (vs 1-2). Grace is the whole relationship of the expression of love in which we are standing before God, as it were, spiritually in His presence—

- because we're human
 - because we're flesh
 - because we have the 'law of sin and death' in us
 - because we are weak
 - because we are sinners
- we need the grace.

Now an interesting comment was made concerning the difference between the grace of God and having the right status with Him and religious people getting together in an ecumenical thing. Ecumenism—where men agree with each other on their goodness—is the opposite of the grace of God. God's grace is that:

- He grants the forgiveness
- He grants the love
- He grants the access
- He grants His Holy Spirit
- He gives us of His way that we can have contact with Him

Men agreeing in ecumenism are agreeing to the lowest common denominator on what they agree with religiously, which is going away from God.

Verse 2: "...into this grace in which we stand, and we ourselves boast in *the* hope of the glory of God. And not only *this*, but we also boast in tribulations... [trials and difficulties; I'm still edging up to that.] ...realizing that tribulation brings forth endurance... [and that I understand; and what does it say about when you will be saved: 'he who endures to the end, the same shall be saved.' So tribulation *works patience or endurance*.] ...and endurance *brings forth* character..." (vs 2-4). And I'm glad we've had some experience in the things that we have done. Let us hope that we don't repeat the same mistakes as in the past.

I never will forget when I first went into the army. I remember there as a recruit all with my nice shaved head and my new fatigues, and I guess there were about four or five thousand new recruits there; we were down at Ft Ord right here in California, and the General came out on the stage, 'Welcome all you new recruits.' And he gave a speech and I never will forget what he said, though I don't know if I've always practiced it. He said, 'A wise man learns from his own mistakes; but a wiser man learns from the mistakes of others.' Which is a true principle.

So, can we not only learn from our own mistakes, which we all have bundles of it. That's why we need the grace and love of God. But can we learn from the mistakes of others and ask God to help us go in a right direction.

"...and endurance *brings forth* character, and character *brings forth* hope.... [because then you

have that relationship with God through love that the hope keeps growing.] ...And the hope of God never makes us ashamed because the love of God has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, which has been given to us" (vs 4-5).

So the love which comes from God not only did He send His Son down to be that loving sacrifice for all mankind, but He sends His love down to us with His Holy Spirit. And so the love that God has toward us then is multiplied and magnified by the Spirit of God. Now the world doesn't have the Spirit of God. God shows His love to them by giving them the physical things in the world, providing the world for them, food for them and things like this—providing that they do some basic things. But God gives us of His Spirit so then we have a closer connection with God through the Spirit of God, so the working that God does with us, we can grow in that love. So that's how God's love comes down to us. Now He also chastens us, too—doesn't He? He also gives us correction—doesn't He?

Let's go to Hebrews, the twelfth chapter. Correction can come from many ways.

- Correction can come from circumstances.
- Correction can come directly from God.
- Correction can come from another person.
- Correction can come from the society.

If you're speeding along and get a ticket. I know this last week they had the biggest accident that I've ever seen—54 cars right down there. But I have to say, it was also a testament to how well they're making cars—no one was killed. They had a eleven injuries and only one was somewhat serious. So they've learned from mistakes of others. So they're applying some of these things. *Corrects us!* And the whole thing of it is, so that we overcome sin. The whole thing is so that God loves us, that He wants us to learn how bad sin is and to desire His love so much that we count His correction worthy of His love.

Now, let's pick it up here in Hebrews 12:1: "Therefore, *since* we are surrounded by such a great throng of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin that so easily entraps us; and let us run the race set before us with endurance, having *our minds* fixed on Jesus, the Beginner and Finisher of *our* faith; Who for the joy that lay ahead of Him endured *the* cross.... [Why? *Because He loved God.*, that's why!] ...*although* He despised *the* shame, and has sat down at *the* right hand of the throne of God.

3. Now meditate deeply on Him Who endured such great hostility of sinners against Himself so that you do not become weary and faint in your minds. You have not yet resisted to the point of *losing* blood in your struggle against sin" (vs 1-4). And I've never anointed anyone yet by saying, 'Well, I got this

wound because I was striving against sin.' No!

"And you have already forgotten the admonition that He addresses to you as to sons: 'My son... [quoted from Prov. 3] ...do not despise *the* chastening of *the* Lord, nor grow weary of being reproved by Him; for whom *the* Lord loves... ['agape' love, *active* love] ...He chastens, and He severely disciplines every son whom He receives'" (vs 5-6). So that's just part of it. And that's what the whole Church is going through right now—wherever it is; I don't care where you go, Church of God, whatever name—God is correcting the Church right now, because He loves it and He wants the Church to come back to Him. And that's what the whole exercise is all about.

"If you endure chastening... [and that's part of the endurance] ...God is dealing with you as a *Father* with *His* sons. For who is the son whom *the* Father does not chasten? But if you are without chastisement, of which all are partakers, then you are bastards and not sons. Furthermore, we have had our fleshly fathers who chastened *us*, and we respected *them*; should we not all the more *willingly* be subject to the Father of spirits, and live *forever*? For in the first case, they chastened *us* for a few days in whatever way seemed good to them; but in the second case, He *chastens us* for *our own* benefit that we may be partakers of His Holiness. Now truly, no chastisement for the present seems to be joyous, but grievous... [and we can all say by experience that is true, yes!] ...afterwards... [there comes the perfect 20/20 hindsight vision] ...it yields *the* peaceable fruits of righteousness to those who have been exercised by it" (vs 7-11). So you have to let God do the exercising of it.

Now there's another aspect of love that Jesus has, which you could say is Jesus' special love for us. Let's go to the Gospel of John, chapter 13. And that's why with the Passover ceremony, that we have in the *Passover Ceremony* booklet, the whole covenant that God has with us is based upon the love of God. That's why we have in there: John 13, 14, 15, 16 & 17. And that's the covenant relationship that God wants. And I'll have to bring a sermon on the other side of the hierarchy and show the covenant relationship a little more. I think with the covenant relationship and kings and priests that there will be a structure that is not hierarchical being oppressive. That's what I mean in the hierarchy thing being oppressive—not against structure.

Now, John 13:34: "A new commandment I give to you... [Why did He not give the new commandment until then? Why didn't He give this at the beginning? Why did He wait until just before He was to be crucified? *The Holy Spirit was coming shortly afterward and they could not comprehend*

*how they could do this without having the Holy Spirit to lead them—with the Holy Spirit being in them.] ...I give to you: that you love one another... [So again, when you talk about the love of God it comes down to the brethren, too—doesn't it?] ...in the same way that I have loved you... [Now you think about all that Jesus did in His love toward us.] ...that is how you are to love one another.... [in the same way—as. And I think though we understand about the love of God, maybe we ought to focus a little more on this and ask God to help us understand this. I'll have to admit, I don't think I understand it the way I ought to. To really love each other as Christ loves us! That's quite a command. That's a lifelong command, isn't it? Something to grow into.] ...**By this shall everyone know that you are My disciples—if you love one another**" (vs 34-35).*

Now, let's come over here to John 15:9—and here's how He loved us: "As the Father has loved Me, I also have loved you... [Now how great is the love of the Father? So great that He sent Christ! So great that He would give us of His grace, that He could bring us into a covenant relationship with Him.] ...I also have loved you; live in My love. If you keep My commandments..." (vs 9-10). And this is so profound: love first, then commandment-keeping; because then you can have proper commandment-keeping. And you can just put in your margin there, the second commandment: 'you shall not make unto your self any graven image of any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, earth beneath or in the waters under the earth; **nor should you bow down to them to worship them, to serve them.** For I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children until the third and fourth generation of those that hate Me; and blessing unto thousands of those who love Me and keep My commandments.' That's the whole second commandment, which has the same identical principle: love/commandment-keeping—same thing that we have here.

Let's read that again: "As the Father has loved Me, I also have loved you; live in My love. If you keep My commandments, you shall live in My love. just as I have kept My Father's commandments and live in His love" (vs 9-10)—**live and dwell in His love.** And of course, that's going to be the ultimate when we enter into the Kingdom of God.

Now, come over here to John 16, and this is to really encourage us in our prayers. Today I was reading the paper, and there was something in there about a movie called *Devil's Advocate*—and I thought from the title it would be something different than the movie, but the ultimate of the *Devil's Advocate* is that the movie says that they want to fill the world with lawyers—sort of spoof kind of thing. But anyway, there was another article

about the Catholics. And the Catholics are having a big meeting in Rome, for a whole month, on how to get the new hemisphere back into the fold; because the Catholics are drifting away and there's too much independence, and they want to get everyone back in a Parrish, so they can have that command and control. And I was thinking that's just the opposite of what God is doing. God wants us all first to have that relationship with Him, then we come together in a congregation together because we love God first. Not come into a Parrish or congregation and all be organized and then be told—and I got another book I have to read, too, which is: *There's No Salvation Outside the Catholic Church*. So you know where the persecution is going to come from—and all be corralled together with all of these physical constraints—because that is what we've learned over the years. ***You can't accomplish spiritual things by physical means!***

So Christ wants us to understand something very personal and very profound—which is the opposite of a hierarchy! And that is, you have direct connection with God the Father, and He's making it clear:

John 16:23: "And in that day you shall ask Me nothing..." That's why we pray to the Father. Now, it's not wrong to thank Christ Who's our High Priest at the right hand of God the Father;

- to thank Him for His love
- to thank Him for His sacrifice
- to thank Him for the life that He lived

But we don't ask Him for anything. That's what He said: "...And in that day you shall ask Me nothing. Truly, truly I tell you, whatever you shall ask the Father in My name, He will give you. Until this day, you have asked nothing in My name. Ask, and you shall receive, that your joy may be full." (vs 23-24). And we have more joy and less misery; and that's what we need as brethren in the Church of God—don't we? And the joy comes from what?

- from love
- from service
- from understanding
- compassion
- mercy
- grace

"These things I have spoken to you in allegories; but the time is coming when I will no longer speak to you in allegories, but I will plainly disclose to you *the things* of the Father. In that day, you shall ask in My name; and I do not tell you that I will beseech the Father for you, **for the Father Himself loves you...**" (vs 25-26). And you've heard me say how many times: 'eth' (*KJV*) is what? *Active*

present tense participle—the Father Himself *is loving* you.

(go to the next track)

Now, let's understand something about God's love toward us, toward mankind, but more particularly for us. God loves you, His love never ceases in spite of your sins. Now because of your sins, God's correction may come—which is love—isn't that true? But His love never ceases. Now, as human beings, we measure out our love—don't we? If you're good, I'll love you. If you're not good, I won't love you. Now that's not how God is.

“For the Father Himself loves you, because you have loved Me, and have believed that I came forth from God” (v 27). Now that is, I think, one of the most profound things concerning the love of God toward us. And I know that has helped me many, many times when I get down to the bottom of the pit. And living in the world that we live in, we all get to the bottom of the pit quite often—don't we? *Yes!* Well, that's why we are to look up and look to God the Father—and that's direct. That's not through a church, that is not through an organization, that is direct with the Spirit of God between you and the Spirit of God—and **NO ONE**, brethren, can cut that off—**NO ONE!** No one can threaten to take it from you. We have plenty of examples, don't we, where they cast people out of the synagogue.

- Did that take away the Spirit of God? *No!* We have plenty of examples where people in the Church of God have been cast out of the Church of God because they went against *human* policy.
- Did that take away the connection with God the Father and Jesus Christ? *No!*
- Did it take away the Holy Spirit? *No!*
- Can any man take you from Christ? *No!*

Let's go to John, the tenth chapter—**NO ONE** can take you from the Father and Jesus Christ. You need to understand that. John 10:22—and I like this encounter here: “Now it was winter, and the Feast of Dedication was taking place at Jerusalem.”

When you read most commentaries they say that this is Hanukkah, what is called Hanukkah today. However, you go back to the book of Ezra and they had the dedication of the temple, which was still in winter; so this may not have been what is called Hanukkah today—it may be different from what they have today. But trust me, Hanukkah is as *pagan* as Christmas. A lot of people say then, ‘Since Jesus was there at the temple during the Feast of Dedication, therefore, it's all right to keep Hanukkah.’ Well, it doesn't say that, and I don't find that in Lev. 23, so you have to be careful leaping to conclusions in things like this.

“And Jesus was walking in the temple in Solomon's porch. Then the Jews encircled Him and said to Him, ‘How long are You going to hold us in suspense? If You are the Christ, tell us plainly.’ Jesus answered them, ‘I have told you, but you do not believe. The works that I am doing in My Father's name, these bear witness of Me’”(vs 23-25). Now that's how God is going to separate out everything with all the scattering that's going on right now—right there, there's the answer!

“My sheep hear My voice... [which then understands the words of God—correct? Things out of the New Testament and the Bible? *Yes!*] ...and I know them... [how do you know them? ‘*He who says ‘I know Him’ and keeps not His commandments is a liar. The Truth is not in him.’* (1-John 2:4). But if you keep His commandments then you know Him and He knows you. And if you have the Spirit of God He knows you.] ...and **they follow Me**.... [It's all part of the love of God—isn't it?] ...And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; and no one shall take them out of My hand.... [**NO ONE can take you from Christ!**] ...My Father, Who has given *them* to Me, is greater than all; and no one has the power to seize *them* from My Father's hand. I and the Father are one” (vs 27-30). So there again, telling the whole plan of God.

- They're *one* in purpose.
- They're *one* in love.
- They're *one* in thought.
- They're *one* in plan and everything.
- **ALL ONE!**

And that's what God wants us to be. The way that God is going to bring His Church together is not through the ecumenical compromise of men, but through the power of God's Holy Spirit and His love, and the grace of God—that's how it's going to be done. So **NO ONE is able to take you out of God's hands.**

All right now, let's look at a couple of other Scriptures—let's go back here, concerning the love of God—let's come to 1-John, the fourth chapter, and this is one of the most profound chapters in all of the Bible: showing the love of God, and showing what we need to do, showing how we need to conduct our lives. Let's back up and analyze this just a little bit here, right after I get done reading this verse:

1-John 4:5: “They are of the world; because of this, they speak of the world, and the world listens to them. We are of God; the one who knows God listens to us; the one who is not of God does not listen to us. By this *means* we know the Spirit of the Truth and the spirit of the deception” (vs 5-6).

Now here's a real clue then, brethren: ***Only through the love of God are we going to be able to determine the Truth from error***—no other way! That's how we're able to then understand what is right doctrine, what is true understanding, put it all together the way that God wants it put together—and only with the love of God. And I think we'll find out this: ***Everything comes back to the love of God.*** And that all comes back to what God did to send Jesus Christ down here and His expression of love, that God sent His love ***down*** to us. That's the only way.

You stop and think now for just a minute. In the Churches of God where there was not a sufficient amount of love—what has happened? They were not able to discern between Truth and error—correct? Now if you love God, you're going to love the Truth. And Jesus said, 'I am the way, the Truth and the life.' So through all of this—you combine that with John 10 that we just covered there, that Christ isn't going to lose any; but He's going to filter them through. But if they have enough of the love of God, they will be able to discern Truth from error. And that's what God is putting all of the Church through: brethren, ministers, everybody.

- Do they love God?
- Do they love the Truth?
- Are they able to discern Truth from error?
- Or are they going to run off and go back into the world and listen to the world?

Christmas is a perfect example is how you need to discern Truth from error. Christmas is all based upon error, deception; using good enticements

- of things that people like
- of using human love of getting families together

But human love is not Godly love.

- using human desire to have things
- using human desire to be comfortable
- using human desire to do good for the kiddies, but at the same time, you're lying through your teeth

People say they 'love Christmas.' And that was on the news last night. 'Oh, I love Christmas, best time of the year.' If you love Christmas, which is error, you can't love the Truth. Therefore, if you're keeping Christmas you can't understand Truth. You can carry it one step further—correct? ***Yes! It blinds you!*** More suicides, more problems and difficulties at Christmas time. Of course, then we also have this, too—at Thanksgiving and Christmas time—Jesus said, 'When you do your alms don't let your right hand know what your left hand is doing.' So what do they do: 'We're giving away 10,000 turkeys, send down the TV crew. *Opposite of what Jesus said.*

"...By this *means* we know the Spirit of the Truth and the spirit of the deception. Beloved, we should love one another because love is from God.... [now, the word *of* in the Greek is a two-letter word also: 'ek'—which means *out from* God to us. Not only just 'of' but ***out from*** God, because God's love to mankind in His Church is *out to us!* And out to the world to even give the good things that God gives to the world.] ...and everyone who loves... [as God would desire] ...has been ***begotten*** ... [as it should read—not *born*, begotten.] ...by God, and knows God" (vs 6-7). So you see:

- if you *love* God, you ***know*** God
- if you *love* God you ***keep His commandments***
- if you *love* God you know the difference between the Spirit of Truth and the spirit of error

"The one who does not love does not know God because God is love.... [That's the greatest characteristic of God. And I've often marveled: John wrote the Gospel of John and the Epistles of John and the book of Revelation—one of the very last things written. But look at how long it took him through all the experience of the Church to understand the love of God sufficiently to really put it together the way he's written it. These are profound writings, brethren. These are really the greatest things that we can have, since the love of God is the greatest of all that there is. Now the other apostles understood about love. I think Paul understood it next to John. John understood it the greatest of all. I think Peter understood it somewhat, but John was the one who loved Jesus and Jesus loved. And John, as you recall, was the only apostle to stay there while Jesus was crucified—and that took a lot of guts and that took a lot of love. The women did to, they stayed there—all the other disciples ran off. So that's something!]

Now notice: "In this *way* the love of God was manifested toward us... [God is the One Who must initiate it. That's why God must call. That's why we can't come to God unless He calls. We can seek after God. And if we seek after God with a pure heart, He will call us. But that doesn't mean that we come to God because of any great thing that we have.] ...In this *way* the love of God was manifested toward us: that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, so that we might live through Him. In this *act* is the love—not that we loved God... [in other words, God is not responding back to us because then that would be from our human initiation—wouldn't it? *Yes!*] ... not that we loved God [first]... [and God looked down here and says, 'Oh, this one loves Me. Good!' No! The other way around.] ...rather, that He loved us and sent His Son *to be the*

propitiation for our sins” (vs 9-10). And ‘propitiation’ means *continual source of atonement and forgiveness and love and grace and mercy and all of the characteristics of the Holy Spirit of God poured out upon us*.

“Beloved, if God so loved us, we also are duty-bound... [*obligated*, we have an obligation from God] ...we also are duty-bound to love one another. No one has seen God at any time... [clear down to this time; early 90s A.D.] ...*Yet*, if we love one another, God dwells in us, and His own love is perfected in us” (vs 11-12). And that’s the whole key, brethren. ***Our lifelong goal is to have the love of God perfected in us.*** And that comes with the things that we read there in Romans, the fifth chapter—through the trials, through the difficulties, through the overcoming, through the situations—for our desire and God’s Spirit in us, perfected in us.

“By this *standard* we know that we are dwelling in Him... [and be dwelling—that’s something—to be dwelling in God, spiritually—with His love, with His Holy Spirit] ...and He *is dwelling* in us...” (v 13). Christ *in* us! And didn’t the Apostle Paul say, ‘Don’t you know whether Christ is in you or not except you be reprobates.’

- God wants us to know that we have His Spirit.
 - God wants us to know that He loves us.
 - God wants us to know that we understand His Word.
 - God wants us to know that Christ is in us.
- That’s what’s so profound. That’s what’s so magnificent, brethren.

“...that we are dwelling in Him, and He *is dwelling* in us: because of His own Spirit” (v 13). And this no organization has any control over except God the Father and Jesus Christ.

1-John 3:19—and notice how this ties in with what we’ve just covered here. “And in this *way* we know that we are of the Truth.... [God want us to know with no shadow of doubt, concerning the Truth of God—that we are of the Truth.] ...and shall assure our hearts before Him, that if our hearts condemn us, God is greater than our hearts, and knows all things” (vs 19-20).

When will your heart condemn you? *Well, your heart will condemn you when you’ve sinned.* And at that point, you don’t like to go before God. But that’s when you *need* to go before God—because God knows you’ve sinned. How are you going to get right before God unless you go repent? *You can’t!* The big mistake a lot of people make is they sin and they say, ‘Well, I’ll pray when I get myself straightened around.’ No! Get yourself straightened around as you’re praying. Go to God

[when] you have to, and say, ‘God, I’ve been in a rotten, horrible, miserable, nasty, carnal, bad attitude. And I’ve sinned greatly before You. Forgive me. Help me. Cleanse my mind. Cleanse my heart.’ God is greater than our heart. There are other times when we haven’t sinned:

“Beloved, if our hearts do not condemn us, *then* we have confidence toward God.... [And I know and you know that in those cases your whole prayer life is (how shall we say) ten times better? *Yes!*] ...And whatever we may ask we receive from Him... [that is if it’s according to His will] ...because ***we keep His commandments and practice those things that are pleasing in His sight***.... [Now the way that we do the things that are pleasing in His sight is with Christ in us, with His Holy Spirit, by loving God, by keeping His commandments, by loving each other, and all of that.] ...And this is His commandment: that we believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and that we love one another, exactly as He gave commandment to us” (vs 21-23). Again, the love of God comes right back into loving one another.

“And the one who keeps His commandments is dwelling in Him... [that is in Christ] ...and He in him... [Isn’t it a whole lot easier to keep the commandments with Christ in you, motivating you, with the love of God? *Yes!*] ...and by this we know... [there again, ***we know***—so He wants us to know. And I tell you what, as we get closer and closer and closer to the day when we reckon with death, we need to know—don’t we? *Yes, and God wants us to know!* And also understand this, too: God knows that we’re going to get old and feeble, and God isn’t going to desert us because we are. God is not like the world. The world, when you get old, they dump you for something that is beautiful and handsome and strong all of that sort of thing. No, God is not like that. If you’ve been faithful to God and love Him, He loves you even more. And in your physical weaknesses He loves you even more still. Because Christ is in you, suffering with you. So you need to understand that, too. And that’s all a part of God loving us.] ...and by this we know that He is dwelling in us: by the Spirit which He has given to us” (v 24).

See how all that ties in together, brethren? ***God’s love toward mankind is so profound!*** And it’s not just that those who have the Spirit of God have the only corner on the market. No! God is even gracious and good to people in the world. So we need to understand that, too.

Now, let’s come back here to 1-John 4:14: “And we have seen *for* ourselves and bear witness... [now ‘we have seen’—this is the apostles: John, maybe Andrew was there, maybe Bartholomew was

there. What happened to the rest of the apostles? Well, it's very likely at this time they came back to Ephesus with John and they helped write part of the Epistles of John and part of the Gospel of John—as a final record.] ...And we have seen *for* ourselves and bear witness that the Father sent the Son *as the* Savior of the world. Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God... [Now, that means in the way that the Scriptures define we should confess it. Not just to say, 'Oh yeah, He was the Son of God, that's fine'—and go on down the road in your own way. No! Confess it that you believe, that it is your whole being.] ...God dwells in him, and he in God. And we have known and have believed the love that God has toward us. God is love, and **the one who dwells in love is dwelling in God, and God in him**" (vs 14-16).

And this is where it has to be, brethren. This is why God is putting the whole Church through everything that He's doing so that we will come to understand this. So that we can dwell in love and dwell in God. "By this *spiritual indwelling*, the love of God is perfected within us..." (v 17). So again, it's perfected.

- we grow in it
- we understand it
- we think on it
- we pray about it
- we read about it
- we study about it
- we apply it
- we live it

And I know my experience has been whenever I've asked God to help me grow more in understanding of love, I end up with some great big trial. Why? *So that I can learn to understand the love of God!* That's how it's perfected. How do you think the love of Christ was perfected? *Through sorrow! Through rejection!* Yet, at the same time He had direct contact with God the Father—didn't He? Yet, at the same time He loved God the Father—didn't He? God the Father loved Him. They dwelt in love, but everything on the outside was one great trial. The love of God is powerful.

"...so that we may have confidence in the day of judgment.... [There's going to be the day everyone is going to stand before the judgment seat of God, and luckily the minister who baptized you will give an account for you. NO! NO! NO! And everyone's going to give an account of himself or herself, right? *True.*] ...so that we may have confidence in the day of judgment because even as He is, so also are we in this world. There is no fear in the love of God... [and I think that's the thing that

helped get me started on understanding the love of God more than anything else; because as I was studying that, the thought came into my head: if there's no fear in love, why did we run the Church with fear? And I think with that, God began to open my mind.] ...rather, perfect love casts out fear... [Again, a process! That's how it is perfected, by casting out fear.] ...because fear has torment. And the one who fears has not been made perfect in the love of God.... [What is being described here, with God's love, is the whole overall goal that God wants us to have constantly before us—**constantly** before us!] ...We love Him because He loved us first...." (vs 17-19).

- God's love to mankind
- God's love to the Church
- God's love to each one of us
- the love of Jesus Christ to mankind, coming down being the sacrifice of God the Father
- to love the disciples
- to love each one of us as the Father has loved Him

Now then, we have the acid test: "...If anyone says, 'I love God,' and hates his brother, he is a liar.... [That's a hard one—isn't it?] ...For if he does not love his brother whom he has seen, how is he able to love God Whom he has not seen?.... [and that also is another acid test; if you want conviction of heart, there it is right there, brethren. And you have to start right there. That's right. And you can put any name there you want: brother, mother, sister, father, husband, wife, children—whatever] ...For if he does not love his brother whom he has seen, how is he able to love God Whom he has not seen? And this *is* the commandment *that* we have from Him: that the one who loves God should also love his brother. (vs 19-21). And that's what the whole foundation of the Church needs to be built on, brethren—the very love of God. Anything else will fall short. Anything else, it will work for a while, but it won't hold together because it's not the real power and eternal Spirit of God which is doing it. That's what God wants to teach us.

Now, we all have enough sins and faults and mistakes. That's why we need to have the love of God to help us overcome. And I tell you, understanding the love of God helps you overcome sin more than anything else, because ***if you love God you want to leave the sin behind.*** If you love God you will want to love those that are even your enemies. Now, you may not quite have the opportunity to do it in the way that may present itself; but with us as brethren, which we will get into next time—our love toward God and then love toward the brethren—that this is the whole

foundation. Notice how we started out here. We start out first with the

- Nature of God
- God Family
- God the Father
- God the Son Jesus Christ
- Nature of Mankind

then the Love of God—which then is really the nature of God—isn't it? *Yes!* And then our love toward God that goes back. And isn't that something, that God is so great He gives us of His love, that it goes back to Him? *Yes!* And then our love toward each other.

Scriptures from *The Holy Bible In Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*

Scriptural References:

- 1) Psalm 145:1-12
- 2) Matthew 5:43-48
- 3) John 3:16
- 4) 1 John 3:16
- 5) Romans 5:6-10; 1-5
- 6) Hebrews 12:1-11
- 7) John 13:34-35
- 8) John 15:9-10
- 9) John 16:23-27
- 10) John 10:22-25, 27-30
- 11) 1 John 4:5-13
- 12) 1 John 3:19-24
- 13) 1 John 4:14-21

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Proverbs 3
- John 13-17
- 1 John 2:4

Also referenced:

- Sermon Series: *Love Series Grace*
- Booklet: *Passover Ceremony*

The Love of God Love Toward Neighbor

Fred R. Coulter

Now, let's continue on in our study through the Beliefs booklet—we just finished the section: *Our Love Toward God* and then the next section listed in the Beliefs booklet is *Our Love Toward Brethren*—but there's one that we need to insert in between those two, which is *Love Toward Neighbor*.

Now the reason that we need to put it there—let's go to Matthew 22 and let's see the reason that we need to put it there, because that's part of what God requires of us with our love. And of course, this is the foundation of all the law and the prophets, and this is really a very good Scripture. Just remember this: If anyone says 'you believe in commandment-keeping, we believe in love.'

This was a lawyer who was tempting Him, and he said to Christ: Matthew 22:36: "Master, which commandment *is the* great commandment in the Law?" And Jesus said to him, 'You shall love *the* Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is *the* first and greatest commandment... [What's so important here is that God expects it complete. In other words, when God calls you and you're going to come to God, God does not want anything half-hearted, He wants it complete. What is another Scripture you can think of which tells us that God doesn't want it half-hearted? Rev. 3, you're lukewarm—right? That's half-hearted. God wants it all the way. He says, 'I wish you were either hot or cold.' So, if you're going to be hot, then what you're going to do is be loving God with all your heart, with all your mind, with all your soul.] ...This *the* first and greatest commandment'" (vs 36-38). And this means that this is the great and primary, there is nothing greater than this. That's why Paul said that there is 'faith, hope and love'; but love is the greatest.' And that's why Paul said, 'love never fails.'

"And *the* second one is like it: You shall **love your neighbor as yourself** [And so we'll investigate that today—we'll study through that today.] ...On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets'" (vs 39-40). So everything that God has done is based upon love. There's not one thing that God has done that has not been based on love. Even to the exterminating of the wicked, to take them out of their misery and to keep them from contaminating other people who are not wicked—even that is based upon love.

Let's go back here to Exodus, the twentieth chapter, for just a minute—and this is important to realize, too. Now, part of it you're going to see as we

go through here. This is the giving of the Ten Commandments. Now, I'm not going to read every one, you should know them.

What we have in Exodus 20, is we have the first four commandments have to do with your direct relationship with God. The fifth commandment has a relationship between your parents and you and God, which says—Exodus 20:12: "Honor your father and your mother so that your days may be long upon the land which the LORD your God gives you." So it is God Who gives you long life when you honor your father and mother. The fifth one transits between the relationship with God and the relationship with human beings—and it starts out with father and mother. And almost everything in the world today is designed to:

- dishonor father and mother
- dishonor home
- dishonor family
- dishonor everything

Then it goes on: "You shall not murder. You shall not commit adultery. You shall not steal. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor. You shall not covet..." (vs 13-17). All of those have to do with the relationship with your neighbor—any neighbor.

Remember when the man said, 'Who is my neighbor, Lord?' Then Jesus gave the parable of the Samaritan and the man who was beaten up and robbed—left over in the ditch to die. The priest came by and said, 'Oooo, I'll walk on the other side.' So he didn't help him out. A Levite came by and walked over and said, 'Oop I got to be on my way to do my religious duties.' Here comes the Samaritan. Now the reason why Christ used the parable of the Samaritan was because the Jews hate—with an implacable hatred—the Samaritans, above all people on earth. So he said the Samaritan went and picked him up, cleaned up his wound, put in wine and oil, took him into the inn, told the inn-keeper 'I've got to go and here's so much to take care of him. If it's going to cost more I'll pay you on my way back.' And the neighbor was the one to whom he did good.

So loving your neighbor as yourself becomes a very important thing. All of the statutes and judgments (Exo. 21), having to do with neighbor-to-neighbor—person-to-person. Whether it has to do with murder, whether it has to do with bodily injury, whether it has to do with stealing, all of these judgments and statutes have to do with *love your*

neighbor as yourself.

Now, if you get a little bored in your Bible study sometime, do this—I've recommended it several times, but you just do this: Take the Ten Commandments and write each one across the top of a paper. First Commandment, Second Commandment, so forth. Now then, on the first commandment, you'll have to have all the priest laws, because that has to do with the relationship they had with the priest. Then you can have, like the agricultural commandments, that'll be on the side, that's a little bit different. But outside of those two categories go through and take all the laws that you find in Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy and put those under the Ten Commandments and you will see that every one of them fit under the Ten Commandments—as some part of an expression or definition of how you apply the Ten Commandments.

Now this is God's way. Legalism then is when you take something and go beyond what God has done to split the hairs and try and create a system that rejects God's way but creates a legal system. So you will love your neighbor as yourself. Now in that then, we have a counterbalance. Let's go to 1-John, the second chapter, we have a counterbalance. This is a spiritual counterbalance so that we will not get involved with the sins of the world while we still love our neighbors as ourselves. In loving our neighbors as ourselves, that does not mean that we endorse their sins. That does not mean we participate in their sins. You're not going to love your neighbor by running over and having a hoopy-do Christmas party on his Christmas party night. Then he will not know that you are different.

1-John 2:15: "Do not love the world... [Now there's a distinct difference between your personal relationships with individuals. And, of course, anyone in that sense is your neighbor who is next to you or whatever wherever you are.] ...Do not love the world, nor the things... [now notice the difference here; we're talking about *things*, not people.] ...things *that are* in the world. If anyone loves the world... [That's loving this whole world's system—everything that is out there in the world, what it stands for.] ...the love of the Father is not in him, because everything that *is* in the world... [Now notice the difference here.] ...—the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pretentious pride of physical life—is not from the Father, but is from the world. And the world and its lust is passing away, but the one who does the will of God abides forever" (vs 15-17).

Of course, the will of the Father is to love your neighbor as yourself. Sometimes that becomes very difficult, especially when you have difficult

neighbors; sometimes it is. Sometimes it really is! And I always remember in the *Fiddler on the Roof* movie, his young fella came up to the Rabbi and said, 'Rabbi, is there a blessing for the Czar?' and the Rabbi stroked his beard and thought for a minute and he says, 'Yes, may the Lord bless him and keep him far away from us.' And sometimes if your neighbors are of that kind, that is your prayer. You're still loving him!

Also we'll see some other things here concerning how to express loving your neighbor. Let's go to Matthew 5, and I think we'll see some very interesting things here, and I think we'll see something that perhaps maybe we haven't looked at in that particular way before. But nevertheless, let's come to Matthew 5:17—again, this is one you should have memorized.

All of those who say, 'Well, Jesus came to abolish the law'—the very first words out of His mouth when He began teaching here—and we're going to see something very important. Matthew 5:17: "Do not think... [that is don't let it enter into your mind, let alone even believe it and practice it] ...that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets... [Haven't heard anyone say they would abolish the Psalms or the Writings. No one has come to that point, yet.] ...I did not come to abolish, but to fulfill.... [Now to 'fulfill' means *to make full*. And what He's really doing, He is bringing the spiritual requirement to its fullest.] ...For truly I say to you, until the heaven and the earth shall pass away, one jot or one tittle shall in no way pass from the Law until everything has been fulfilled" (vs 17-18). So there's no part of the law that is going to be done away.

Someone is going to say, 'Yeah, but what about the sacrifices?' Aha! Sacrifices have not been done away in the sense that they have been abolished that there is no more sacrifice. *The sacrifice of Christ is a greater sacrifice*, which supercedes the sacrifice of any animals. So we have a greater sacrifice. Same thing with circumcision; there is a greater circumcision—circumcision of the heart and mind—which now applies to men and women. So, "...until everything has been fulfilled."

Now then, here's another one, v 19—and we know this is very important because we're going to see this is part of how you love your neighbor: "Therefore, whoever shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, shall be called least in the Kingdom of Heaven.... [Now again, you can relate back to Sunday-keeping/Sabbath-keeping; Holy Day keeping/holiday-keeping; and they teach against what they figure is the least commandment.] ...but whoever shall... [What?] ...**practice and teach**

them, this one shall be called great in the Kingdom of Heaven. For I say to you, unless your righteousness shall exceed *the righteousness* of the scribes and Pharisees, there is no way *that* you shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven” (vs 19-20).

At this point let me just say you need to listen to the two tapes: *The Two Righteousnesses*—and we’ll cover that a little bit more in detail when we get to the *righteousness of the law* and the *righteousness of the spirit*.

Matthew 7:12: “Therefore, everything that you would have men do to you, so also do to them; for this is the Law and the Prophets.” Now, what I want you to understand, here is a very important thing—

Matthew 5:17: “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish, but to fulfill.” Everything between Matt. 5:17 and Matt. 7:12 is explaining what? ***The law and the prophets concerning your loving your neighbor as yourself.*** That’s what it’s talking about.

Now let’s go back and we’ll see this. Matthew 5:21, and notice how He starts out here: “You have heard that it was said to those *in ancient times*, “You shall not commit murder; but whoever commits murder shall be subject to judgment.” That’s what it was said—however if you kill a Gentile you’re not responsible; if you steal from a Gentile, you can take all you want. ***That’s not what Christ said! That’s not what God meant.*** God said in the Old Covenant: ‘One law for the stranger and for the Israelite.’ Same thing applies to everybody.

“But I say to you, everyone who is angry with his brother without cause shall be subject to judgment... [and ‘the judgment’ means *the final judgment*.] ...Now *you have heard it said*, “Whoever shall say to his brother, ‘Raca,’ shall be subject to *the judgment of the council*.” But *I say to you*, whoever shall say, “*You fool*,” shall be subject to the fire of Gehenna” (v 22). That’s Gehenna fire—so the whole standard now has been changed on how you love your neighbor as yourself. So you need to be careful.

What are you doing when you say these things? *You’re judging the person’s mind and heart.* That’s why it’s so severe. You can judge an action. You can say what you did was foolish. That doesn’t necessarily mean that the person is a fool. But this is judging the mind, judging the thoughts, when no one but the individual who has those thoughts knows whence they come from. And lots of times we do this. ‘Oh I know what you’re thinking?’ *Well, how do you know what I’m thinking?* ‘I just know.’ Wives guess pretty good, but that doesn’t mean they know every time. This is judging unto

condemnation, of course, otherwise it wouldn’t be so severe.

Verse 23: “For this reason, if you bring your gift to the altar... [So now He starts out with who do you start with then?] ...and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar, and go *your way*; first be reconciled with your brother, and then come and offer your gift” (vs 23-24). So loving your neighbor, loving your brother, has a relationship to your *standing* with God. And I know and you know, *if* you’ve got loose ends hanging around—between neighbors and between brothers and between husbands and wives all this sort of thing—how’s your prayer life? *Probably not so good!* And you can feel it. Once they’re reconciled and when you have the reconciliation it’s wonderful. Everything then fits together and everything comes together and it works just right. And I think we’ve all experienced that, too—haven’t we? *Yes, we have.* So that’s why it’s important.

Now then, He talks about agreeing with your adversary—and you won’t get thrown in jail. Verse 27: “You have heard that it was said to those *in ancient times*... [notice how He’s going down, taking the commandments, ‘You shall not kill’ is the first commandment after ‘honor your father and mother’—right? *Yes!*] (Next one is): ...‘You shall not commit adultery.’.... [In the letter you could come right up to the point of not committing it and not committing it. But in the spirit, now it’s a different thing—even for people that are out there in the world that you are dealing with.] ...‘You shall not commit adultery.’ But I say to you, everyone who looks upon a woman to lust after her has already committed adultery with her in his heart” (vs 27-28). And the same thing would apply for a woman to a man.

And then He shows here how important it is. He does not mean to pluck out your right eye or cut off your hand or cut off your foot, but you have to make the effort, because you can be blind in lust. As I said before, you can cut off both arms, both hands, both feet, you can gouge out both eyes and be a paraplegic in bed *and [still] lust unto sin*. So what He’s showing here is that you have to have the effort, and you have to put it forth.

Now then, we come down here to v 31—and now we’re talking about marriage and divorce. “It was also said *in ancient times*, ‘Whoever shall divorce his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement.’.... [Well, that’s what they have today, anything, not even any cause. Today, people have prenuptial agreements preparing for divorce—before they even marry! So the whole thing is defeated from day one.] ...But I say to you, whoever shall

divorce his wife... [and today we can say husband, because back then the wives did not put away their husbands, but today wives can.] ...except for the cause of sexual immorality..." (vs 31-32)

Today there is such a variety of it that it's unreal. That's the only cause for divorce. Now the reason that's the only cause for divorce is because, just like anything else, you come back up here, if you have difficulty in your marriage then you be reconciled—that's why. Now, if there is an offending party that runs off and rejects God and commits adultery and so forth, then that's another whole case.

Verse 33: "Again, you have heard that it was said to those *in ancient times*, 'You shall not forswear yourself, but you shall perform your oaths to the Lord.' But I say to you, do not swear at all, neither by heaven, for it is God's throne; nor by the earth, for it is the footstool of His feet; nor by Jerusalem, because it is *the* city of the great King. Neither shall you swear by your head, because you do not have the power to make one hair white or black. But let your word be *good*, your 'Yes' *be* yes and your 'No' *be* no; for anything that *is* added to these is from the evil one" (vs 33-37). In other words, let it be true. Now there are times when you can't give a wholly full answer because you may not have all the facts. So then you say, 'I may not have all the facts, but this much I know up to this point.' So there's the difference. In other words, you don't tell a person 'yes' and turn around planning to do 'no.' You don't give testimony in court and say 'yes' when you know otherwise.

All of this is 'loving your neighbor as yourself.' You don't tell your neighbor 'yes, I'll watch your yard and take care of it while you're gone on vacation' and then let all of the big four-wheelers come in and scroll up his lawn.

Now, v 38: "You have heard that it was said, '*An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth*'" Now when you go back—let's go back and clear this up right here. Let's go back to book of Exo. 21—because you'll have people say, 'Ok, now you see, back there if you lost an eye, you bring him in and you have someone take out their eye.' Lost a tooth, bring him in and say, 'Ok, open up your mouth'—BAM! Knock out your tooth. That's not what He's talking about. And we will find that today we have something very similar to it.

Exodus 21:22: "If men strive and strike a pregnant woman... [now is a child in the womb a child? *Yes!*] ...so that there is a miscarriage, and no harm follows... [That means that the child lives and the woman lives—no death.] ...he shall surely be punished... [So there's still a punishment to be

meted out.] ...according as the woman's husband will lay upon him. And he shall pay as the judges *determine*.... [So here was to be a fine. This is where we have in our legal system today the paying of a fine when something goes wrong. You pay a fine.] ...And if *any* injury occurs... [that is, one of them dies] ...then you shall give life for life.... [he's to pay with his life] ...eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burning for burning, wound for wound, stripe for stripe" (vs 22-25)—as the judge orders him to pay—that's what it has to do with. If you're in an accident and you lose an eye, then the person who caused it is to pay for the loss of your eye.

Now, we have insurance that takes care of those things today; that's why we have car insurance. Car insurance is 'loving your neighbor as yourself.' There are some people who have thought, well, we don't need any insurance—we don't need car insurance, we don't need house insurance, we don't need any of these things. But, yes you do, in case something happens and you can love your neighbor as yourself, compensate him for whatever may happen. What if he's over working with you, just helping you, and a man lost his fingers in a shredder. Now what are you going to do? Finger for finger—how much is a finger worth? Well, you go to an insurance company and they say a finger's worth so much; an arm is worth so much; a leg is worth so much, two hands are worth so much, etc. That's what it's talking about here—when it talks about 'eye for eye and tooth for tooth.'

Let's go back to Matthew 5:38: "You have heard that it was said, '*An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth*'; but I say to you, do not resist evil.... [Now this is when they come after you for what you believe. And this is where all the 'sovereignists' then go way off the deep end. They have their guns, they have their ammunition, they have their secret hideouts, they have all of these things so when the government troops or the UN troops come to take over the country and arrest them, they're going to shoot them. No! No!] ...rather, *if* anyone shall strike you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also" (vs 38-39). Is that not what Jesus did? *Yes, He did!*

What happened on several occasions when they were coming to get Him? He got away. So if you can flee, get away. What did He say in Matt. 10, when you are preaching the Gospel? You're hauled up before the council? *If they let you go then flee to the next city. If they come after you there then flee to the next city.* So sooner or later if they catch up with you then you do exactly what it is here.

Now, v 40: "And *if* anyone shall sue you before the law and take your garment... [so now we're talking about suing at law and compensation.

If you are truly guilty of it then, don't sit there and fight it just to resist it.] ...and take your garment, give him *your* coat also.... [All the way through it says 'loving your neighbor as yourself' is going ahead and being honest and open with him—that's what it's talking about.] ...And *if* anyone shall compel you to go one mile, go with him two. Give to the one who asks of you; and do not turn away from the one who wishes to borrow from you" (vs 40-42).

Someone really needs some help it doesn't matter who they are. *Help them!* I know, sometimes you get ripped off—but I remember on several occasions I come off the freeway in the rain, dripping wet and really miserable, and I've seen some of these men or Vietnam vets—they really have it tough—a lot of them do. And they're standing there freezing, shaking, shivering and I've given them three or four or five dollars as I've stopped there; to help them out, because they really looked like they needed it. Now, I thought to myself, what if I was standing there—dirty, disheveled, freezing to death having gone through the Vietnam War and no one is helping out—and here they're all driving by in their cars, the windows rolled up and sticking their noses high in the air and driving along and not helping them. I'd rather give them something. And if they're truly ripping me off well then, that's on their head then. Now there are times when I haven't. There are times—I don't pick up hitchhikers anymore—but there were times when I'd pick up a hitchhiker. I remember I picked one up and this fellow was really in a bad way; just a terrible, terrible, terrible way—and I was glad I pick him up. So far I haven't been beaten over the head and so far no one has had a gun in the cast on their leg, like some of these programs you read about.

Now, v 43—here's a whole change in loving your neighbor; now it goes beyond: "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, love your enemies.... [And this is what Christ did. When you stop and think that when Christ came on the earth no one loved Him but God the Father and maybe His own mother. Now that's hard! Love your enemy. That doesn't mean you run out and embrace him, but that doesn't mean you stand there have vicious thoughts of hate against them. Just pray like the Rabbi did, keep him far away.] ...bless those who curse you... [and that is difficult. Just understand, that's what Christ did: 'Father forgive them they know not what they do.'] ...do good to those who hate you... [I wonder how many people Jesus healed that later on hated Him and rejected Him? Makes you wonder.] ...and pray for those who spitefully use you... [good example of the Apostle Paul—right? Remember what happened when Stephen was being martyred? He said, 'Oh Lord, don't lay this to

their charge.' God answered that prayer right away by calling Saul, who was the one standing there saying, 'Do it.' So it can turn around. God can turn it around. What you're doing in this case, you're putting it all in God's hands.] ...pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, so that you yourselves may be *the* children of your Father Who *is* in heaven" (vs 43-45). Now you can take this statement and reverse it around the other way around.

If you hate your enemy, hate all of those who spitefully use you and so forth, then can you be the children of your Father in heaven? Why does He say that? If you hate your enemy, have you done anything to him? He could care less. But if you pray for him, maybe perhaps God can do something with him. But instead if you're not, then God has to do something with you. If you hate your enemy with a vituperated hatred—let's just add that to it—then what you're doing, you're hurting yourself because you're cutting yourself off from God. Does it change anything that the enemy does? *No!*

Now notice, and this is what causes a lot of people difficulty; they can't figure some of these things out: "...for He causes His sun to rise on *the* evil and on *the* good, and sends rain on *the* just and on *the* unjust." (v 45). Now, why does God do that? *Because He loves the world, that's true.* But why else? *Because He isn't judging right then.* Why else? *No respecter of persons.* All correct—why else? *We all live together.* You may have someone righteous living in this house and right next door you may have someone evil. *Space for repentance.* Okay, why else, there's another fundamental reason? *There's another fundamental reason.*

Let's go back to Genesis 8:20: "And Noah... [that is after he got out of the ark] ...built an altar to the LORD, and he took of every clean animal, and of every clean bird, and offered burnt offerings on the altar. And the LORD smelled a sweet savor; and the LORD said in His heart, 'I will not again curse the ground for man's sake... [in the way I did, because of what Adam did. There are still curses, but not in the same way.] ...—although the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth... [the good and the evil; the just and the unjust] ...and I will not again smite every living thing as I have done. While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease" (vs 20-22). Now that's why God made a promise and God made a covenant.

And as we were driving here today, we saw the covenant—didn't we? *The rainbow!* Because it has been raining. So that's why God does it. Now, if God is going to do that for the good and the wicked—who are we? What happens?

Let's go back here to Matthew 5 again, let's pick up where we left off there. What happens when you do not do it the way that God does? You're setting yourself up as greater than God—correct? You're setting yourself up in the seat of God for judging—correct? And God doesn't want that. So that's why back here in Matthew 5:44, He's saying that's why you are to “, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, so that you yourselves may be *the* children of your Father Who *is* in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on *the* evil and *on the* good [And there's summer and winter and harvest and seed and night and day] ...and sends rain on *the* just and *on the* unjust” (vs 44-45).

“For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not the tax collectors practice the same *thing*? And if you salute your brethren only... [and of course, that's always wonderful] ...what have you done *that is* extraordinary? Do not the tax collectors practice the same *thing*?” (v 46). That's why when Jesus came He went down and He was accused of spending time with the publicans and the harlots. Now this was very difficult for the religious leaders to figure out. And, of course, many of the religious leaders had a Gospel of hate—didn't they? Anyone who was not with them, they hated—hated the Samaritans; hated the Gentiles; hated everybody else.

I've heard some information about those down in the Essenes and the Coomaron community; and they have writings that are so vituperative that one person said you could only explain it as the 'gospel of hate.' In other words, if you were not down there in that little community—out of the whole world, 200 people—the gospel of hate.

Verse 48—here's what we're to be; so He gives us a whole lifetime goal—doesn't He? “Therefore, you shall be perfect, even as your Father Who *is* in heaven is perfect.”

So all of these are love your neighbor as yourself. Now then, when we come to Matthew 6, it's a little bit different. All of these are personal applications now. Since you are to love your neighbor as yourself, now what do you do?

- Don't do as they did.
- Don't have public worship.
- Don't have throwing your alms where everyone can see it.
- Don't use vain repetitions.

He tells you how to pray. Let's just review that here in Matthew 6:9 on how to pray and let's look and see what is here, which is very important for us to understand, too; so that we can have our relationship

again reestablished with other people and one another.

Matthew 6:9: “Therefore, you are to pray after this manner... [This is an outline. This is a model. Now if you want another study, take this model prayer and go back and look at the Psalms and analyze and see how the Psalms many times just fits this same sequence that you have in this model prayer.] ...‘Our Father Who *is* in heaven, hallowed be Your name; Your kingdom come; Your will be done on earth, as *it is* in heaven; give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but rescue us from the evil one. For Yours is the Kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.’ For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses” (vs 9-15). So God lays the individual responsibility upon everyone—doesn't He? *Yes, He does!* Then He talks about fasting, and don't appear to be fasting to men. Then He talks about the faith that we are to have. We're to trust God to provide everything that you need.

Here's the overall goal that God gives us to follow all of our lives. You tie that in with Matt. 5:48—put the two together. “Therefore, you shall be perfect, even as your Father Who *is* in heaven is perfect.”:

Matthew 6:33: “But *as for* you, seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness... [In other words, the primary thing that God wants us to seek is His Kingdom, rather than just the physical things here on earth. And this ties in with love not the world, nor the things in the world: ‘lust of the flesh’ and all of that.] ...and all these things shall be added to you. Therefore, do not be anxious about tomorrow.... [that means *don't worry about it*—put it in God's hands. It doesn't mean *don't think, don't plan*. It means]: ...do not be anxious about tomorrow; for tomorrow shall take care of the *things* of itself. Sufficient for the day *is* the evil of that *day*” (vs 33-34).

And sometimes, boy! you have bad days! And I also think this. I think if you're loving God, and you're following what He has to say, and trying; that doesn't mean you're going to be perfect. Maybe you're going to be falling short many, many times. However, if you are doing this, I think that God will show you what is going to come in the future at the time that He wants it known that it's going to be. And we've seen so many times: people studying prophecy, studying prophecy, and they just get so far off base that it's unreal.

Matthew 7:1—this sums up everything that we have covered so far; here's another part of

judging: “Do not condemn *others*, so that you yourself will not be condemned.... [And this is judgment unto condemnation] ...for with what judgment you judge, you shall be judged; and with what measure you mete out, it shall be measured again to you. Now why do you look at the sliver that *is* in your brother’s eye, but you do not perceive the beam in your *own* eye?” (vs 1-3). And that’s just the way human nature is. We always look for the little thing that the other person does wrong. And many times that is what you would call—and what He’s describing here—in modern terminology is what is called a *ideological mask*.

What do I mean: an *ideological mask*? All right, how many have been trying to follow the investigation where all of the money comes for the elections? What’s the first thing? ‘Yeah, but they do it!’ And true, the Republicans were taking care of theirs and they were coming down and seeing, ‘well, the Democrats are doing worse—let’s get ‘em.’ Of course, there’s a lot of love between the both of them, you know that! So what they’re doing, they’re just back and forth and back and forth and back and forth—nothing is accomplished. So that is an *ideological mask*. You point out the fault of someone else to defer attention from you. Or you point out the faults of someone else so you won’t have to face your own yourself and admit to God you have them; and I’ve got to do something about them.

Verse 4: “Or how will you say to your brother, “Allow *me* to remove the sliver from your eye”; and behold, the beam *is* in your *own* eye? You hypocrite.... [So this is hypocritical judgment; not righteous judgment as we learned during the Feast.] ...first cast out the beam from your *own* eye, and then you shall see clearly to remove the sliver from your brother’s eye.... [Then you can do it. And if you’re praying for him, maybe they’ll run along and they’ll find out they’ve got a little moat in their eyes themselves. And maybe they’ll come to see. So that’s what God wants done in a proper way.] ...Do not give that which *is* Holy to the dogs.... [In other words, don’t take the good things of God and just throw it out there in the world.] ... nor cast your pearls before the swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn around and tear you in pieces” (vs 4-6) So there’s some caution you need to exercise in these things.

Then here’s a promise for prayer: “**Ask**... [And the Greek there has the meaning: *and keep on asking*. In other words, just don’t ask once. Ask, keep on asking] ...and it shall be given you. **Seek**... [and the meaning is: *keep on seeking*; because we’re told right up here in v 33, ‘Seek first the Kingdom of God’ and that is a constant ongoing thing.] ...**Seek**, and you shall find.... [And maybe what you’ll find

is better than what you really want.] ...**Knock**, and it shall be open to you.... [If it’s a door and it’s God’s will and all of that, it will be opened.] ...For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it shall be opened. Or what man is there of you who, if his son shall ask *for* bread, will give him a stone? And if he shall ask *for* a fish, will give him a serpent? Therefore, if you, being evil...” (vs 7-11).

Now that’s quite a statement! Every time I come across that I think, boy! You know, here Jesus is talking to His disciples and He’s saying, ‘Now look, if you then being evil’ “...know *how* to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your Father Who *is* in heaven give good things to those who ask Him?” (v 11). And of course He will give it without penalty.

Then He concludes by saying, v 12: “Therefore, everything that you would have men do to you, so also do to them; for this is the Law and the Prophets.” So what He really did was expand and explain concerning the law and prophets in a way that had never been explained before, in that way. And you go back and read all these things and ask yourself the question: How do I want to be treated? *Just like Jesus said here*. That’s what He’s talking about. So that’s all part of loving your neighbor as yourself.

Now there are other things we could add to that, but I think we’ve covered it sufficiently concerning loving your neighbor as yourself.

Scriptures from *The Holy Bible In Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*

Scriptural References:

- 1) Matthew 22:36-40
- 2) Exodus 20:12-17
- 3) 1-John 2:15-17
- 4) Matthew 5:17-20
- 5) Matthew 7:12
- 6) Matthew 5: 17, 21-24, 27-28. 31-38
- 7) Exodus 21:22-25
- 8) Matthew 5:38-45
- 9) Genesis 8:20-22
- 10) Matthew 5:44-48
- 11) Matthew 6:9-15
- 12) Matthew 5:48
- 13) Matthew 6:33-34
- 14) Matthew 7:1-12

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Revelation 3
- Matthew 10

Also referenced: Sermon Series:
The Two Righteousnesses

The Love of God Love Toward Brethren

Fred R. Coulter

Let's come back to the statement in the Beliefs booklet—*Our Love Toward Brethren*. And this is something which is especially critical now in the time when the Church is in such great upheaval. So let's just go ahead and read the statement here. (*Beliefs of the Christian Biblical Church of God*, pg 7 throughout):

Christians are to have a special love for one another...

I think we've been developing that through the years, and I think we have it here, and I think the brethren, wherever we go we have it.

...because God the Father and Jesus Christ have individually called and personally love each one

Now, sometimes you're kind of stuck with your own carnality, and God has made it that way. Let's go to 1-Corinthians, the first chapter; we'll come back and finish the statement. Within the Church or fellowships there is always cause to not love someone, and there are many reasons why. That's why I wrote the statement in the way that I did. Now here's why.

1-Corinthians 1:26: "For you see your calling, brethren, that *there are* not many who are wise according to the flesh, not many who are powerful, not many who are high-born *among you*. Rather, God has chosen the foolish things of the world ... [Sometimes it's difficult to get along with brethren; sometimes it just is.] ...so that He might put to shame those who are wise [God is doing a greater work than beyond our initial first impression, or our initial impressions. You need to understand that.] ...and God has chosen the weak things of the world.... [Weak in many ways. Maybe weak in personality; maybe weak in personal resolve; maybe weak in whatever areas it may be; maybe physically weak. I would have to say, look at all of us the way we're all limping around here—all physically weak.] ... so that He might put to shame the strong things. And the low-born of the world, and the despised has God chosen—even the things that are counted as nothing—in order that He might bring to nothing the things that are; so that no flesh might glory in His presence." (vs 26-29).

So that's why I wrote here why we are to have this special love for one another. Now, in spite of being weak; in spite of being foolish; in spite of being base; in spite of all of these things, we are to love each other:

...because God the Father and Jesus Christ have individually called and personally loved each one....

God the Father's the one Who called. That's very, very important to understand.

...As the begotten children of God, with the Holy Spirit shed abroad into their hearts, all true Christians share a special fellowship with God the Father and Jesus Christ.

That's why it starts out with: 'And truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ.' And that's what makes the fellowship and love among the brethren.

This fellowship is the foundation for the new commandment...

And it was a new commandment; and it was a new thing.

...which Jesus gave to His disciples to 'love one another as I have loved you.' This true Christian love is a sign by which all people can recognize the followers of Jesus Christ.

And I would have to say, unfortunately, I do believe that all the Churches of God—we'll just include ourselves in there—have fallen way short on that.

Now let's go back to John 13—this is that new commandment, but it's based on what? ***The old commandment of loving God with all your heart, mind, soul and being***—isn't it? *Yes!* John 13:34: "A new commandment I give to you... [He didn't give this commandment to start with. Why? *Because this takes the Holy Spirit to do it*, that's why. And they didn't receive the Holy Spirit until when? *Until Pentecost!* He's talking to them on Passover night.] ...**A new commandment I give to you: that you love one another in the same way that I have loved you**... [Now did Jesus do anything against any of the disciples or anyone on earth? *No!* He loved them.] ...that *is how* you are to love one another." So God has given us a quite a standard—hasn't He? Look at the things we've covered already.

1. Be perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect
2. Seek the Kingdom of God
3. Love your neighbor as yourself
4. Love each other as I have loved you

Those are really profound and big principles of living that we need to follow every day—new commandment. “By this shall everyone know that you are My disciples—if you love one another” (v 35)

Now then, let’s come over here to John 15—some of this is just a little repeat of what we covered concerning the love of God, when I covered Jesus’ love for God. But nevertheless, this overlaps, and I think we really need to keep this in mind and just ask God to help us. Wouldn’t it be great, brethren, if we could really do it: *love each other as Christ loved us*. That is a lifetime goal, too—isn’t it? *Yes, it is*. And that is a continual, ongoing thing that we have to have. And we’ll cover one thing before we stop this time, on how to keep that going in spite of all the mistakes. And we’ve all done that. So I won’t be reiterating anything new there.

John 15:9: “As the Father has loved Me, I also have I loved you.... [Now, you can’t have any more perfect love than that. And I think that with all of our carnality and all of our humanness, it’s really difficult to comprehend that—isn’t it? So this is *spiritually* discerned. We have to ask God for His Spirit to understand it and His Spirit to do this.] ...live in My love. If you keep My commandments... [So there is a way to understand how this begins.] (of course, then): ...**If** you keep My commandments... [Now, that’s ALL of Jesus’ commandments. We just read a lot of them back there in Matt. 5—didn’t we? *Yes, we did!*] ...you shall live in My love; just as I have kept My Father’s commandments and live in His love.... [and the word ‘abide’ can mean *dwell, live in.*] ...These things I have spoken to you, in order that My joy may dwell in you, and *that* your joy may be full” (vs 9-11). In spite of all the difficulties and problems that you may have without.

“This is My commandment: that you love one another, as I have loved you.... [Now notice, He’s reiterated it three times. This becomes very, very profound.] ...No one has greater love than this: that one lay down his life for his friends” (vs 12-13). We have another Scripture which takes right off on this one:

1-John 3:15—because in His laying down His life, also gave us an example of what we need to be doing. “Everyone who hates his brother... [notice the ‘eth’ in the *King James*, which means present tense.] ...is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life dwelling within him. By this *very act* we have known the love of God because He laid down His life for us: and we ourselves are to... [The word ‘ought’ (*KJV*) means *we are obligated—we have an obligation to*] ...lay down *our* lives for the brethren.... [And I think all of us

are doing that to the very best that we can, in whatever way that we can do that.] (And it starts out): ...But whoever has this world’s goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his feelings of compassion from him, how can the love of God be dwelling in him? My little children, we should not love in word, nor with *our* tongues; rather, *we should love* in deed and in truth” (vs 15-18).

So that ties right in. This is what He means back here in John 15:13: “No one has greater love than this: that one lay down his life for his friends.... [And, of course, not only did He lay it down for them, but *for the whole world.*] ...No longer do I call you servants, because the servant does not know what his master is doing. But I have called you friends because I have made known to you all *the* things that I have heard from My Father. You yourselves did not choose Me, but I have personally chosen you, and ordained you... [That’s why we’re to have the love of the brethren, because God has chosen each one. **God chose them!**] ... that you should go *forth* and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain; so that whatever you shall ask the Father in My name, He may give you. These things I command you, that you love one another” (vs 13-17).

So all the way through, that’s why this is so important. That’s why John 13, 14, 15, 16 & 17 is the heart and core of the Passover ceremony that we go through every year at the Passover; because what God has for us *is not a religion. He has a way of life* based on a relationship of love with Him and with each other. And that’s how we need to keep these things in perspective. Then we can know, and grow and overcome and understand God’s way even more.

How then do you maintain this relationship?—and this also fits in with what we covered there in Matt. 5, that if you have somewhat against your brother, you go to him. I think we’re even going to learn just a little something here that we didn’t understand quite in the same way before. Now, if you love one another as Christ has loved you, and if you believe in following the Scriptures—and I think this is very, very important, brethren—I think this is the only thing that’s going to help bring brethren back together again in the way that they need to be.

Matthew 18:15: “So then, if your brother sins against you... [that means *any* trespass] ...go and show him his fault between you and him alone.... [Now, this is not dealing with a great, major sin. This is not dealing with just a great, major sin against God. It is **you go and you tell him alone**. You don’t tell other people first. You don’t tell a minister first. You don’t tell your best friend first. **You go to the person first.**] ...If he is willing to hear

you, you have gained your brother.” What I suggest is this: Whenever something like this happens, you do it this way: You approach the person and say, ‘I have a Matt. 18 I need to discuss with you.’ When someone comes to you and says that, just keep your antenna up and be very sensitive—because you may be wrong. Now then, you can sit down and resolve it; and you will find that it will be easy to do if you have the Spirit of God and the love of God. You can get it resolved.

“But if he will not listen... [now we’re dealing in a very difficult situation] ...take with you one or two others, so that in *the* mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.... [get all the facts] ...And if he fails to listen to them... [Maybe you sit around and talk about it; you try and figure out a way to resolve the problem.] ...tell *it* to the Church.... [Now the Church is *not* the ministry. The Church is the congregation assembled. That’s what the Church is.] ...But if he also fails to listen to the Church... [So it would be just like a roundtable discussion. And if he ‘neglect to hear the Church,’ notice what happens then]: ...let him be to you as the heathen and the tax collector” (vs 15-17). So the Church is the one that does the disfellowshipping. It’s quite the opposite of the practices of most Churches of God.

“Truly I say to you, whatever you shall bind on the earth will have already been bound in heaven... [That is the solution to this problem or the judgment that was rendered when you all gathered together—whatever you decided *shall be bound in heaven*. Has nothing to do with the law and commandments of God, doing away with them, changing them or anything like that whatsoever. It has to do with that particular decision, that’s what it has to do with.] ...and whatever you shall loose on the earth will have already been loosed in heaven. Again I say to you, that if two of you on earth shall agree concerning any matter that they wish to request, it shall be done for them by My Father, Who *is* in heaven” (vs 18-19). Now, does this not tie in with ‘let your *yes* be yes and your *no* be no’? If two of you agree? If you say, ‘Okay, that’s fine we’ll do it’? God is going to hold you responsible—it’s bound in heaven. There it is, right there. You have an obligation before God.

“For where two or three are gathered together in My name... [that is to solve this problem or to go over the difficulty] ...there, I am in *the* midst of them.... [Because you’re following the way of God and He will lead you to the proper conclusion. Now then, this secondarily applies that ‘wherever two or three are gathered together’—say, to fellowship together] ...there, I am in the midst of them” (v 20). If you only have two or three, you get together on the Sabbath, God will be with you. But

this applies primarily to making that decision to solve a problem—not necessarily just getting together on the Sabbath. (Comment was made): Church, it doesn’t call it the congregation. That is *the saints* gather together. Comment was made that our background in church history, this was never done. No, it was never done. Why?

1. Because they never taught the brethren
2. They would lose control

—and it was a matter of hierarchical control—that’s correct.

Let’s learn something here, because now, vs 21 & 22 have been used against people—that you’re not forgiving, when their gross sins were so gross against God, especially from a ministerial point of view—that they’re disqualified from ever opening the Bible publicly again—they turn to this Scripture and say you’re not forgiving. Has nothing to do with major sins against God.

Matthew 18:21-22: “Then Peter came to Him *and* said, ‘Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me... [a personal offense—not a major sin against God] ...and I forgive him? Until seven times?’.... [Because what are we dealing with? *We’re dealing with personal foolishness, personal weakness and so forth* that we covered there in 1-Cor. 1:26. Or maybe we’re dealing with a personality weakness.] ...Jesus said to him, ‘I do not say to you until seven times, but until seventy times seven.’”

Now, we know one infamous minister who would stand up and use this and say, ‘Well, you haven’t forgiven me for my 10,000 cases of adultery.’ Has nothing to do with that! Has to do with personal little offenses that bug you—if I could put it that way. That’s what it has to do with. And let’s see the example that He uses in a parable to explain it. What He’s explaining is not a sin against God.

“Therefore, the Kingdom of Heaven is compared to a man, a *certain* king, who would take account with his servants. And after he began to reckon, there was brought to him one debtor who owed *him* ten thousand talents.... [Now, is this sin against God? *No, this is a personal debt*—owed money.] ...But since he did not have *anything* to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made. Because of this, the servant fell down *and* worshiped him, saying, ‘Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay you all.’... [Notice his attitude: he was willing. He just didn’t have the means to do it. It has nothing to do with murder; nothing to do with adultery; nothing to do with stealing; nothing to do with idolatry; nothing to do

with taking God's name in vain.] ...And being moved with compassion, the lord of that servant released him, and forgave him the debt" (vs 23-26). So we're talking about a monetary debt.

"Then that servant went out *and* found one of his fellow servants, who owed him a hundred silver coins; and after seizing him he choked *him*, saying, 'Pay me what you owe.'.... [Almost like shaking him.] ...As a result, his fellow servant fell down at his feet and pleaded with him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.' But he would not *listen*; instead, he went and cast him into prison, until he should pay the amount that he owed." (vs 26-30). And you earn like three cents a day in jail. What is it, seventy-five cents now, today? Somewhere around there.

"Now when his fellow servants saw the things *that* had taken place, they were greatly distressed; and they went to their lord *and* related all that had taken place. Then his lord called him *and* said to him, '*You* wicked servant, I forgave you all that debt, because you implored me. Were you not also obligated to have compassion on your fellow servant, even as I had compassion on you?' And in anger, his lord delivered him up to the tormentors, until he should pay all that he owed to him. Likewise shall My heavenly Father also do to you, if each of you does not forgive his brother's offenses from the heart" (vs 31-35).

And that's what's so very important. These are the inner personal relationship things that come along—having nothing to do with the great commandments of God or sinning against God. Those are in a totally different category.

And the love of the brethren must be the result of the fruit of the Holy Spirit from God. And that's what's so important. That's where the special love comes, because it should be Christ in us, with the love for each other as Christ has loved us. So it's a special and a particular and a very close love that God wants us to have which is different than any other kind of love.

- different than husband and wife love
- different than love of children
- different than love of neighbor

But this is a particularly very close love; and this is something which has really been missing in the Churches of God because it hasn't been taught, it hasn't been practiced. The Scriptures are very seldom read; and the thing that is important about love is that you must constantly emphasize it, you must constantly work at it. Especially living in this evil, rotten world that we are living in which is so *loveless*.

Let's go to Matthew 24 for just a minute and show what we are dealing with the extreme of society against us. As I was discussing just yesterday regarding children in the Church—you can do real well with the children and then there is the world and BAM! Just like that, because they're not converted, they don't have God's Spirit. And the world today, even though it is wicked and evil as it is, looks so glamorous and looks so good and looks so successful. What we're dealing with, with everything, is this right here. And this is why love must constantly be worked at. There are so many things that come up everyday which go contrary to love. The environment in which you work; travel which you do; the people that you meet; the circumstances in your own life; your own carnality and the carnality of those around you all interfere to really tear down and take away love. So it's really something you need to work at.

Matthew 24:12: "And because lawlessness shall be multiplied... [and that means growing, multiplying, just increasing all the time] ...the love of many shall grow cold." And that's what we're up against. That's what makes love so difficult. Because in the world today, if you commit yourself as a person to love someone or befriend someone, too many times what happens?—BAM!—that commitment is cut off, that commitment is turned upside down, they turn on you, they misconstrue everything. And the way it is in the world today, people get offended so easily. Another thing as to why love grows cold is because people are easily offended. So in love for the brethren, we're going to have to really understand each other and work with each other—*forebear each other*—because we're coming from different backgrounds and different areas, so it makes it real difficult to have that real good camaraderie, buddy-buddy thing that, if we could liken it unto good old college days or school days or whatever. Do you understand what I mean with that? It's completely different.

Plus now, it's harder, too, with those who have been through different churches; those who have been offended; those who have been hurt. Now it's really difficult to develop that kind of brotherly love that comes from God. Not only did the love grow cold in the world, but the love grew cold in the Church. And it went from being the Church to being a corporation. And it went from helping people grow in grace and knowledge to being an organization of ridge militarism. And *all of that defeats love!* That cuts it in two. Now, you can have law—remember this: You can have law without love. So you can have rules; you can have regulations; you can have all of this and still not have any love. That's why the love with the brethren is so important, and that's

why we all need to work at it and protect it and nourish it and help it to grow the best that we can.

Now, let's come back here to the section on the *Love for the Brethren*—let me read that again:

Christians are to have a special love for one another because God the Father and Jesus Christ have individually called and personally love each one.

We might put in brackets here: In spite of their weaknesses; in spite of their quirks; in spite of their difficulties. Have to understand that. And that also makes loving each other even a little more difficult because we have all of these things—we're all so different. But if we know that God is the One Who has called; God is the One Who loves them individually.

As the begotten children of God, with the Holy Spirit shed abroad into their hearts, all true Christians share a special fellowship with God the Father and Jesus Christ.

And that's where it begins, brethren. We can't come to church on the Sabbath and that is the total activity of our spiritual life. Coming to church on the Sabbath—that is assembling together as God wants us to—is a highlight of the whole week of where we are studying, we're praying, we're getting close to God, we're fellowshiping with God the Father constantly. Then when we come together on the Sabbath, that's what makes the Sabbath so much better. Now, all of us are subject to what? *Slacking down on all of that*. And what happens? When I do, when you do—we what? *We all get carnal to a certain degree*—don't we? So that's why we have to keep working at it.

This fellowship is the foundation for the new commandment, which Jesus gave to His disciples to "love one another as I have loved you."

And that is really something! That is really something!

- Does Christ suffer through with our problems? *Yes!*
- Does He understand us? *Yes!*
- Does He help us? *Yes!*
- Does He love us in spite of the difficulties? *Yes!*

Too many times, as human beings, we have conditional love. I will love you, *if*—and you can list all kinds of things there. And then when you have conditional love then you're moving away from the love of God—you're going back to carnal love. And there is a carnal love.

This true Christian love is a sign by which all people can recognize the followers of Jesus Christ.

Now, let's see how then among ourselves we need to help this grow, help it develop and nourish it. Let's go to Colossians, the third chapter. There are things we have to do. Since love is the greatest; and love never fails; and love is something that we need to work at and cultivate and develop; God gives us, through the Apostle Paul, here is how we are to do it. It requires a real dedication to God,

Colossians 3:1: "Therefore, if you have been raised together with Christ..." Baptism is a total commitment to Jesus Christ. Baptism is joining in the death of Christ. You are conjoined in His death. And so, you are telling God, just as Christ—to institute the New Covenant—died. Your covenant with Christ and co-joining with Christ you are telling Him, 'Yes, I accept Your death instead of mine as a substitute.' But yes, you're also telling Him that if you do not follow-through on it to the end, that you yourself will die in the same way.

Covenant relationships are more binding and more profound than just a legal relationship. A legal relationship can be changed; you can modify it. Covenant cannot! Covenant relationship—an agreed ratified covenant—when you were baptized you ratified the covenant between you and Christ, that's how you ratified it. Covenant relationship cannot be changed except upon death. Then it extinguishes that covenant. Now we are in an everlasting covenant, so you either fulfill it or that covenant to you is extinguished with the second death. So that's why he's saying here:

"Therefore, if you have been raised together with Christ... [because we now have a living, eternal covenant] ...seek the things that are above..."

- the fruits of the Spirit
- the knowledge of God
- the Kingdom of God
- the Word of God
- and all of that are the things which are above

...where Christ is sitting at *the* right hand of God. Set your affection on the things that are above, and not on the things that are on the earth.... [Remember, last time we covered how we're not to 'love the world nor the things in the world.' This is just saying in a little bit different way.] ...For you have died, and your life has been hid together with Christ in God. When Christ, *Who is* our life, is manifested, then you also shall be manifested with Him in glory" (vs 1-4). And that's the whole purpose. That's the whole goal. That's the whole meaning of where we're headed, brethren.

Isn't that something? If we really have the love of God and love each other in that way and understand that, that some day we're going to be glorified sons and daughters in the Kingdom of God; and it's going to be a marvelous and wonderful and tremendous existence. And I'm going to tell you right now, ***the only way that's going to be forever is going to be with the love of God.*** It isn't going to be based on any other thing. Yes, there will be law. Yes, there will be obedience. Yes, there will be all of those things. But since the greatest characteristic of God is that He is love, then the greatest characteristic of His Family is that there is going to be love—and be love through all eternity. That's why He wants us to have this love now. Very special!

Now here's what we need to do because we're still in the flesh. "Therefore, put to death your members which *are* on earth—sexual immorality, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil desires, and covetousness, which is idolatry.... [Now, every one of these things can happen in the Church if there is not the love of God. And if they're not seeking, wholeheartedly, God's way, it comes in, it creeps in, it develops. Even leaders are taken down by sins of these magnitudes here that we have just read.] ...Because of these things, the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience, among whom you also once walked.... [That was the way of life. This is the way of the world. You can pick up the paper and read the news, or watch the evening television, or whatever, and you're going to find it's filled with all of this.] ...when you were living in these things.... [So that you're walking in it, and so forth, equates as a way of life.] ...But now, you should also put off all *these* things..." (vs 5-8).

So after you get rid of the major things that are listed here: "...wrath, indignation, malice, blasphemy, *and* foul language from your mouth" (v8). Now you get down to the other things of going to your brother if you have a difficulty—that's how you maintain love among brethren—and forgiving them for their faults. Now we're talking about some of the faults that are here that need to be taken care of.

"...wrath, indignation, malice, blasphemy, *and* foul language from your mouth" (v 8). These were problems that brethren were having. We have to put these out. We have to ask God to help us with His Spirit and His love. And the way that you put these out is ask God for His love so that it will be put out; to become not part of the way that you live, but part of the way that Christ will have you to live. Put these out!

"Do not lie to one another, *seeing that* you have put off the old man together with his deeds, and

have put on the new man, who *is* being renewed in knowledge according to *the* image of Him Who created him" (vs 9-10)—because salvation is creation. Christ being created in us; and being renewed. That's why with having all the Word of God—and it's just impressed upon my mind so much here lately—I do believe that God really puts a responsibility upon us, because now He's provided this for us. What are we going to do with it now that we have it? And now that we have it, are we going to live by it? Are we going to love it? Are we going to learn so that we can go forward?

(go to the next track)

Now we can put in some other Scriptures there. Ephesians shows that we are being created in Christ Jesus. Now, that's something! God is taking us as raw, carnal material and creating in us that spiritual character of Christ. I think this: The more that you understand the grace of God, the love of God, and really ask Him to help you grow in it, the more carnal that you see yourself. What do I mean by that? You begin to see more the greatness of God, and when you do, you begin to understand how carnal that human beings are—beginning with number one: ***the self!*** You really do! God slowly reveals Himself to yourself, that perhaps many other people see, that God sees.

Back here in Ephesians 2:10: "For we are His workmanship... [Now God is working with us. ***We are His workmanship!*** Can Christ be formed in you? That's what he's talking about here.] ...created in Christ Jesus unto *the* good works... [And the 'good works' here then are referring to the spiritual works of the fruit of the Spirit of God. And unto good works which then result in that: in helping people, in serving, in praying for them, in loving them, in helping them in their circumstances.] ...that God ordained beforehand in order that we might walk in them."

Now notice, we saw here in Col. 3 that if you walk in them, that's the way you are living. So if you're walking in these things being created with Christ in you, then you're walking in that way—it is a way of life!

Galatians 4:19: [the Apostle Paul wrote]: "My little children, for whom I am again laboring in pain until Christ has been formed in you..." So Christ has to be formed in you. And there is always our own nature, Satan the devil there to try and keep Christ from being formed in you, because this is the greatest work that can be done. What God is doing is the greatest work—creating in you, Christ—so that at the resurrection, when you are born into the spirit world, then you will be equipped. To be a spirit being requires at least a beginning level of something. That's why we go through this life and

we have so many difficulties and problems in overcoming. Christ being created in us so that when we are resurrected we will be equipped to do the spirit work that God wants us to do.

And this whole thing: ‘we have to practice the Kingdom of God now by ruling’ **No!** You have let Christ be formed in you first. You don’t ‘practice’ ruling now. That’s how the Church got itself in deep trouble, very deep trouble. *They should have practiced loving each other. They should have practiced teaching the Word of God the way it should have been done.* Then they wouldn’t have the problems that they do. So what we need to do is let Christ be formed in us and walk in those ways of God; doing the good things that God wants us to do. We need to overcome our temper. We need to overcome our anger. Only Christ in us can overcome it. So all of this is part of putting on the **new** person—that is what is called *conversion*.

Colossians 3:10: “And have put on the new man, who *is* being renewed in knowledge according to *the* image of Him Who created him; where there is neither Greek nor Jew ... [So what God is doing is not dependent upon who you are as a physical person. That doesn’t mean we don’t exist as physical people. We do! And there are things we need to realize with that.] ...neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, barbarian *nor* Scythian, slave *nor* free; but Christ *is* all things, and in all” (vs 10-11)—because the whole goal is the same for everyone. And I’m sure that it’s going to be, as God has shown, that those things which we, as human beings, esteem least will be counted greatest in the Kingdom of God. And those who count themselves as great now will be least in the Kingdom of God.

Now then, when you have these to be put out and be renewed, then here’s what we are to do—v 12: “Put on [in] then... [The Greek there is *put in, inward, within*] ...Put on then, as *the* elect of God, Holy and beloved, deep inner affections... [that your heart be tender; that you have compassion and understanding and mercy.] ...kindness... [not rudeness; not thoughtlessness; but kindness] ...humility...”—and ‘humility’ comes when you understand the greatness of God even more. And I think that the thing that we all need keep in mind for ‘humbleness of mind’ is this: ***you have nothing you didn’t receive—nothing!***

- We have our physical life—*God gave it to us.*
- We live in this physical world—which *God created for us.*
- We have His word—which *He gave to us.*
- We have His Spirit—which *He’s given to us.*

- We have understanding—*because of God*—and God is the one Who gave it.

We can’t stand up and say, ‘How great we are with this; how great we are with that’—or anything like that. Now sometimes, because we stand for the Truth, people might count us arrogant. Well, that’s a different story, that’s not so. We need to have the humbleness of mind that we are willing to help and serve and do what God wants us to do. “...meekness and long-suffering; forbearing one another...” (vs 12-13). And that’s one thing that really needs to be: ***forbearing one another.*** Remember this: ***Do not treat brethren as doctrine.***

Doctrine’s a different story. You compare it with the Word of God and it’s got to be the way that God wants it—that’s doctrine! But because we’re all weak in the flesh, don’t treat each other as doctrine; because you’ll be just cutting each other off because you don’t meet the carnal standard that is given. And so, I found that a lot with brethren; especially with the upheavals that are going on in the Church—when there’s that kind of thing that you treat brethren like doctrine. Then you won’t be kind to them. You won’t be nice to them. You’ll walk on the other side of the room—if you’re in the same room. You’ll be short to them. You’ll snip at them—and all of this sort of thing. And unfortunately, too many brethren are going through that. And I know in some cases, part of it stems from kind of self-preservation; ‘That I’ve been hurt so much by so many people for so long I don’t know who to trust or what to do. And if I hear the least little thing wrong then I react.’ Well remember, when you are trying to overcome human nature, there are going to be these problems that come along. And Jesus said what? *Forgive seventy times seven*—didn’t He? *Yes, He did!* That’s what it means ‘forbearing one another.’

“...and forgiving one another...” (v 13). All too often it is: ‘Well, I’ll remember that!’ Well, no, you shouldn’t! What if Christ has already forgotten it? What if He’s already forgiven it? Now in this “forgiving one another” we’re not talking about great, huge, major things—are we? **No!** We’re talking about the true love of brethren who are not out overtly sinning.

“...and forgiving one another if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so also you *should forgive....* [So this has to do with your own personal feelings; your own interaction of personality and so forth—and the conflicts that you may have that way. That’s what it has to do with.] ...And above all these things *put on* love.... [Now, the *King James* has ‘charity.’ But the Greek there is ‘agape’ which is *love.*] ...put on [in] love... [*put in*—it comes from

within.] ...which is the bond of perfection" (vs 13-14).

Now why is that important? We'll see why it's important. How do you achieve what Christ has said? *Well, you achieve it with the love of God. You achieve it with the Spirit of God.* Here He shows what we are to be—Matthew 5:48: "Therefore, you shall be perfect, even as your Father Who is in heaven is perfect." How can you be perfect before God? *By having love, that's how*—because then everything is motivated from the right motivation.

That's why it says back here in Colossians 3:14: "And above all these things *put on* [in] love, which is *the* bond of perfection.... [That's how Matt. 5:48 is fulfilled.] ...And let the peace of God rule in your hearts.... [There is the self-control. That's where the control comes from—from Christ in you. Let it rule, or reign. Let the peace of God govern your heart. How's that done? *By loving God with all your heart and mind and soul and being.*] ...to which you were called into one body, and be thankful. Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly... [As I said before, we need to learn the Scriptures; we need to think with the Scriptures; we need to understand the Scriptures; we need to put them together properly—and let it dwell in you *richly.*] ...in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord" (vs 14-16).

And I tell you what, when you do have the love of God and everything is right, what do you want to do? I don't know about you, but I want to sing. So there is some truth to that. Now maybe not all of you may want to do that, but anyway...but 'singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.' This is to Him. It's not necessarily to everybody round about. "And *in* everything—whatever you do in word or in deed—*do* all in *the* name of *the* Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and *the* Father by Him" (v 17).

That's then how you develop and keep this bond of love and perfectness within the brethren. That's how we are to love each other as Christ has loved us.

Now, let's go to 1-Corinthians 13, and here He shows again the application of this. This ought to be one of these chapters that we need to really know and memorize and live by—and this will help us. I tell you what, next time you get in a bad attitude or get cantankerous or carnal, go read 1-Cor. 13, then think about it. And why do we get angry? *We get offended.* Why do we get offended? *Sometimes it's because we think too much of ourselves.* Or we're offended in such a way that we react and burst out and that is not *righteous* indignation—that is carnal

reaction. And what always happens when that occurs? *You did this. You did that.* And you do the same thing that all carnal human being do, you start comparing; when you compare then you're in difficulty. So when you get in a bad, cantankerous, carnal attitude go read 1-Cor. 13. And the first part here is designed specifically for ministers.

Paul is speaking of himself—1-Corinthians 13:1 "If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a sounding brass or a clanging cymbal." It doesn't matter the eloquence. It doesn't matter for all those who teach and preach. They need to conclude that it doesn't matter what you've done in the past, because it really doesn't amount to anything unless you're serving God and doing it the way He wants to. You can be elegant. You can be persuasive. You can be whatever; speak with the tongues of men and angels and have not love, you're nothing more than just a noise out there that's going on that means nothing!

"If I have *the gift of* prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge..." (v 2). What if you could just recite the Bible by memory and have not love? You have nothing! And I think that if those who teach and those who preach and those who teach teachers and preach to preachers would help everyone of us to understand this, I think that it would be a whole lot better for all the Church. And I don't think we would have so many contrary opinions about different things, because even if you understand certain prophecies, if you don't have love it doesn't make any difference.

"...and understand all mysteries... [That is difficult sections of the Bible it really doesn't make any difference if you don't love God.] ...and all knowledge... [Well, if you don't live it and apply it with love it really doesn't matter.] ...and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing" (v 2). So when I hear people that say, 'Boy, why don't we have the gift of miracles, run around to hospitals and heal everybody?' Well, that's not based on the love of God. That's based on just going out and doing something so you can be important. If and when God wants that, He'll make it available and He'll do it. Even Jesus only raised three people from the dead when He was here on the earth. So that's something we need to consider when we read these things.

"And if I give away all my goods... [Now, it says 'to feed the poor'—but it really means just *to give them away*—whatever effort there is, religiously speaking.] ...and if I deliver up my body that I may be burned, but do not have love, I have gained nothing" (v 3). You haven't gained anything with God. What are you going to do—this person—that's going to impress God so much that He is

compelled to do something for you? Which mountain are you going to climb? Which problem are you going to solve?—that you're going to compel God? *No!* What will move God more than anything else is a 'contrite heart' and spirit of love and serving God. That's what will move God. Remember Hezekiah when he was told 'you're going to die'? He turned to the wall and 'wept sore'—he repented! And God saw his repentance and saw his heart. He said, 'Ok, I'm going to add 15 years to you.' Now when God does give you mercy, don't do like Hezekiah, because his vanity got him down and he showed everything that all the riches and all the treasure and all of the secrets of Israel to the Ambassadors of Babylon and they came back 'licking their chops' and said 'Man, we've got to conquer this country.' So that's what happened! So when God does do something, don't get lifted up in vanity with it.

Verse 4: "Love is patient..." Not only just in the way of pains and aches and sickness and things like that, but suffers long with one another. That is *forbearing*. You know and I know that each one of us have some sort of idiosyncrasy that if we would let it get to us, rub each other the wrong way—correct? *Yes!* But what you do is, with the love of God you set that aside and you just understand, asking God to help that person to overcome that, and God will—given time, God will.

"...and is kind... [That's what we need to be, brethren. I think we are.] ...love envies not... [No, it doesn't say, 'Well, that person has that why shouldn't I have it?' Well, if that person has it, *rejoice!* If someone has a benefit, be happy!] ...does not brag about itself... [That is it is not self-promoting—boasting on the self: I'm this, I'm that, I'm the other.] ...is not puffed up. *Love* does not behave disgracefully, does not seek its own things, is not easily provoked, thinks no evil..." (vs 4-5). In other words, is not out planning and scheming and plotting evil. It doesn't mean not to be aware that evil things may be going on—that doesn't mean that at all. It means that your way of thinking is not in an evil way.

"Does not rejoice in iniquity... [If someone has problems and difficulties, help them in it. Don't come and add to it and go beat them down. Maybe you can help them. Maybe you can lift them up. Maybe you can show them a way.] ...but rejoices in the Truth... [and that is in all things that are true, of course.] ...*Love* bears all things... [regardless of the set of circumstances around it.] ...believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things" (vs 6-7). And I'll tell you what, that is really a testimony to the brethren in the Church that love God, because they've had to do this and go through these things—they've had to *bear all things*. They have had to

believe in God in spite of it. So in order to make it through in today's chaotic church, you have 'bear all things, believe all things, hope all things and do all things.'

"Love never fails.... [And that's what's going to hold the Church together. That's what's going to hold the family together. That's what's going to hold the brethren together.] ...Love never fails.... [That's why Christ told us to love each other as He has loved us, because He doesn't want His Church to fail.] ...But whether *there be* prophecies, they shall cease... [Yes, those are the human prophecies—not any of God's.] ...whether *there be* languages, they shall cease; whether *there be* knowledge, it shall vanish away. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part" (vs 8-9). And that's something we have to understand, brethren. Even if we come to the greatest, fullness of the knowledge of understanding that God wants us to have, now in this life, we still know 'in part.' Because what's going to happen at the resurrection is going to be so great and fantastic that it cannot be compared to anything other than as Paul did here.

He said, "But when that which is perfect has come, then that which is in part shall be set aside.... [And 'Amen,' yes, when that happens; that'll be so great!] ...When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I reasoned as a child; but when I became a man, I set aside the things of a child" (vs 10-11). He's making this comparison. And too many of us have too many different things that hold back from really expressing the love that God wants us to have to each other, in our families and so forth; because we still, too much, have the child in us—and we act and behave that way. So we need to put that aside.

Verse 12: "For now we see through a glass darkly, but then *we shall see* face-to-face.... [So, our perception of things is always going to be in part. Even though we may understand the Bible as well as we do, it's still in part. We need Christ to help us to understand and grow in the knowledge. And that can only come with the love of God.] ...but then *we shall see* face-to-face..." And that's going to be some thing, brethren! When the resurrection takes place and we can see Christ face-to-face! See all the resurrected saints. We can meet Abraham. It's going to be something to meet Abraham. One thing I want to ask him is, 'What was it like when you were taking Isaac out to offer him for a burnt offering?' I mean, we find no account like the movies, that he raged that night and beat his fists on a rock and broke his walking stick or anything like that. He just quietly did it. What was in his mind? Here he was, he must have been pretty close to, I figure between 112-120 at that time. His only son whom he loved, given to him by a Divine miracle, and God asked

him go out and offer him as a sacrifice. The next question I want to ask him: 'How did you feel when you heard the voice?' 'Don't lay a hand on him.'

(Comments from audience)—Yes, if you're a child you can't implement that level of love. Abraham certainly must have had great and profound love for God to just say—when God says, 'Take your son, your only son, whom you love and you take him out to the place that I will show you and you offer him there for a burnt offering.' Abraham must have had a deep and profound and mature love for God at that time—more than we can comprehend. And then Isaac; you think of Isaac. Now Isaac, the only thing he said was, 'My father'—and he said, 'Here I am.' He knew what was coming. He said, 'I see the wood and you have the fire...' As a matter of fact, he was carrying the wood. And he said, 'But where is the lamb for the offering?' And Abraham said, 'The Lord will provide.' And then Isaac, I want to ask him, 'What did you feel like when your dad was binding you and laid you on the wood?' How old do I think he was at that time? I guesstimate between 12-20—because he's called 'a lad.' The other men that were with them were called 'young men.' So I would assume that he was still a teenager.

So when we see some of them face-to-face and able to talk with them, we're going to have enough conversation for eternity. Then the Apostle Paul. I could ask him what was it like, two things: 'What was it like when God called you and you were knocked off your horse? You had such a quick change of attitude, from adversary to 'Yes, Lord, what will you have me to do.' And then, 'How did you feel when you were left for dead, stoned?' And then the disciples came and picked you up, hauled you back—and I imagine Luke, the physician was daubing his wounds and so forth. But he got up, God gave him strength, turned around and went back and continued on preaching; and then came right back through the cities again. That's something!

So the kind of love and dedication that we find in the Scriptures that they have done, I think God is going to also lay upon us again sometime, if He's not already doing it right now.

Now notice: "...but then *we shall see* face-to-face; now I know in part..." (v 12) And for the Apostle Paul to say 'I know in part' is quite a statement, because he had visions up into the third heaven, did he not? *Yes!* He was taught of Christ three and half years in the desert—by vision and personally—correct? Now he says, 'Now I know *in part*.' And look at all that he learned. I can't help but think when I go back and I read, especially Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians—those three books that he wrote in prison—how much you can

see that he had grown in knowledge and love in the circumstances that he was in. Just think what Paul is going to feel when he's resurrected.

"...now I know in part, but then I shall know exactly as I have been known" (v 12). So when we're transformed from physical to spiritual what is God going to put into us, add to us? We don't know. But it's got to be something. Just consider: When God made Adam and Eve, He made them complete with a language. What's it going to be when we're resurrected? It's got to be complete with a language. Surely we're not all going to speak English. So that's quite a statement.

Now, v 13: "And now, these three remain... [this is *living*—these are living things; spiritually living things] ...faith, hope *and* love; but the greatest of these *is love*." Now, don't ask me why the *King James* has 'charity' here. The best reason I can give is this—the only way I've been able to figure out is this: They divided the translating of the *King James* down into different committees; and I think the committee that had John's Gospel and his epistles translated 'agape' love all the way through—they understood that. The committee that had 1-Corinthians decided to go with 'charity' instead of 'love'—that's the only difference I can figure. But it really means *love*.

So these are the things that give us love. And then to share our experiences as we go along, of the things that take place. Now, a couple of other things we need to cover with this—let's go to James, the fifth chapter—because then this gives us the loving ability to do as it says here.

James 5:16—now this takes love: "Confess *your* faults one to another... [Now, if someone comes to you and says, 'I have this fault, I have this problem, will you please pray for me'—please keep it confidential. No one knows. It's not talking about a great sin. This is a fault. Like we're talking about Matt. 18.] ...Confess *your* faults one to another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. *The* supplication of a righteous man prevails much, being effective." Then He gives the example of Elijah. He prayed and shut up the heavens for three and a half years and prayed again, and it flooded everything.

Now v 20—we can do this with brethren: "Let him know that he who brings back a sinner from *the* error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall cover a multitude of sins." That is brotherly love. That's all part of it.

Now, what happens when you get into a dispute? Paul and Barnabus had a dispute. Let's go to Acts 15:36. It was hot! It was an argument. And in this case it took time to heal. It wasn't something that was healed just instantly. "And after certain

days, Paul said to Barnabas, 'Let us go back to see how our brethren are doing in every city where we have preached the Word of the Lord.' And Barnabas was determined to take with *them* John *who was* called Mark.... [Now he must have been an older teenager at this point—say 18-19] ...but Paul did not think *it* good to take him *because* he had departed from them at Pamphylia, and did not go with them to the work" (vs 36-38). So they were out on one of their trips and Mark just said, 'Hey, I'm going home.' So Paul was angry with him. He was upset that Mark would do that, because Paul was a worker—He was out to work, work, work, work. He was probably wearing Mark out—killing him. So Mark said, 'Hey, I gotta go.'

"As a result, *such* a sharp contention arose between them... [between Paul and Barnabas. 'Contention' there means a *hot, heated argument*. They must have even shouted at each other.] ... that they parted from one another. And Barnabas took Mark and sailed to Cyprus... [I imagine what their discussion was like—I'll have to ask Barnabas about that.] ...but Paul chose Silas and departed, after being committed to the grace of God by the brethren. And he passed through Syria and Cilicia, establishing the churches" (vs 39-41). Now then, did Paul forgive? Was that breach healed? *Yes!* Let's go to 2-Timothy, the fourth chapter. Completely! And this is all a part of brotherly love. This is when he was just finishing up his epistles to pass them on to Peter.

2-Timothy 4:9: "Be diligent to come to me quickly; for Demas has forsaken me, having loved this present age, and has gone to Thessalonica; Crescens, to Galatia; Titus, to Dalmatia. Only Luke is with me. Get Mark *and* bring him with you, because he is profitable to me for *the* ministry of *the* Word" (vs 9-11). So there he rejected him because he said, 'Look you're lazy, you're no good; I don't want you going with me.' And Paul and Barnabas had a big fight and argument over it; and they went their ways. Now at the end, look: "Take and bring Mark with you for he is profitable to me for the ministry." So he ended up being a profitable situation for Paul there, and help do it.

Now, let's look at one other thing for loving the brethren—let's go to John 21. The brotherly love has to start with those who are teaching; it has to start with the ministry, because everything else is reflected down with that—and Jesus knew that. So, this also has to be a part of it.

John 21:15: "Therefore, when they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, 'Simon, *son* of Jonas, do you love Me more than these?'.... [Now, He asked this question because Peter was perhaps one of the most political involved. And

when we get into the *Scripturalism vs Judaism* somewhere down the road again, we're going to see that Peter succumbed to some political things, some people up in Jerusalem—which he should not have done. 'These' being the other disciples; because the disciples were there.] ...*And* he said to Him, 'Yes, Lord. You know that I love You.'" Now, in the first case *love* is 'agape'—spiritual, Divine love. And when Peter answered back he said, 'You know that I love You'—this is 'phileo'—which is having personal affection. 'Yes, I have personal affection for You'—is what he's saying.

So then, He [Christ] wanted to make sure that he got the point, so "He said to him again a second time, 'Simon, *son* of Jonas, do you love Me?' *And* he said to Him, 'Yes, Lord. You know that I love You.' He said to him, 'Shepherd My sheep'" (v 16). The first time He said up there, 'Feed My lambs.' Now He says, 'Feed My sheep.' Part of the loving of God that any minister has, or any teacher, is to *feed the sheep of God*—teach them, help them, uplift them, encourage them; that's all a part of it.

"He said to him the third time, 'Simon, *son* of Jonas, do you love Me?' Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, 'Do you love Me?' *And* he said to Him, 'Lord, You know all things. You know that I love You.' Jesus said to him, 'Feed My sheep.... [All that's part of the love of God.] ...Truly, truly I say to you, since you were young, you have dressed yourself and walked wherever you have desired; but when you are old, you shall stretch out your hands, and another shall dress you and bring *you* where you do not desire *to* go.' Now He said this to signify by what death he would glorify God. And after saying this, He said to him, 'Follow Me'" (vs 17-19). So there it is, by the very circumstances. "Follow Me" in spite of everything!

Now, v 20—here's what Peter said, Peter being his political self: "...But when Peter turned, he saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following, who also had sat at the supper and *leaned* on His chest, and had said, 'Lord, who is it that is betraying You?' Seeing him, Peter said to Jesus, 'Lord, what *shall* happen to this one?.... ['What's going to happen to him. You told me what's going to happen to me; what's going to happen to him?'] So Peter had a hard time getting the point.] ...Jesus said to him, 'If I desire that he remain alive until I come, what *is it* to you? You follow Me.'" (vs 20-22)—in spite of the circumstances.

So then, here's how rumors get started in the Church—recorded right here: "Then this saying went out among the brethren, that that disciple would not die. However, Jesus did not say to him

that he would not die; but, ‘If I desire that he remain alive until I come, what *is it* to you?’ This is the disciple who testifies concerning these things and *who* wrote these things; and we know that his testimony is true” (vs 23-24). So that’s quite a little insight into the workings of apostles and disciples and so forth.

So, let’s see that Peter learned the lesson. Let’s come to 1-Peter 5:1. Peter did learn the lesson; and he taught that lesson! “*The* elders who *are* among you I exhort, even as a fellow elder, and an eyewitness of the sufferings of Christ, and a partaker of the glory that is about to be revealed: Feed the flock of God *that is* among you.... [Did he learn the lesson? *Yes, he did!*] ...Feed the flock of God *that is* among you, exercising oversight not by compulsion, but willingly ... [not because it’s a job to do, but willingly; because you love the brethren. That’s the whole point!] ...not in fondness of dishonest gain, but *with an eager attitude*” (vs 1-2). You don’t go and say, ‘What’s in it for me?’ You go into it, ‘What does God want me to do?’ What if nothing comes out of it for you, as a person? Doesn’t make any difference, you still serve God ‘of a ready mind.’

“Not as exercising lordship over *your* possessions... [God doesn’t want the Church overlorded. That’s why I’m against hierarchical government. And that makes a lot of people angry at me, because they lose their hierarchy when people come back to them.] ...but *by* being examples to the flock *of God*.... [to inspire them; to encourage them; to help them] ...And when the Chief Shepherd is manifested, you shall receive an unfading, *eternal* crown of glory” (vs 3-4). ***So the Apostle Peter did learn the lesson. Yes, he did!***

Scriptures from *The Holy Bible In Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*

Scriptural References:

- 1) 1 Corinthians 1:26-29
- 2) John 13:34-35
- 3) John 15:9-13
- 4) 1 John 3:15-18
- 5) John 15:13-17
- 6) Matthew 18:15-35
- 7) Matthew 24:12
- 8) Colossians 3:1-10
- 9) Ephesians 2:10
- 10) Galatians 4:19
- 11) Colossians 3:10-14
- 12) Matthew 5:48
- 13) Colossians 3:14-17
- 14) 1 Corinthians 13:1-13
- 15) James 5:16, 20
- 16) Acts 15:36-41
- 17) 2-Timothy 4:9-11
- 18) John 21:15-24
- 19) 1 Peter 5:1-4

Referenced, not quoted:

- John 13-17
- 1 Corinthians 1:26

Also referenced:

- Sermons: *Scripturalism vs Judaism*

How to Worship God in Spirit and Truth I

Fred R. Coulter

How do you worship God in Spirit and in Truth? This is Jesus and the woman of Samaria at the well:

John 4:19: “The woman said to Him, ‘Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet. Our fathers worshiped in this mountain... [which was Mt. Garazim] ...but you say that the place where it is obligatory to worship is in Jerusalem.’ Jesus said to her, ‘Woman, believe Me, the hour is coming when you shall neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem worship the Father. You do not know what you worship....’” (vs 19-22). This is a very important key thing. *They thought* they were worshipping the *true* God at Samaria, but they weren’t.

He said, “...You do not know what you worship....” Very interesting. You could ask that of Protestants and of Catholics: What are you worshipping? *The same thing applies!*

“...We know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews.... [that doesn’t mean that it comes from Judaism] ...But the hour is coming, and now is, when the **true worshipers...**” (vs 22-23). This also tells us something else. If everyone who worshipped God was a worshipper of God, all He would say is, ‘those who worship God.’ So, there are *true* worshippers which also that implies there are *false* worshippers.

“...shall **worship the Father in Spirit and in Truth...**” (vs 23). Of course, that couldn’t be done until after Christ was resurrected because one of the main missions of Jesus Christ in coming was to reveal the Father.

“...for the Father is indeed seeking those who worship Him in this manner. **God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in Spirit and in Truth**” (vs 23-24). Today, we’re going to find out what it is: How do you worship God in Spirit and in Truth?

Let’s look at some other things that are important for us to realize. The reason that you have to worship God in Spirit and in Truth is because **God is Truth**. We’re going to see that **His Word is Truth**. **God cannot lie!** Therefore, in worshipping and serving God, when we come before God we also need to understand this is why God wants us not only to worship Him in Spirit and in Truth, but our worship of God becomes a relationship between us, God the Father and Jesus Christ. It’s not something where one would:

- go to a cathedral on Sunday morning
- race through the beads
- do some genuflects

- take a round wafer from the priest
- then go out and live their lives any way they want to live

We’ll find out that *it’s a whole relationship, a whole way of life*, much beyond just an ordinary thing that people would consider as worship, or as the Protestants:

- you go to church
- they have the bouncing ball
- you sing songs for 40 minutes
- you have announcements
- you sing songs for another 20 minutes
- you have a 30 minute sermon
- you go home
- you feel good
- you’re all uplifted because of the singing

If you sing happy, happy songs you feel pretty good. Some people think that is spiritual. No, that has nothing to do with worshipping God in Spirit and in Truth. We’ll see what it is.

I. It Begins with Prayer

We’re going to see a lot of elements in the prayer of Matt. 6. Of course, a lot of people just memorize this by rote and think that this is the prayer that they ought to pray, whereas it is an outline of a model prayer.

If you would like something very interesting to discover, when you pray take two Bibles with you, get on your knees—you don’t have to pray with your eyes closed and your hands folded—and you’re in prayer. You can also pray while you’re reading the Word of God. You put one Bible on the right and one on the left. Open it up to Matt. 6 and open the other one up to some of the Psalms. You will see that the Psalms follow this outline that is given in Matt. 6, because it talks about prayer.

Matthew 6:5: “And **when you pray**, you shall not be as the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the corners of the streets, in order *that* they may be seen by men. Truly I say to you, they have their reward.”

I can’t help but think of this every time I see the pope doing something and he does his little thing. Everyone is seeing him and everyone is applauding. I say, ‘He just had his reward.’

Verse 6: “But you, **when you pray**, enter into a private room; and after shutting the door, pray to your Father Who *is* in secret...” The connection is very simple: ‘Our Father,’ and you’re praying to Him. Remember what Jesus said, ‘Don’t pray to Me

and I will ask the Father for you. *You pray to the Father* for the Father Himself loves you.’ Always keep that in mind. God loves you. {note sermon; *Remember, When All Else Fails, God Loves You* (Love series #1)}, because everything else is going to fail. You’re going to think that your world is coming completely:

- undone
- unglued
- torn apart
- ripped asunder

Remember: ***God loves you in spite of all the physical circumstances around!*** When you get through the trial, when you get through the difficulty and come out the other side of it, you’re also going to understand the reason for it.

“...and your Father Who sees in secret shall reward you openly” (v 6). How does He reward you? *He doesn’t send money from heaven!* There are many ways that He can reward you:

- He comforts you mentally and spiritually
- He can give you clear thinking
- He can help you understand your circumstances
- He can bless you in the eyes of other people, if it concerns dealing with other people
- He can bless you with a job, if you need a job
- He can bless you with whatever He needs to bless you with
- He can also bless you with a trial

Most of us don’t think of trials as blessings, but they are because of the spiritual character that they produce in us.

Verse 7: “And **when you pray**, do not use vain repetitions, as the heathen *do*...” You want to know what that’s like, tune in to the *Catholic Hour* that is 15 minutes long. There are prayers you do have to repeat until you get an answer. That’s not a vain repetition. That’s praying without ceasing.

“...for they think that by multiplying their words they shall be heard. Now then, do not be like them; for your Father knows what things you have need of before you ask Him. Therefore, you are to **pray after this manner**...” (vs 7-9). That’s an interesting way to phrase it. He doesn’t say, ‘You are to pray this prayer,’ which a lot of people assume. This is the manner, the outline or the way that you are to pray.

“...Our Father Who *is* in heaven, hallowed be Your name.” (v 9). First of all, you honor God, because He’s the Maker and Creator of everything there is.

Verse 10: “Your kingdom come...” We pray for the return of Christ, continually. Also, this has meaning and understanding that you—now having the Spirit of God—are under the authority of God the Father and Jesus Christ. The Kingdom being in heaven with the Holy Spirit coming to you, that part of it brings you under the jurisdiction of God the Father and Jesus Christ.

“...Your will be done on earth, as *it is* in heaven” (v 10). Let’s understand that God’s will is always done, one way or the other. ***There is nothing that is going to be done in heaven or on earth that’s not going to be according to the will of God!***

Our prayers, because of our attitude and our relationship with God and praying to God, can appeal to the will of God for good and for intervention.

King Hezekiah: Remember what happened? Always remember that whenever there is repentance, God honors that, and He will change His will from one thought to another thought, because of repentance.

What happened? God said to Isaiah to go and tell King Hezekiah, ‘*Get your house in order you’re going to die.*’ What did Hezekiah do? *He turned to the wall and wept sore!* What happened? God changed His mind. It’s still the will of God one way or the other, but ***see how repentance makes a difference!*** This is a key important thing with our relationship with God. No sooner did Isaiah get out the door and down the road, God said, ‘Go back and tell Hezekiah that I’m going to add 15 years to his life because he wept sore and humbled himself before Me.’ So, he lived.

Likewise, remember the case of Ahab? God told Elijah to go down and tell Ahab that he is wicked, he is evil, he is going to die and the dogs are going to lick the blood of Jezebel and his blood off the wall because of what he did to Naboth in taking his property and killing him.

Elijah went down and told him, ‘You’re going to die, you’re evil, you’re miserable, you’re wretched and one of the most evil men that has ever been as a king of Israel.’ What did Ahab do? *He repented and walked in sackcloth and ashes!* Involved in all of this is *our choice*. Elijah is going down the road and God says, ‘Look at My servant, Ahab. You go back and tell him that I’ll honor his repentance and I’ll defer his destruction until later.’

That is a key thing in the will of God. *God’s will is always adjusted to repentance!* Repentance brings:

- mercy
- forgiveness
- grace

- kindness

—in our relationship with God. The longer that you have God's Spirit:

- the more that you understand about God
- the more you understand about human nature
- the more you realize every day how much you need God

Notice what is missing in all of this: *No priest! No minister! No elder!* This is a direct relationship *between you and God*; you're worshipping *God*. That's why he says that you go into a quiet, private place. When you know the One we come before is God, He knows everything; you can't fool God. So, when you worship God in Spirit and in Truth, part of that is acknowledging and repenting of your sins, your human nature and just the way that we are as human beings that are contrary to the will of God.

Verse 11: "Give us this day our daily bread." Of course, that means everything. Not just the food, but God provides the air, the water and everything else.

We were eating the other night and I was having a salad and Delores was eating some chicken. I had a little chicken and I remembered the verse that says, 'All flesh is grass.' So, if you're eating a cow, you're eating grass; a little refined, but you're eating grass. Basically, vegetables are what we eat, and fruits and nuts; it's all a physical thing.

When we ask God to provide our daily needs that's not only the bread, but it's the things that we really need. Ask God to bless you and we'll talk about attitude, obedience and things like this a little bit later. It all starts out with prayer.

Here's a key, *key*, **key** thing: You cannot go to God and say, 'Forgive me my sins, but get that guy over there.' *or* 'I can't possibly forgive this person for doing thus and such.'

Verse 12: "And forgive us our **debts**, as we also forgive our **debtors**." In Luke 11 it is 'forgive us our **sins**, as we also forgive others their sins.' We'll see about praying for your enemy a little later on as we go.

Forgiveness is a very key, important thing, and the more you understand how much you need forgiveness, as an individual, the more that you'll understand. Everyone wants to have their weaknesses and sins forgiven so they are in right standing with God. Well, pray for others that they might repent, too, that God may deal in their lives. *Don't think that all hope is lost*, because it's not! Remember that *as long as there's life, there's hope!*

That's why God called Saul to be the Apostle Paul. Who would have ever thought that you

could have changed Paul's mind? God has a way of doing it—doesn't He? *God can change people's minds!*

- don't just ask God to forgive you for your sins
- ask God to forgive the brethren for their sins
- pray for those who are sick
- pray for those who are in need of encouragement and help
- if there's anything that you can do to help them, then God expects you to do that

Matthew 6:13: "And lead us not into temptation..."—not into trial and difficulty. Sometimes we need them. Sometimes that's the best thing for us and when we are in a situation like that, then it gives an opportunity to see:

- how much we're going to rely on God
- how much we are going to yield to Him
- how much we are going to trust Him

"...but **rescue** us from the evil one..." (v 13). That's a very interesting phraseology there in the Greek. Only God can rescue us from Satan the devil; only *He* has the power. We can't do it of ourselves, on our own or because we're any great thing. Look at this way: How helpless was Job in the face of his conflict with Satan? *He thought he could do it on his own!* That's one of the lessons of Job:

- *only God* can help you
- *only God* can intervene
- *only God* can rescue you from Satan the devil

Living in this world today and with so many things out there, so many tools of Satan the devil, we've really got to have God's protection. We really have to continually ask God to rescue us from Satan the devil and to save us from ourselves. What was that prayer that one of the deacons prayed, 'Know that your people are prone to sin. Lord, save them from the prone.'

Then you acknowledge God, again. "...For Yours is the Kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen." (v 13). When you acknowledge that and acknowledge God in all your prayers, you can take this and expand it out. We'll look at some other things, look at some prayers and how we can do this a little bit later.

So, #1 is prayer; not only daily, but prayer is many times a day. We're also told by the Apostle Paul, 'Cease not praying.' That doesn't mean that you around and you're muttering prayers and you're doing laps around beads. It means that your mind and your attitude toward God is such that you're constantly seeking the help of God many, many times a day.

II. How We Approach God

Next, we're going to look at the manner in which we approach God. Here's our whole approach to God. As we're going to find out, to worship God in Spirit and Truth is far beyond just praying.

What do you do when you get up off your knees? *When you're praying to God, you're praying to God because you love Him!* When you get up off your knees, then you put that love into practice. This is what Christ is pointing out here. This is going to be the manner in which we approach God, the manner in which we worship Him in Spirit and Truth.

Matthew 22:35: "And one of them, a doctor of the law, questioned *Him*, tempting Him, and saying, 'Master, which commandment is *the* great commandment in the Law?'" (vs 35-36). Everyone is looking for a key. If you just do this one thing then you got it made; it's like:

- the magic word
- the rabbit's foot
- the good luck charm
- having a crucifix hanging from the mirror of your car to protect you from accidents

Verse 37: "And Jesus said to him, 'You shall love *the* Lord your God **with all your heart...**'" It's not just worship in prayer alone, but it is a complete relationship between you and God based upon the love of God.

"**...and with all your soul, and with all your mind.**" (v 37). It's not a part time thing; it's a full time thing, when we understand what God is doing. Let's look at it this way: God's Word and Sabbath services are a *continuing education* for us. He is teaching us to become like He is.

Let's understand something very important: this was also given by God in Deut. 6. This also tells you a very important key in loving God, and to do so with all the heart, mind, soul and being. ***You must have the Spirit of God in order to worship God in Spirit and Truth!*** What happens when people don't have the Spirit of God is, even if they try they fall short.

After God gave them the Ten Commandments and they said that they would do everything that He asked them to do, God said:

Deuteronomy 5:29: "Oh, that there were such a heart in them that they would fear Me and keep all My commandments always, so that it might be well with them and with their children forever!" They failed because they didn't have the Spirit of God.

This is what was quoted by Jesus, Deuteronomy 6 4: "Hear, O Israel. Our one God is

the LORD, *the* LORD. And you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. And these words, which I command you this day **shall be in your heart.**" (vs 4-6). In order for it to get into the heart, there must first be conversion. Conversion comes with:

- repentance
- baptism
- laying on of hands
- receiving the Holy Spirit of God
- then growing spiritually

When God first calls us and we receive the Holy Spirit, and we're sealed with the spirit of promise, it's just exactly like the creation of a new human life. When the seed of the father begets the egg of the mother, the egg seals immediately. The same way when you receive the Holy Spirit of God, you're sealed immediately. But just like the beginning of human life:

- there are a few cells
- then a few more
- then it begins to develop and grow

so, likewise

- we grow in grace
- we grow in knowledge
- we grow in Spirit
- we grow in the character of Christ

From the time that we are baptized until we are resurrected, we're growing and developing. So:

- God is teaching us His way
- God is giving us of His Spirit
- God is giving us of His way
- God is giving us of His heart
- God is giving us of His mind
- God is giving us of His attitude

That's why God wants us to worship Him in Spirit and in Truth and to love Him with all our heart, mind, soul and being.

Matthew 22:38: "This is *the* first and greatest commandment... [everything else flows from this] ...and *the* second *one* is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets" (vs 38-40). *Amazing!* Loving God *enhances* the commandments rather than eliminates them. That's all part of it, part of our relationship with God.

III. Love of Neighbor

With those who have the Spirit of God, Jesus gave a new commandment. We're to go above and beyond 'loving our neighbor as ourselves,' from the point of view that:

- yes, we should help them

- yes, if they are in need, we provide for them

That's fine; we need to do that, even in this world. You just have to watch out for 'rip-off' artists that stand at freeway turnoffs. If you see someone down and out, you help them; you give them something.

John 13:34: "**A new commandment I give to you: that you love one another in the same way that I have loved you...**" This requires a *spiritual* love that comes from God. In particular from the point of view that God has called us from many different backgrounds, many different situations and we're all different.

It's not like being in one physical family. We're in *one spiritual family* and we all have things and difficulties that we need to grow in and overcome. In loving one another in the way that Jesus loved us is the way that we are to love one another. That takes a special love, and that love comes from God the Father and Jesus Christ. That is in such a way that we overlook the difficulties, problems and physical circumstances that we may see or observe among the brethren. That's why God has called us from the different backgrounds so that we do learn to love each other a Christ loves us.

IV. Love Your Enemies

We have to go one step beyond in the manner that we approach God. This is the most difficult; this is the hardest one. It's easy to love friends and family. It's harder to love the neighbor, especially if they're cantankerous. You can pray and ask God to change their heart, mind and attitude. I've talked to people who've had many experiences where that has happened, and it can be done.

Matthew 5:43: "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.'" That's the easiest, most carnal thing to do: hate your enemy. You can hate what they do and if it's really a very difficult situation, always put them into God's hands for Him to deal with them. Why? *Because God can deal with them better than you!*

Verse 44: "But I say to you, **love your enemies, bless those who curse you...**" Jesus did every one of these things. Remember that one of the last things that He said was, 'Father forgive them, they know not what they are doing,' as they were mocking Him while He was hanging on the cross.

"...do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, so that you yourselves may be *the* children of your Father Who *is* in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on *the* evil and *on the* good, and sends rain on *the* just and *on the* unjust" (vs 44-45). *Quite a lesson!* In spite of the fact that God has to judge the wicked, He still loves them by:

- providing food
- providing air
- providing rain
- providing water
- providing the different things that are there

He doesn't love them in the way that He loves us, because He's called us into a special relationship, to be in a special love relationship with Him and Jesus Christ.

All of this becomes part of our worship of God in Spirit and in Truth. It's just not a matter of a five, ten or fifteen minute prayer in the morning and you're off on your own, or whatever you think, however your mind works, and so forth, that everything's okay. We go beyond!

Verse 46: "For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not the tax collectors practice the same *thing*?" What are political parties made of? *You're for those who are in your political party! You're against those who are not!* If that's not the basis of the hate campaign that's in American politics today, I don't know how else to describe it.

Verse 47: "And if you salute your brethren only, what have you done *that is* extraordinary? Do not the tax collectors practice the same *thing*? Therefore, **you shall be perfect...**" (vs 47-48). That's what this is all about. To worship God in Spirit and Truth is *to perfect us in Spirit and in Truth*.

V. Becoming Perfect

This the whole mission statement. What are you to be as a Christian? Here it is, go to your life's experience:

Verse 48: "**Therefore, you shall be perfect, even as your Father Who is in heaven is perfect.**"

- that takes *a lot of spiritual work*
- that takes *time*
- that takes *circumstances*
- that takes *difficulties*
- that takes *trials* and things that we go through

Our approaching God is all about loving Him, which then affects our heart and our mind. So, if we love God with all our heart, mind, soul and being, then it's going to cause our actions to follow along those lines. Loving God helps you to trust Him. Trust in God in everything, because you know this:

- God is love!
- God is Truth!
- God cannot lie!
- God will not lie!

That's why we're to worship Him in Spirit and Truth. Therefore, we trust Him.

Psalm 31:1: “In You, O LORD, have I taken refuge, let me never be ashamed; deliver me in Your righteousness. Bow down Your ear to me...” (vs 1-2); In other words, answer my prayer. Notice how similar this is to what we read in Matt. 6.

“...deliver me quickly... [that’s very similar to ‘rescue us from the evil one’] ...be my strong Rock, a fortress of defense to save me; for You are my Rock and my fortress; therefore, for Your name’s sake lead me and guide me. Pull me up out of the net that they have hidden for me, for You are my strength. Into Your hand I commit My spirit; You have redeemed Me, O LORD God of Truth” (vs 2-5).

Quite a Psalm! Actually, part of this, is some of the words of Christ. The last words He said before He died on the cross was: ‘into Your hands I commend My spirit’—a prophecy of it right here.

VI. Trusting God

Let’s come back and see some things that are also important to understand. How do we get to this point in attitude and heart? This is how we learn to trust God.

Jeremiah 10:23: “O LORD, I know that the way of man is not in himself; ***it is not in man who walks to direct his steps.***” That’s why we all make so many mistakes. That’s why it’s automatic to sin.

For example, let’s just take one fantastic, modern convenience that we all have and use: the car or truck. It seems good. It seems right. Look at all the troubles they had developing highways, developing safety and all of this sort of thing.

I was driving on a freeway in Los Angeles and I couldn’t help but think about all these cars jammed six lanes on each side of the highway and how long it takes them to get where they’re going. Here’s this wonderful thing that we all assume is a blessing and when you get on the freeway *it’s a curse!* You look around at the cars and in 99% of the cars there is *one* driver. You go by many homes that are made for two cars and they have five. You can take any aspect of the way that men do things and it won’t work:

- take the federal budget
- take the taxation
- take the money system
- take the prison system

They think the way to do it is: don’t kill them; don’t execute them! Put them in jail for life! What are you going to do when all the prisons are full? They won’t do it God’s way, which says there are either redeemable crimes or unredeemable crimes. ***Unredeemable:*** you execute them. ***Redeemable:*** you rehabilitate them and make them pay.

Like the great crusade that they have, ‘We’re going to put every sex predator in jail for life.’ God says to execute them. We even dared to have one person on Fox News’ Bill O’Reilly program, who said that they ought to execute them. ‘Okay. Let’s put them in prison for life.’ You look at those prisons and the way they build them with concrete and steel and a concrete slab to sleep on; they’re in there 23 hours a day and nothing to do, and you drive them absolutely batty. If they could ever get out, they would be worse criminals than they were when they went in.

Look what happened in Iraq. What did Saddam Hussein do? *He let every criminal out of jail!* Look at the havoc that it raised for months and months with warring, killing, looting, cheating, and things like that.

Verse 23: “O LORD, I know that the way of man is not in himself, it is not in man who walks to direct his steps. O LORD, correct me, but with judgment; not in Your anger, lest You bring me to nothing” (vs 23-24). Our whole relationship with God is one where God:

- directs us
- corrects us
- leads us
- helps us

in our relationship with Him, because we worship Him in Spirit and in Truth.

(go to the next track)

VII. Attitude In Approaching God

Now we’ve seen the manner that we are to approach God. Let’s look at the attitude. There’s an awful lot in the attitude in approaching God that’s important.

Eph. 6 may seem like a strange place to begin talking about attitude toward God, but it really is a good place. As I read this, let’s not apply this to those who are the physical slaves at that time. Let’s apply it to ourselves being *the slaves of God*. That’s what the Greek word ‘doulos’ for servant means, *slave*. We’re a total servant to God.

Ephesians 6:5: “Servants, obey *your* masters according to *the* flesh...” So, we can say our Master is Jesus Christ and our Father is God the Father, in spirit rather than just the flesh.

“...with reverence and trembling, in singleness of heart, as unto Christ; not *merely* with eye service, as *do* pleasers of men...” (vs 5-6). In other words, don’t be a hypocrite and put on a good show when you’re around people that are brethren. “...not *merely* with eye service, as *do* pleasers of men...” because what happens then? *You get into*

politics! Has not politics ruined and hurt the Church? *Yes, indeed! Sure!*

“...but as servants of Christ, **doing the will of God from the heart**” (v 7). There’s the key. ***Not grudgingly!*** Sometimes it’s difficult, but not grudgingly.

Let’s look at the heart, because the heart becomes a very, very important thing. Let’s come to Isa. 66. Let’s look at our attitude and see how this also applies to worshipping God in Spirit and in Truth.

Isaiah 66:1: “Thus says the LORD, ‘The heaven *is* My throne, and the earth *is* My footstool. Where, then, *is* the house that you build for Me? And where *is* the place of My rest? For all these things My hand has made, and these things came to be,’ says the LORD....” (vs 1-2).

When Jesus said, ‘You’re not going to worship in this mountain where they had a temple, and you’re not going to worship in Jerusalem where they had a temple,’ all of those physical things are not required. Men like to have them. Men like to build them and to have buildings to meet in and things like this. That’s perfectly well and fine, but the problem is that when that becomes the paramount thing, whether:

- the temple
- the cathedral
- the building
- the statue
- the idol

—which then gets into idolatry, which is what it’s all about—then, it takes away from the heart. God is interested in the heart. So, he says:

“...But to this one I will look, **to him who is of a poor and contrite spirit** and who trembles at My Word” (v 2).

- you worship God in Spirit and in Truth
- you love Him in Spirit and in Truth
- you obey Him in Spirit and in Truth

Your worship of God in Spirit and in Truth translates into:

- the way that you think
- the way that your attitude is
- the way that you live

I watched a lot of the funeral of John Paul II, and I couldn’t help but think of that over and over again, when I saw all the things that they did and all of the trappings of:

- the funeral
- the buildings
- the idols

- the ceremony

One thing that stuck in my mind was that if he was such a perfect man, why did they have to pray for his soul? I couldn’t understand that. It’s a contradiction in fact, with the Bible. What you saw was ***the whole, physical ritual that glorifies Satan’s perfection of religion!*** That’s what you saw.

When God looks down on something like that He shows what it is. Even if they came to His temple and offered a sacrifice—when the temple was there and when God did command the sacrifice—even then He wanted a contrite spirit and trembling at the Word of God. If you don’t, if you come with a hypocritical attitude, He says:

Verse 3: “He who kills an ox *is as if* he killed a man; he who sacrifices a lamb *is as if* he broke a dog’s neck; he who offers a grain offering *is as if* he offered swine’s blood; he who burns incense *is as if* he blessed an idol. Yea, they have chosen their own ways, and their soul delights in their abominations.” Think of that in relationship to religions of men. What do they do? *They choose what they want rather than God’s way!* Therefore, He says:

Verse 4: “I also will choose their delusions, and I will bring their fears upon them because when I called, no one answered; when I spoke, they did not hear. But they did evil before My eyes and chose *that* in which I did not delight.”

Let’s look at some other Scriptures showing about being wholehearted to God and how we need to approach that. Psal. 130 also shows an attitude of repentance. ***The more you understand about God:***

- through prayer
- through study
- through living God’s way
- knowing right and wrong

the more that you understand how you need to be rescued by Christ.

Psalms 130:1: “Out of the depths I have cried unto You, O LORD. LORD, hearken unto my voice, and let Your ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications” (vs 1-2). When you get yourself in real difficulty and trouble and you start crying out to God, this a good Psal. to turn to, to help you get your mind focused on your attitude and what you need to be.

Verse 3: “If You, LORD, should mark iniquities, O LORD, who shall stand? **But** there is forgiveness with You, that You may be feared.... [feared, loved and, in this case, revered and awe] ...I wait for the LORD, my soul does wait, and in His word do I hope” (vs 3-5).

- repentance brings forgiveness

- forgiveness brings hope
- hope brings love
- love brings reconciliation

All of those together!

Let's see what this kind of repentance does. God is having to take that which is carnal and imperfect, which we are, and perfect it to become like He and God the Father are. Psalm 51 also shows forgiveness, repentance and a deep kind of repentance. This is particularly important when you understand that this Ps. is the Ps. that David prayed when he finally came to himself after the affair with Bathsheba. Remember, that went on for a number of months. Just like every one of us, when we come to a point that we sin and:

- we haven't repented
- we avoid God
- we avoid prayer
- we avoid study

We sort of muddle along until something all of a sudden hits us., and then we repent. That's what happened with David. God sent Nathan, the prophet and gave him the parable about the rich man who had everything and he stole a little ewe and had that for his sacrifice. David said, 'That man will pay for it.' Nathan pointed his finger right at David and said, '*You are the man!*' even though he was 'a man after God's heart.'

Why is that recorded? *It's recorded because all men sin, even those that God uses in profound ways, and that they have to repent!* That's why! That's another verification of the Truth and the inspiration of the Bible. How many history books do you read where it lays out the most egregious sin of a man, records his prayer of repentance and God's restoration of him? *No other book but the Bible!* So, Ps. 51 is a very important one.

Psalm 51:1: "Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Your loving kindness; according to the greatness of Your compassion, blot out my transgressions." When you come to that point and you've had sin and it's been wretched, miserable and rotten, you just feel cruddy all the way through. So, David says:

Verse 2: "Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin, for I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me" (vs 2-3).

What happens is that if you have an on-going sin that you're kind of pushing out of the way, just pushing off to the side, avoiding and not admitting, what's going to happen is *God is going to bring that right smack to the middle of your mind!* It's going to be before you day and night so that you may repent. Then you will understand as David did.

Verse 4: "Against You, You only, have I sinned..."

- God made him king
- God gave him the authority
- God blessed him

God told David, through Nathan: 'Why did you do this? I've given you thus and such and thus and such, and furthermore, if you wanted this and that, I would have given it to you. Why did you do this thing?

"...and done evil in Your sight, that You might be justified when You speak and be in the right when You judge" (v 4). Remember this, never forget—this is the lesson that Job had to learn, too—***God is always right!*** You can add on to that, God is also:

- always merciful
- always kind
- always forgiving upon repentance

Then David understood the depths of human nature.

Verse 5: "Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity..." We're born with sin. *It's in us!* You can see it manifest in the little children when they do the things that they do. You can see it manifest in all areas of life, of people from babies to those who are very old.

"...and in sin did my mother conceive me" (v 5). That wasn't because it was through adultery, of course. It just is that the 'law of sin and death' is inherent in every human being. Here's what God desires:

Verse 6: "**Behold, You desire Truth in the inward parts...**" That is a key of worshipping God in Spirit and in Truth—"Truth in the inward parts."

"...and in the hidden part You shall make me to know wisdom.... [the whole purpose of it] ...Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow" (vs 6-7).

Verse 10: "**Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.**" When you sin as egregiously as David did in this situation, you've got to have yourself cleaned up; you've got to have your heart cleaned up. So, God did! That's all part of it.

VIII. Wholeheartedness

Let's look at a couple of other Ps. to show our whole attitude toward God. In that is repentance, and as we saw in the model prayer, *every day*. Not just a matter of rote, but a matter of deep understanding, introspection, and so forth.

As you read through some of these Psalms, they can be the basis for many of your prayers. Have you ever had it where:

- you know you got to pray
- you don't know what to say
- you just go pray
- you get on your knees
- open the Psalms and start reading them
- apply them
- use those words as your words

I'll guarantee you your own words and your own thoughts will begin to flow as the Spirit of God leads you with it.

Psalms 111:1: "Praise the LORD!..." Part of our worship is praising God. We praise God in prayer. We can praise God also in song, which is a different form of worship. It's not on your knees, but you're singing.

"...I will give thanks to the LORD with my whole heart..." The whole key we want to focus on, here, in our attitude is *wholeheartedness*. Human nature, being deceitful as it is, always likes to reserve a little corner for itself. To become wholehearted is a process of growth, change and overcoming.

- you praise the Lord with your whole heart
- you serve the Lord with your whole heart
- you come to God in every way that way

Psa.119 is quite fantastic, when you understand it. I know in going through this you could take and gives scores of sermons from Psa. 119. Look at it this way: This, I believe, is how Jesus Christ—when He was in the flesh,—viewed the laws and commandments of God. Many of the things that David writes are some of his thoughts and then they are a prophecy of the thoughts of Jesus Christ..

To give you an example of how the Psa. are interspersed with the thoughts of David and then the prophecies of the Words of Christ, Psa. 22 is the prophecy of Christ being crucified. I've often wondered what David thought after he had written this Psalm down and then came back and read it again. Not very much of it applies to David. Most of it applies to the words of Christ, which were another 1200 years in the future.

Psalms 22:1: "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me, and why are You so far from helping Me, and from the words of My groaning?... [the very words of Christ while He was on the cross.] ...O my God, I cry in the daytime, but You do not answer; and in the night season, and am not silent. Yet, You are Holy, O You enthroned upon the praises of Israel" (vs 1-3).

Now, David is getting into his own words. The first verse is definitely about Christ. The second

and third verses, and on down for a little bit, are the words of David.

Verse 4: "Our fathers trusted in You; they trusted, and You delivered them. They cried to You and were delivered; they trusted in You and were not ashamed. But I am a worm, and no man; a reproach of men and despised by the people" (vs 4-6).

Now it's getting into the words of Christ again, v 7: "All who see Me mock Me... [while they look at Christ hanging on the cross] ...they shoot out the lip; they shake the head, saying, 'He trusted on the LORD; let Him deliver Him; let Him rescue Him, since He delights in Him!'" (vs 7-8). What did the scribes and Pharisees say in their mocking? *They said, 'Yes, if you're the Christ, come down off the cross and we will believe You are of God!'*

Verse 9: "For You are He who took Me out of the womb, causing Me to trust while on My mother's breasts. I was cast upon You from birth; You are My God from My mother's womb. Be not far from Me; for trouble is near, for there is none to help.... [some of the thoughts of Christ while He was on the cross] ...Many bulls have encircled around Me..." (vs 9-12). Can you see David praying with 'bulls' running around him? *Of course not!* This is Christ on the cross and the 'bulls' are Satan and the principalities, powers and demons rejoicing that He's dying, thinking that if they can just get Christ killed that He will be dead forever.

"...strong bulls of Bashan have surrounded Me. They opened wide their mouths at Me, like a ravening and a roaring lion. I am poured out like water, and all My bones are out of joint; My heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of My bowels" (vs 12-14).

These are the words of Christ. These are not the words of David, though he wrote them. I've often wondered what David thought. I wonder what the experience of his mind and emotion was when he was praying this prayer and writing down these words.

That's quite a thing where David was 'a man after God's heart' and even inspired him to write down, for prophecy, the very words that Christ would utter. Of course, Christ is going to assume the throne of David. This is quite a thing! This shows us the *wholeheartedness* that we need to have. That:

- in spite of everything
 - in spite of every difficulty
 - in spite of every problem
- God is there!*
- He will help
 - He will hear
 - He will give us hope and raise us up

Verse 16: “Dogs have surrounded Me; a band of evildoers have encircled Me; they have pierced My hands and My feet; and You have brought Me into the dust of death. I can count all My bones; they look and gloat over Me. They divide My garments among them and cast lots upon My vesture” (vs 16-18). All words of Christ, or prophecies of what would happen.

This helps us to be able to understand the kind of attitude we need to have. A *wholehearted attitude* toward God. This is very similar to the very first Psa.

Psalms 1:1: “Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, nor stand in the way of sinners, nor sit in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the Law of the LORD; and in His Law does he meditate day and night” (vs 1-2).

That’s all part of worshipping God in Spirit and in Truth. When you get on your knees to pray, you don’t reach for some modern technical equipment and go, ‘Pray mode, Okay.’ *No!* Prayer is an extension of your relationship with God and an extension of your life.

Psalms 119:1 “Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the LORD.” That’s a good one.

A church member and I were talking and he’s got a guy whose trying to evangelize him to Protestantism. We thought up a few good answers. Here’s a good one for Sunday-keepers. ‘I keep Sunday.’ He says, ‘No, I keep every day holy.’ Answers:

- When do you work?
- Oh, really. God didn’t
- Are you greater than God?
- Jesus didn’t keep Sunday
- Are you better than Jesus?

Just keep one-liners. That’s what we talked about, one-liners.

It says you’re blessed, v 2: “Blessed are they who keep His testimonies and who **seek Him with the whole heart.**” That’s what God wants more than anything else, *wholeheartedness to God!* That’s what He wants in everything that you do.

Verse 3: “They also do no iniquity...” Why? *Because if you’re keeping the commandments of God, walking in His way, you’re not sinning!* You’re here on the Sabbath Day, you’re studying the Word of God. You’re not sinning—are you? *No!* Not even if you’re hungry and hoping that food comes pretty quick, you’re just hungry, that’s all.

“...they walk in His ways. You have commanded us to keep Your precepts diligently” (vs

3-4). We’ll talk about that a little bit later on, too. That has an awful lot to do with it.

Verse 5: “O that my ways were directed to keep Your statutes!... [all the Holy Days are statutes] ...Then I shall not be ashamed when I have respect unto all Your commandments. I will praise You with **uprightness of heart** when I have learned Your righteous judgments. I will keep Your statutes; O forsake me not utterly” (vs 5-8). Very good. It’s helps us a lot with a lot of things that we need to do.

Verse 10: “**With all my heart I have sought You;** O let me not wander from Your commandments. **Your Word I have laid up in my heart, so that I might not sin against You**” (vs 10-11). This is New Testament doctrine. The whole purpose of what God is doing with us is developing:

- the mind
- the heart
- the character
- the love

All the attributes of the Spirit! All of this is part of worshipping God in Spirit and in Truth.

Hebrews 10:16: “‘This is the covenant that I will establish with them after those days’... [the covenant that we have, been established with it] ...says the Lord: **‘I will give My laws into their hearts, and I will inscribe them in their minds.’**” *That’s the very reason that God created us!*

If God is Lawgiver, which He is and He is the only Lawgiver, isn’t that what James says, ‘There is one Lawgiver,’ and if we’re to become like God, which we are, then He’s showing us here, one of the ways that we do it. If it’s in our ‘heart and inscribed in our mind,’ then what is this? *This is how we think!* What does it say? *As a man thinks in his heart, so he is!*

If we have the Spirit of God, which is Truth, in your heart and mind, and you have the Word of God, which is Truth, in your heart and mind, *then you’re going to be thinking like God!* If you’re thinking like God—of course, in a very diminutive scale, because character comes first—then you’re developing the mind of Christ. That’s part of our *wholeheartedness* to God.

Phil. 2—here’s a very interesting way that God inspired it to be written. This is something that you have to *let happen* by active participation in:

- learning the Word of God
- praying to God
- worshipping God
- keeping His commandments
- having them written in you heart and mind

Philippians 2:5: “**Let** this mind be in you, which *was* also in Christ Jesus.” You have to *let* it be there. It’s something you have to *choose* to do. You choose that and God will respond and fill that. *It’s quite a thing!* Isn’t it amazing?

Psalms 119:34: “Give me understanding... [David crying out to God] ...**that I may keep Your Law and observe it with all my heart.**” God wants us *wholehearted* in everything that we do. If we’re going to worship God in Spirit and in Truth, we have to have the Spirit of God in us, we have to have the Truth in us, and the laws and commandments of God are also Truth. *Wholeheartedness* is what we need here.

Verse 58: “**I entreated Your favor...**” That means grace. We all need the grace of God. Of course, as you know, the grace of God is not contrary to the commandments of God. The grace of God is *your standing before Him!*

“...**with all my heart...**” (v 58).

Verse 69: “The proud have forged a lie against me, **but I will keep Your precepts with all my heart.**” *If* we’re *wholehearted* toward God and *wholehearted* in everything that God wants us to do, *then* He’s going to look upon us with mercy, kindness, grace, favor, and so forth. Now that we’ve seen that we need:

- the Truth
- God’s Spirit
- repentance
- wholeheartedness

Let’s look and see what’s going to happen to the world *because they don’t want it.*

IX. Truth Rejected by the World

It’s very important because this happens every time that there is a court trial or a hearing. I couldn’t help but think of this when you see congressional hearings. They all stand up and they raise their right hand. ‘Do you promise to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth?’ I think:

- I wonder what raising the hand does?
- What does that do?
- If it’s not going to be truth *from the heart*, what good does it do to raise the hand or place one on the Bible?

What is going to be coming on the world pretty quickly? When this happens, the world is going to be swept off its feet and it’s going to look like the real thing. The only ones who are going to truly know the difference are those who have the Spirit of God. They did something that these people, who’ll follow this, did not do.

2-Thessalonians 2:8: “And then the lawless one will be revealed (whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth, and will destroy with the brightness of His coming)... [Rev. 19] ...*even* the one whose coming is according to *the* inner working of Satan, with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in those who are perishing **because...** [God doesn’t do anything without cause] ...**they did not receive the love of the Truth, so that they might be saved**” (vs 8-10).

That has an awful lot. If you want to know the full depths of what this is talking about, then you get out a good concordance and do a concordance study about ‘true’ and ‘truth’ all the way through the Bible. You will see what it’s talking about. This also means that they don’t love God’s way, so, they’re going to be deceived.

We’ll close with some verses concerning the Truth of God back in the book of Psalms. Let’s understand about Truth: Truth never changes! Truth never gets old!

Psalms 117:1: “O praise the LORD, all you nations; praise Him, all people, for His merciful kindness is great toward us; and **the Truth of the LORD endures forever.** Praise the LORD!” (v 1-2) Never forget that.

Psalms 119:30: “**I have chosen the way of Truth...** [all part of worshipping God in Spirit and in Truth] ...I have laid Your judgments before me.”

Verse 142: “Your righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and **Your Law is the Truth.**”

What did Jesus say? John 17:17: “...**Your Word is the Truth.**”

Psalms 119:151: “You are near, O LORD, and **all Your commandments are Truth.**” Very important to understand.

- *if* they endure forever
- *if* they’re done in Truth and righteousness
- *if* they are Truth
- *if* Jesus said, ‘Don’t think that I have come to abolish the Law,’
- *if* Jesus said, ‘Man shall live by every Word of God,’
- **then** know for sure that they stand forever

If anyone says that they don’t, then you know who is a liar and what the Truth is.

We’ll finish by coming to Psalms 145:17: “**The LORD is righteous in all His ways and loving in all His works.** The LORD is near unto all who call upon Him, unto all **who call upon Him in Truth...** [worship God in Spirit and in Truth] ...He will fulfill the desire of those who fear Him; He also will

hear their cry, and will save them.” (vs 17-19). Remember we started out also, with the love of God.

Verse 20: “The LORD watches over **all who love Him**... [also implies a resurrection] ...but all the wicked He will destroy.... [the second death] ...My mouth shall speak the praise of the LORD, and let all flesh bless His Holy name forever and ever.’ (vs 20-21)].

That’s part of the how you worship God in Spirit and in Truth!

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible In Its Original Order, A Faithful Version* by Fred R. Coulter

Scriptural References:

- 1) John 4:19-24
- 2) Matthew 6:5-13
- 3) Matthew 22:35-37
- 4) Deuteronomy 5:29
- 5) Deuteronomy 6:4-6
- 6) Matthew 22:38-40
- 7) John 13:34
- 8) Matthew 5:43-48
- 9) Psalm 31:1-5
- 10) Jeremiah 10:23-24
- 11) Ephesians 6:5-7
- 12) Isaiah 66:1-4
- 13) Psalm 130:1-5
- 14) Psalm 51:1-7, 10
- 15) Psalm 111:1
- 16) Psalm 22:1-14, 16-18
- 17) Psalm 1:1-2
- 18) Psalm 119:1-8, 10-11
- 19) Hebrews 10:16
- 20) Philippians 2:5
- 21) Psalm 119:34, 58, 69
- 22) 2-Thessalonians 2:8-10
- 23) Psalm 117:1-2
- 24) Psalm 119:30, 142
- 25) John 17:17
- 26) Psalm 119:151
- 27) Psalm 145:17-21

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Luke 11
- Revelation 19

Also referenced: Sermon:

Remember, When All Else Fails, God Loves You

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How to Worship God in Spirit and Truth II

Fred R. Coulter

It's very interesting when you read John 6 where Jesus said that *He* is the Bread of Life. He pointed out where even some of His disciples were not willing to follow Him because He said this:

John 6:54: "The one who eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up in **the last day**." Let's just stop here and think a minute. This does not say the Last Great Day. What is 'the last day?' *That's the day of the resurrection!*

When you count to Pentecost—and Pentecost pictures the first resurrection—what is the last day of the count? *The fiftieth day!* So, when He says, "...I will raise him [you] up in **the last day**" it is another indirect verification that the resurrection is on Pentecost, because we're the firstfruits and we're going to be harvested as the firstfruits harvest.

Verse 55: "For My flesh is truly food, and My blood is truly drink." If you don't have *The Christian Passover* book, be sure and write in for it, because this explains what it means.

When we enter into covenant with God we enter into a *spiritual* covenant where we pledge our very lives in the same way that Jesus pledged His life. It's one of those things that there is no turning back. Who would want to turn back anyway?

Verse 56: "The one who eats My flesh and drinks My blood is dwelling in Me, and I in him." Showing that the Passover is the renewal of the New Covenant. It is a *spiritual* covenant. It's all wrapped up in worshipping God in Spirit and Truth and developing the spiritual fruits. If you don't renew the Passover, how long will Christ remain living in you? *We don't know! God has to make that judgment!* That's something each one of us needs to evaluate.

Verse 57: "As the living Father has sent Me, and I live by the Father; so also the one who eats Me shall live by Me." That's as clear as can be. What we do when we take the Passover, *which is a spiritual covenant unto spiritual eternal life*, we are saying that we are going to live by Christ, and He is going to grant us eternal life through the power of the Holy Spirit. The Truth is hard for people to accept.

Verse 58: "'This is the Bread, which came down from heaven; not as your fathers ate manna, and died. The one who eats this bread shall live forever.' These things He said in *the* synagogue as He was teaching in Capernaum. **Therefore, after hearing these words, many of His disciples said...**" (vs 58-60). I want you to think about what it says: 'For many are called, but few *are* chosen.'

"...many of His disciples said, '**This is a hard saying. Who is able to hear it?**' But Jesus,

knowing that His disciples were complaining about this, said to them, 'Does this offend you? What if you shall see the Son of man ascending up where He was before?'" (vs 60-62).

Jesus was God! I suggest you read the book of John all the way through. It starts out: John 1:1: "In *the* beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

John 6:62: "What if you shall see the Son of man **ascending up where He was before?**" It tells you that He was God Who became human to be the perfect sacrifice for the sins of all mankind. This *one* verse refutes everything that all of the false doctrine about the 'one God' brings out. Not to say the dozens and scores of other Scriptures that also refute it.

John 17:4: "I have glorified You on the earth.... [He's praying to the Father] ...I have finished the work that You gave Me to do. And now, Father, glorify Me with Your own self, **with the glory that I had with You before the world existed**" (vs 4-5). The *King James* says 'was,' but the Greek *absolutely* means *existed*.

What are you going to do with that if you say that Jesus did not exist until He became impregnated in the womb of Mary? In loving God and worshipping Him in Spirit and Truth also entails a lot of defending the Word of God and believing the Word of God.

John 6:63: "**It is the Spirit that gives life; the flesh profits nothing....**" Very important to realize! Another thing you need to understand is that all human beings—though they live in the flesh—unless they have the Spirit of God, *are dead*. Why? *Because they have 'the law of sin and death' in them and they can die any instant they quit breathing!* This is why human effort without the Spirit of God is incapable of producing *true spiritual* fruit.

"...**The words that I speak to you, they are Spirit and they are Life**" (v 63). Part of your worshipping God in Spirit and Truth is studying the Word of God.

When you study the Word of God, when you don't understand the true meaning of the Word of God and what it is, you know that these are the Words of God—God is talking to you—written down. That's important to understand. Something happens when you have the Spirit of God in your mind and you read and study the Bible. You are able to learn things from it because God's Spirit *in you* and God's Words—which are Spirit—are interacting in your mind to teach you. There's a very interesting verse right here in John 6, at the same time.

This one woman who received a New Testament from her daughter said, 'We have quit the Baptist Church, we are keeping the Sabbath and the Bible is opening up to us as we study every Sabbath.' What is that? *That is the action of God's Spirit working with them to bring them to the knowledge of the Truth!* Of course, the Spirit of God is called the Spirit of Truth, too. This is a *spiritual* thing.

This is why in Sabbath services when we get together, we learn from the Word of God. This is why many, many times we learn more on the Sabbath than any other day.

- Why is that? *Because God created the Sabbath Day for that very purpose, to teach us!*
- Who is doing the teaching?

Verse 44: "No one can come to Me unless the Father, Who sent Me, draws him..." *God is very selective!* Why is God very selective? *Because He's got a plan for the other people that He doesn't call, which we know encompasses the Last Great Day!*

"...and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, '**And they shall all be taught by God.**'" (vs 44-45).

Let's look at the words of Jesus. What did Jesus teach? *What the Father commanded Him!* All the words of Jesus came from the Father. Very important to understand that in studying.

"...Therefore, **everyone who has heard from the Father, and has learned, comes to Me**" (v 45). That's how God calls. Let's again look at the importance of the Word of God.

John 12:42: "But even so, many among the rulers believed in Him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess Him, so that they would not be put out of the synagogue." A little politics going on there, a little self-preservation. That's why we have the book *Lord, What Should I Do?* You're better off standing alone with God in Truth than standing in a congregation of sinners.

Verse 43: "For they loved the glory of men more than the glory of God. Then Jesus called out and said, 'The one who believes in Me does not believe in Me, but in Him Who sent Me. And the one who sees Me sees Him Who sent Me. I have come as a light into the world so that everyone who believes in Me may not remain in darkness'" (vs 43-46).

The opposite then, if you don't believe in Jesus, you remain in darkness. And 'what fellowship does light have with darkness?' *None!*

Verse 47: "But if anyone hears My words and **does not believe...**" There are a lot of people

who call themselves Christians but don't believe. Add to this that He was the Lord God of the Old Testament and He spoke all the words that are recorded in the Old Testament.

"...I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world, but to save the world.... [He shows how judgment is coming] ...**The one who rejects Me and does not receive My words...**" (vs 47-48). Very important, because too many ministers today teach their own ideas, their own ways and reject God. Let's reflect on something here; since:

- God is perfect, which He is
- His Word is perfect, which it is
- His Word is True, which it is
- "...not one lie comes from the Truth" (1-John 2:21)

Can man improve upon the Word of God? *Think about it!* He thinks that he can:

- we're going to improve upon it
- we're going to worship on Sunday, that's better

God never said it was!

- we don't have to keep the Holy Days because they're Jewish

God never said they were; they are His!

All of those kinds of statements are *rejecting* Jesus Christ and are *rejecting* His Words because you don't receive them.

John 12:48: "...has one who judges him; the word which I have spoken, that shall judge him in the last day. **For I have not spoken from Myself...**" (vs 48-49). These words did not come from Jesus as a human being.

Jesus was not taught as a Jew, He was not taught by the rabbis; ***He was taught by God the Father!*** We have Appendix G, ***Jesus Christ Was Taught Directly by God the Father in The Holy Bible In Its Original Order, A Faithful Version***, which shows that.

"...but the Father, Who sent Me, gave Me commandment Himself, **what I should say and what I should speak.** And I know that His commandment is eternal life. **Therefore, whatever I speak, I speak exactly as the Father has told Me**" (vs 49-50).

Isn't that something? Here, you have recorded for you the very words of God! When you read and study, God is teaching you and it's God the Father the Sovereign Ruler of the universe. You cannot have any better relationship than that. It's directly between you and God the Father and that's a relationship. That's why you worship Him in Spirit and in Truth.

This is great! Just think about this: How much of human nature do I want to retain? When

you know the Truth and you know the evil of human nature—**none!** That won't occur until the resurrection, the last vestige of getting rid of human flesh.

We always go to Jer. 17:9, but there are some other things that are recorded there which are important to understand, that has to do with:

- human nature
- human mind
- trusting in God
- trusting in men

Here is a prime verse against church hierarchy, Jeremiah 17:5 “Thus says the LORD, ‘**Cursed is the man who trusts in man...**’” That’s why the New Testament says, ‘Prove all things, hold fast to that which is good.’

“...and makes flesh his arm... [his strength] ...and whose heart departs from the LORD.... [quite an interesting statement] ...For he shall be like a shrub in the desert, and shall not see when good comes. But he shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, *in a salt land that is not inhabited*” (vs 5-6).

You can also apply that spiritually. You get out into the spiritual wilderness of this world where there is no Truth, or where there are so many lies that the Truth is totally distorted.

Trusting in God:

Verse 7: “Blessed *is* the man who **trusts in the LORD** and whose hope is the LORD.” Part of worshipping God in Spirit and in Truth in our relationship with Him is trusting in the Lord. Trusting in Him in everything.

Verse 8: “For he shall be like a tree planted by the waters; *it* sends out its roots by the river, and *it* shall not fear when the heat comes, but its foliage shall be green; and he is not worried in the year of drought, nor will it cease from yielding fruit.” That’s the whole purpose, to yield the *spiritual fruits of God* that He wants us to have, ***by trusting in Him!***

Part of worshipping God in Spirit and Truth is also to use the Truth, which is the sword of the Lord, to cut through all of the false teachings and doctrines that men bring along under the inspiration of Satan, which makes it sound ‘blessedly’ true.

Not only has Satan done this in the society, but what is it that he is doing to the ‘so-called’ Christian churches today? As I read from part the introduction to *The Marketing of Evil* by David Kupelian, I want you to not only view the nation, but I also want you to view all those churches that profess Christianity. I want you to also keep in mind the Churches of God, as well. Satan is never going

to be satisfied until he can get everyone he can get, and he will never do it by a frontal assault but by *the marketing of evil*.

Introduction from *The Marketing of Evil* by David Kupelian:

As Americans, we’ve come to tolerate, embrace, even champion many things that would have horrified our parents’ generation. Things like abortion-on-demand virtually up to the moment of birth, judges banning the Ten Commandments from public places...

There’s a judge recently who said, ‘You cannot pray in the name of Jesus.’ I would tell him, ‘I defy you! ***I will pray in the name of Jesus*** and if you want to haul me off to jail, ***send the sheriff!*** God gave me freedom of speech and if I pray in the name of Jesus, ***I shall do so!***

...a national explosion of middle-school sex, slow starvation of the disabled, thousands of homosexuals openly flaunting the law and getting “married,” and online porn creating late-night sex addicts in millions of middle-class homes.

At the same time, our courts have scrubbed America’s classrooms surgically clean of every vestige of religion on which this nation was founded—Christianity.

The plain truth is, within the space of our lifetimes, much of what Americans almost always, once almost universally abhorred has been packaged, perfumed, gift wrapped, and sold to us as though it had great value. By skillfully playing on our deeply held nation’s values of fairness, generosity and...

God said, through Christ, ‘Judge righteous judgment’—didn’t He? ***Yes!***

...and tolerance, these marketers have persuaded us to embrace as enlightened and noble that which previous generations since America’s founding regarded as grossly destructive—in a word, evil.

Then he talks about what happens when a person for the first time—like in abortion with a medical student—crosses the line and performs the abortion. Something happens!

Likewise, what the Apostle Paul is writing about is that ***God does not***—though we have to overcome sin and overcome the pulls of the flesh—***want us to cross the line into accepting lies in place of Truth!*** Very important to understand!

2-Timothy 3:13: “But wicked men and imposters shall become worse and worse, deceiving *others* and being deceived *themselves*. But *as for*

you, continue in the things that you did learn and were assured of, knowing from whom you have learned *them*; and that from a child you have known the Holy Writings” (vs 13-15). That’s the Old Testament.

The biggest lie that has ever been perpetrated upon a people who want to find God is—and they go to a church anywhere they may go, be it Protestant, Catholic or otherwise—they are told that the Old Testament has been done away. They are told that the laws of God no longer count.

“...which are able to make you wise unto salvation through faith, which *is* in Christ Jesus” (v 15). This is why the words that Jesus spoke, which came from God the Father, *are ‘Spirit and are Life and are Truth!’*

Verse 16: “**All Scripture**... [not some, not part, but *all*, even the historical and genealogies] **...is God-breathed** and *is* profitable for doctrine, for conviction, for correction, for instruction in righteousness...”—so that you can worship God in Spirit and in Truth; you can be taught of God.

Verse 17: “So that the man of God may be complete, fully equipped for every good work.” This talking directly to Timothy as an evangelist and teacher. In other words, Paul is telling Timothy to use the Scriptures of God. They’re all “...God-breathed...” They are the words of God!

- When I’m speaking, what am I using? *My breath!*
- When you speak what do you use? *You use your breath!*

It’s comes directly from God!

2-Tim. 4 becomes very important in what we’re going to discuss about worshipping God in Spirit and in Truth.

2-Timothy 4:1: “I charge you, therefore, in the sight of God, even the Lord Jesus Christ, Who is ready to judge *the* living and *the* dead at His appearing and His kingdom: **Preach the Word!** Be urgent in season and out of season...” (vs 1-2). Always be zealous for God’s Word and His way.

“...**convict**...” (v 2). That’s an important thing that we learn when we come to understand the Truth. With the Spirit of God and the Word of God, when God opens our mind it convicts us. *It convicts us* of sin when we sin so that we may repent. *It convicts us* of Truth that we have conviction as a spiritual foundation that can’t be shaken, not mealy-mouth, not wishy-washy, but *convicted*.

“...**rebuke**...” (v 2). The Word of God corrects you! If you want to have quite an example of how the Word of God can correct you, as well as seeing things in the world and nation, study the book of Jeremiah. That’s some book!

“...**encourage**... [and inspiration] ...with all patience and doctrine” (v 2).

Let me read you a doctrine just to give you a point, because there are a lot of people who say that we really shouldn’t get into doctrine too much because doctrine divides. *Doctrine does divide!* That’s a true part of the statement. That’s why we should get into it. Let’s just love one another. All that sounds good—doesn’t it? Here is a doctrine, a teaching.

1-John 5:2: “**By this standard**... [you’ve got to have some standard of measurement] ...we know that we love the children of God: **when we love God and keep His commandments.**” You have to have both. You know what they say: ‘Love and marriage go together like a horse and carriage.’ Loving God and keeping His commandments go hand-in-hand. How are we to keep them? *In Spirit and in Truth*, which then gets back to *worshipping God in Spirit and Truth!*

Verse 3: “For this is the love of God: that we keep His commandments; **and** His commandments are not burdensome.” That is a teaching! A doctrine!

Although all the Word of God is the inspired God-breathed Word of God, there are some things that are hard to be understood. Save those until after you understand the simple things. Then move up to the complicated things. For example:

You cannot understand Rev. unless you have a good grasp of the whole Bible. You cannot understand the book of Galatians unless you understand Judaism. Protestant theology concerning Galatians is completely wrong. You stick with the simple things and then move to the complicated. If you want to know about Galatians, note sermon series: *Circumcision Wars*, it will amaze you. Also note the book *Code of Jewish Law* by Solomon Ganzfried and Hyman E. Goldin.

You read all of this from 2-Tim. 3:13-4:3. Here’s the conclusion of it and the reason why it is important.

2-Timothy 4:3: “For there shall come a time when they will not tolerate **sound doctrine**; but according to their own lusts they shall accumulate to themselves *a great number of* teachers, having ears itching *to hear what satisfies their cravings*; and they shall turn away their own ears from the Truth; and **they shall be turned aside unto myths**” (vs 3-4).

We’ve seen that happen in our lifetime. If men teach lies, what is a lie? *It is a myth!* That’s what false prophets do. Here’s what false teachers will do to teach against the Word of God. Abortion, adultery, homosexuality and all of those things are against the Word of God.

{continuing with *The Marketing of Evil*}

He says here, quoting a man (unknown source):

Lose you inhibitions.

He's talking about the thing concerning teaching young people in church and teaching them the wrong way.

Young people usually have inhibitions against doing anything too embarrassing or shameful. These exercises...

He talks about it how one youth leader had them all brush their teeth, spit in a cup and then they would pass it around and drink it to lose your inhibitions. These reality shows on television where they do all kinds of evil things: eat worms and lie with corpses and all that sort of thing. By the way, that is part of Hinduism—the left hand way to God—being taught that way.

...are designed to free people from such hang-ups....

Give in to peer pressure. Defenders of these kinds of activities maintain that they help create group unity. The way they work, though, is to overcome a teenagers' inhibition with greater desire to go along with the group....

Then, they come along with this:

Christianity is stupid. Status conscious teenagers know that those who are so depraved, who are so desperate to be liked that they will do anything to curry favor are impossible to respect. Young people may come to off-the-wall youth group meetings, but when they grow up they will likely associate the church with immature, juvenile, phases of their lives and Christianity will be something they will grow out of.

Beth is right, but it's actually much worse. Degrading someone is a classic, preparatory step to brainwashing. I'm not saying church youth leaders are intentionally trying to brainwash anyone, but the fact is, someone who has been tempted to cross the ethical boundaries...

That's the whole thing, 'the ethical boundaries.' What Satan wants you to do is to *cross the boundary of commandment-keeping to commandment-breaking* and thinking that commandment-breaking is good.

...in response to peer pressure or out of fear of ridicule or other adverse consequences, is being open wide to being programmed by a strong personality. This dynamic makes it all the more powerful by

the process of a group pulling in the same direction as the leader.

So then, he points out how it is when people begin to do things that are evil. This is what happens when people come to this point *of crossing over the barrier of keeping the commandments of God to breaking the commandments of God*, then here's what they do:

2-Timothy 4:4: "**And they shall turn away their own ears from the Truth; and they shall be turned aside unto myths.**" That's what's happened in too many cases.

Let's get back to what we need to cover here concerning trusting in God. What do you do when you don't understand something right away? *You trust God that you'll understand at a later time!*

Psalms 31:1: "In You, O LORD, have I taken refuge..."—put my trust. We saw what it was there in Jer. 17 about those who trust in a man. You can just see it before the throne of judgment: A person is resurrected and God says, 'What was your life like? You had this sin, this sin, this sin.' It's all recorded on the spirit of man, so God knows it all. The man says, 'Well, I believed the pope!' Don't trust in a man. **Trust in the Lord with all your heart!**

"...let me never be ashamed; deliver me in Your righteousness" (v 1). Here's a prayer where David was in trouble and having to trust in the Lord. Sometimes you come down to the point in your life that the only thing left for you to do is trust in God. That's a good thing! That's what God wants!

Verse 2: "Bow down Your ear to me; deliver me quickly; **be my strong Rock**, a fortress of defense to save me; for **You are my Rock and my fortress...**" (vs 2-3). Tie in there Matt. 7:

- you build on the Rock, which is Christ
- you build in Spirit and in Truth
- you build a relationship with God the Father and Jesus Christ

"...therefore, for Your name's sake lead me and guide me. Pull me up out of the net that they have hidden for me, for You are my strength" (vs 3-4).

Verse 19: "Oh, how great is Your goodness, which You have laid up for those who fear You, which You have prepared for those who take refuge in You before the sons of men!"

Psa. 25 shows what is going to happen when you trust in God, how your life is going to be and what He will do.

(go to the next track)

Psalms 25:1: "To You, O LORD, do I lift up my soul. O my God, **I trust in You**; do not let me be ashamed, let not my enemies triumph over me" (vs 1-2).

Lots of times God is doing something in your life that at the time He's doing it you don't understand what is happening, but you have to trust in God. He's got something else in mind for you than what you have for yourself. That's when you have to trust in God. Then later you can look back in hindsight and understand that.

Verse 3: "Yea, let none who wait on You be ashamed; let them be ashamed who deal treacherously without cause. **Show me Your ways...**" (vs 3-4). That's how you worship God in Spirit and in Truth. When you worship Him in Spirit and in Truth, starting in prayer, then you have to get up off your knees and you have to go live it.

"...O LORD; **teach me** Your paths. **Lead me** in Your Truth and teach me..." (vs 4-5). Notice how that ties in where we began in John 6. *The Father Himself teaches you* and the words that Jesus speaks are Spirit and Life, and they are recorded.

"...for You are the God of my salvation; on You do I wait all the day long. Remember, O LORD, Your tender mercies and Your loving kindness, for they have been of old" (vs 5-6).

If you feel like you've been going through things, you're down and depressed, you've been through a trial and difficulty, do just like he said here, "Remember, O LORD, Your tender mercies and Your loving kindness..." and your goodness and kindness to me. He will do so!

Verse 7: "Do not remember the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions... [repentance] ...according to Your loving kindness remember me for Your goodness sake, O LORD. Good and upright is the LORD; therefore, He will **teach sinners** in the way. **The meek...**" (vs 7-9). Those who are worshipping God in Spirit and in Truth and have a repentant attitude, etc.

"...He will guide in judgment; and the **meek** He will teach **His** way.... [that's what it's all about] ...All the paths of the LORD are mercy and truth to those who keep His covenant and His testimonies" (vs 9-10). That's where we started in John 6 with the New Covenant.

Let's come down to v 14: "The secret of the LORD is with those who fear Him..." This tells us that *the only way we're going to understand God and His Word*—because it's a secret being revealed and He reveals it to those that He has called—*is to love God and fear Him*.

"...and He will show them His covenant. My eyes are ever toward the LORD..." (vs 14-15). *Quite a Psalm!*

Let's come to Ps. 118, speaking of trust. This is why in your relationship with God and in your prayers and worshipping God in Spirit and in

Truth that the Psalms are so important and so powerful. It helps give you *the conviction and the understanding* of what you need.

Psalm 118:1: "O, give thanks to the LORD, for He is good because His steadfast love **endures forever.**" Ps. 132—every verse ends in 'His mercy endures forever.' That's not a vain repetition because if 'His mercy endures forever' there aren't enough words to write it down as to how long it endures. So, he says it three times here.

Verse 2: "Let Israel now say that His steadfast love ¹**endures forever....** [the congregation] ...Let the house of Aaron now say that His steadfast love ²**endures forever....** [the ministry of God] ...Let those who fear the LORD now say that His steadfast love ³**endures forever.** I called upon the LORD in distress; the LORD answered me, and set me in a large place. The LORD is on my side..." (vs 2-6). Let's make it clear. The Lord is only on our side **IF** we are on His side; then He fights for us.

"...I will not fear. What can man do to me? The LORD is for me as my Helper; therefore, I will look in triumph upon those who hate me" (vs 6-7). What's the whole point of all this? *In trouble trust in God!*

Verse 8: "It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in man. It is better to trust in the LORD than to trust in princes" (vs 8-9). *Always trusting in God!*

Proverbs 29:25: "The fear of man brings a snare, but whoever puts his trust in the LORD **shall be safe.**"

Proverbs 28:25: "He who is of a proud heart stirs up strife, but he who puts his trust in the LORD **shall be enriched.**" That means made *spiritually* rich.

Let's look a little bit more concerning the Word of God. We're going to spend quite a bit of time here in Ps. 119, because all of this tells us how:

- to love God
- to serve God
- to keep His commandments

It's all about our relationship with God as we worship Him in Spirit and in Truth.

Psalm 119:42: "That I may have an answer for the one who reproaches me, for **I trust in Your Word.**" It's all God-breathed. *You trust in God! You trust in His Word!*

Verse 43: "And take not the Word of Truth utterly out of my mouth, for I have hoped in Your judgments." You see how *trust and hope* work together there.

Verse 89: “Forever, O LORD, Your Word is settled in the heavens.” No changing it. It’s settled in heaven, speaking of the Word of Truth—God’s Truth.

When you study the Bible, it’s like a huge sphere; there are many parts to it and you put it together and you get the whole of it. You get a little here, you get a little there, you get a little in another place, and spiritually with God’s Word He begins to help you have understanding to put it together.

Verse 160: “Your Word is true **from the beginning...**” That’s why when anyone comes along and says: ‘God didn’t mean this, God didn’t mean that, God didn’t mean the other thing,’ what are they doing? *They’re calling God a liar!* His ‘Word is true from the beginning.’

The Commandments of God:

Let’s look at some other things concerning the commandments of God. Everyone in the Protestant world really does not like the commandments of God.

Verse 47: “And I will delight myself in **Your commandments**, which I have loved.”

- you love God
- you love His Word
- you trust in His Word
- you delight in His commandments

Verse 48: “And I will lift up my hands unto **Your commandments, which I have loved**, and I will meditate on Your statutes.” Let’s see this in action.

I find it very interesting that when people don’t understand the Sabbath, I say, ‘You do this: you keep the Sabbath every week and on the Sabbath you study the Word of God and I’ll guarantee you that at the end of a month you will know why you should keep the Sabbath.’ Hardly ever fails.

Isaiah 58 compared with Psa. 119:47-48, this is an action; Isaiah 58:13: “**If** you turn your foot away from the Sabbath... [don’t be trampling on it] ...*from* doing your own desires on My Holy Day, and **call the Sabbath a delight...**”

Isn’t that what it said, “...I will delight myself in Your commandments...”? If you think the Sabbath is burdensome, it will be burdensome to you because you are not profiting from it.

“...**call the Sabbath a delight** the Holy of the LORD, honorable; and shall honor Him, not doing your own ways, nor pursuing your own desires, nor speaking *your own* words, **then** you shall delight yourself in the LORD...” (vs 13-14). Because:

- you will have understanding
- you will worship Him in Spirit and in Truth
- you will walk in the commandments of God in Spirit and in Truth
- you will have a relationship with God the Father and Jesus Christ in Spirit and in Truth

All of that together.

“...and I will cause you to ride upon the high places of the earth...” (v 14). That is the inheritance in the Kingdom of God. All of those in the first resurrection are going to be kings and priests, and they’re going to rule and reign with Christ a thousand years. *That’s just the beginning!* After that there’s the whole universe. The reason that the universe is so incomprehensible to man—so vast from what we’re able to see of it—is because God has great and fantastic plans for the whole universe. He didn’t make it in vain. Then we can really travel around space because we’ll be spirit beings. *That’ll be something!*

Psalms 119:60: “I made haste and did not delay to **keep Your commandments.**”

Verse 73: “Your hands have made me and formed me; give me understanding so that I may **learn Your commandments.**” We learn them continually, ‘precept upon precept and line upon line.’

Here is the whole key to understanding the Word of God and God; v 127: “**Therefore, I love Your commandments above gold—yea, above fine gold.**”

As I have mentioned before, if you had a room that was all closed off and in it you put a Bible and shined a spotlight on it. On a table next to that one, you had a pile of gold 18 inches high and you put a spotlight on that. Then you had a contest and you said, ‘I want you to choose what is the most important thing here, the most valuable thing. You have two choices.’ They open the door and they see the Bible here and the gold there. Which will most people take? *Physical gold!* You can’t come to the understanding of how great:

- the ways of God
- the commandments of God
- the statutes of God
- the testimonies of God
- the precepts of God

are **until** you have God’s Spirit and you have *spiritual reality*, rather than *physical perception*. You might even have on there: This gold weighs so much and is worth so many millions of dollars and this Bible cost \$39.95. ‘The one leads to death and the other one leads to life. Which do you want?’

Verse 128: “**Therefore, I esteem all Your precepts...**” Precepts goes beyond commandments and laws. That’s the way of God’s thinking. We’ll look at precepts in just a bit because it has an awful lot to do about the precepts. This is why when you have the Spirit of God:

- you understand about the commandments of God
- you understand about the Word of God
- you have a relationship with God based on Spirit and Truth with God’s Spirit

Then you’re able to understand the precepts, or the thinking, of God! That’s what it is, here.

Verse 128: “**Therefore, I esteem all Your precepts** concerning all things **to be right**, and I hate every false way” (v 128). When you come to that *conviction of mind* and that *spirit of mind*:

- *then* you can have a relationship with God
- *then* you can have spiritual strength in time of trouble
- *then* you can always know that your trust in God is going to be right every single time

By walking in faith, you’re not looking to the physical things around you to decide what to do. You’re *trusting* in God.

The Precepts of God:

Let’s look at precepts because this has an awful lot to do with God’s way. It’s something you don’t come by immediately:

- you grow in this
- you develop it
 - ✓ by studying the Word of God
 - ✓ by knowing the Word of God
 - ✓ by living the Word of God
 - ✓ by praying
 - ✓ by drawing close to God

Verse 27: “Make me to understand the way of **Your precepts**... [everything about God’s way] ...and so shall I speak of Your wonderful works.

Verse 40: “Behold, I have longed after **Your precepts**; give me life in Your righteousness.” When you understand:

- the ways of God
- the thoughts of God
- the Words of God

then you can be enlivened in God’s righteousness.

Verse 69: “The proud have forged a lie against me, but **I will keep Your precepts with all my heart**. Their heart is gross like fat... [the bad kind of fat] ...but **I delight in Your Law**. It is good for me that I have been afflicted, so that **I might**

learn Your statutes.” (vs 69-71). Job had to come to that!

Verse 92: “Unless Your Law had been my delight, then I should have perished in my affliction. **I will never forget Your precepts**, for with them You have given me life. I am Yours; save me, for **I have sought Your precepts**” (vs 92-94).

When we come to God and we pray, we don’t demand of God, *we claim His promises*. God said that whatever His promises are, whatever His Word is, it’s a promise and God cannot lie; *we claim the promise*. God promised that He would help us; *we claim the promise*. God said He would intervene for us; *we claim the promise*.

We don’t get down there and say, ‘God I’m in this jam. You’ve *got to intervene* for me.’ **No!** You get down there and you say, ‘O God, this is a terrible situation and I don’t know what to do. I need You to intervene for me. Give me wisdom; give me understanding. I don’t know where to go, what to do, how to do it, or which way to turn.’

Sometimes you get in such a spiritual state you don’t know which way is up, which is down, which way is sideways, and you just have to go to God and admit that that’s just the way things are and claim His promises that He will intervene for you. God will! God is there! *God cannot lie and He will not lie!*

The Laws of God:

Let’s look at the Word of God is true and right, how we need to handle it and how we need to use it. Let’s look at the Laws of God.

Verse 96: “I have seen an end to every purpose... [He’s looking to the end result of it.] ...but **Your commandment** is exceedingly broad. **O how love I Your law!** It is my meditation all the day.... [just like Psa. 1] ...**Your commandments** make me wiser than my enemies, for they... [Your commandments] ...are ever with me. I have more understanding than all my teachers, for Your testimonies are my meditation” (vs 96-99). This Psa. Is so absolutely fantastic.

Sidebar: You see at the top of each section in Psa. 119, that each section is an eight-verse section. The word at the top is the name of one of the letters of the Hebrew alphabet. There are 22 letters in the Hebrew alphabet. When this Psalm was given at the temple, it was sung. Every verse in each of these sections starts out with that letter and they would sing this whole Psalm—Psalm. of Degrees—and the Levites would memorize it and sing it. It’s quite interesting that it’s divided that way.

It is so spiritually ‘jam-packed’—the Word of God is like a sphere—with so much concerning the Word of God that it might be good if you could

take a section or two every day, study through it, read through it and maybe even make it part of your prayer to help you in drawing close to God in Spirit and Truth and in worshipping Him and understanding His Word.

Verse 109: “My life is in my hand daily, yet, **I do not forget Your Law.**”

Verse 113: “I hate those who are double-minded, but **Your Law do I love.**” This also part of understanding how to get rid of carnal nature. You hate vanity and hate vain thoughts.

Have you ever had a thought come along and it looks right, it sounds right, *but it's not of God?* Sometimes it can lodge in there. Have you ever had a commercial lodge in your mind that you can't get rid of? *The same way with human thinking! The same way with vain human reasoning!* You've got to come to **love God's way and hate vain thoughts!**

Verse 114: “You are my hiding place and my shield; **I hope in Your Word.**” All of this ties together. *This is so great!* Let's understand this:

Verse 142: “**Your righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and Your Law is the Truth.**” So, it's everlasting! What we are doing, brethren, is for eternity. Think on that!

Everything that you are doing in developing your relationship with God and worshipping Him in Spirit and in Truth is forever! You are learning how to become like God! That's why we worship Him in Spirit and in Truth!

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version* by Fred R. Coulter

Scriptural References:

- 1) John 6:54-62
- 2) John 1:1
- 3) John 6:62
- 4) John 17:4-5
- 5) John 6:63, 44-45
- 6) John 12:42-48
- 7) 1-John 2:21
- 8) John 12:48-50
- 9) Jeremiah 17:5-8
- 10) 2-Timothy 3:13-17
- 11) 2-Timothy 4:1-2
- 12) 1-John 5:2-3
- 13) 2-Timothy 4:3-4
- 14) Psalm 31:1-4, 19
- 15) Psalm 25:1-10, 14-15
- 16) Psalm 118:1-9
- 17) Proverbs 29:25
- 18) Proverbs 28:25
- 19) Psalms 119:42-43, 89, 160, 47-48

20) Isaiah 58:13-14

21) Psalm 119:60, 73, 127-128, 27, 40, 69-71, 92-94, 96-99, 109, 113-114, 142

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Matthew 7
- Psalm 132; 1

Also referenced:

Books:

- *The Christian Passover* by Fred R. Coulter
- *Lord, What Should I Do?* by Fred R. Coulter
- *The Marketing of Evil* by David Kupelian
- *Code of Jewish Law* by Solomon Ganzfried and Hyman E. Goldin

Sermon Series: *Circumcision Wars*

Appendix:

- From *The Holy Bible In Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*: Appendix G: Jesus Christ Was Taught Directly by God the Father

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Spirit of God—Power of God I

Fred R. Coulter

- Since God is a spirit, is His Spirit in everything in the world?
- What does God mean by the statement that He fills heaven and earth?

We'll look at something in Jer. 23, He's talking about the false prophets that treat His Word very shabbily. This is really something that's important to understand.

Jeremiah 23:22: "But **if** they... [false prophets] ...had stood in My counsel and had caused My people to hear My words..." The Word of God, regardless who speaks it, is effective as long as it is spoken and taught correctly.

"...**then** they would have turned them from their evil way and from the evil of their doings. *Am I a God Who is near,*' says the LORD, 'and not a God afar off?' (vs 22-23).

- What does He mean by *near*?
- How near is God?
- If He's in the third heaven, is He everywhere?
- If He's a single individual, how can He do this?

Verse 24: "Can anyone hide himself in secret places so that I shall not see him?" says the LORD...."

- How does God see that?
- Does He see everything, everyone, everything throughout the whole universe all the time?

"...Do I not fill the heavens and earth?" says the LORD" (v 24). This is where people say that God is in everything everywhere.

- Is that true?
- How can that be?

This is what also causes people to believe in pantheism, which is *God is everywhere*:

- God is in the door
- God is in the floor
- God is in human beings
- God is in animals
- God is in trees, that's why they hug trees
- God is in everything that He has created

Where can God be as an individual? *For example*: If I drink a glass of milk, am I drinking God? If I eat a steak, am I eating God?

Let's answer the question. I think Psa. 139, written by David, is the one what helped provoke the

question, which is very similar to Jer. 23:24. perhaps we can conclude this accurately. Did David have the Holy Spirit of God? *Yes!* Someone who has the Holy Spirit of God obviously is in a different category than someone who does not. Let's read this with God's understanding, here, of having the Holy Spirit:

Psalms 139:1: "O LORD, You have searched me and have known me." With the Spirit of God in us, yes, He knows us. He searches the reigns, tries the hearts, His Spirit leads us, all of that.

Verse 2: "You know my sitting down and my rising up; You understand my thoughts afar off.... [of course; He made all human beings] ...You measure my going about and my lying down, and are acquainted with all my ways, for there is not a word on my tongue, but, lo, O LORD, You know it altogether" (vs 2-4).

- Does God read every mind?
- When you sit down in the chair, are you sitting on God?
- When you walk on the earth, are you walking on God?

That would have to be if God were everywhere, in all places at all times, in everything that He has created with His personal Being.

Verse 6: "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it." Today we're going to see that we can come up about an inch and a half or two, and understand a little more.

Verse 7: "Where shall I go from Your Spirit? Or where shall I flee from Your presence? If I go up into heaven, You are there; if I make my bed in the grave, behold, You are there. If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the farthest parts of the sea, even there Your hand shall lead me, and Your right hand shall hold me. If I say, 'Surely the darkness shall cover me, and the light around me shall be night;' Even the darkness does not hide from You, but the night shines as the day; as is the darkness, so is the light to You, For You have possessed my reins; You have knit me together in my mother's womb" (vs 7-13). We've covered how human beings are created by the Spirit of God.

Let's ask how God creates. First of all, let's look at some things concerning God. We will see that God is a Being a separate, individual Being. He is not in everything, in every place at all times. We will see that He has means of knowing and we'll see what those are.

Rev. 4—In vision, John was able to see the throne of God. This tells us something about God, it

doesn't tell us everything, but it gives us some basic information that we need to know. When John was told, 'Come up here' (v 1):

Revelation 4:2: "And immediately I was in *the* Spirit... [a vision that he sees] ...and behold, a throne was set in heaven, and *One* was sitting on the throne." If God is sitting on the throne, how can He be everywhere in everything all at once and still be a separate Being?

Verse 3: "And He Who *was* sitting was in appearance like a jasper stone and a sardius stone..." I can't imagine what that would look like.

Mike and I were talking and he brought out a very important point, which we'll just project forward here: God is the sum total in His Being:

- of power
- of energy
- of righteousness
- of truth
- of glory

This is the best way to describe it here. I can't imagine what that would look like.

"...and a rainbow *was* around the throne, like an emerald in its appearance. And around the throne *were* twenty-four thrones; and on the thrones I saw twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in white garments; and they had on their heads golden crowns" (vs 3-4).

So, there are 24 other beings. What are they there for? *They obviously have a purpose!* We're not told what they do, but since the #12 is the number of government, we have 2 times 12, which then is this the administrators of the creation of God, under His authority? *We don't know!* We're going to do quite a bit of speculation here. Like I said, maybe we can understand an inch and a half.

Verse 5: "And proceeding from the throne... [this becomes interesting] ...were lightnings and thunders and voices; and seven lamps of fire..." This tells us about the power of God. From God comes His Spirit and for Christians, is a special thing from God the Father and Jesus Christ.

Also coming from God is *power*, so that He—probably with the assistance of the 24 elders, Jesus Christ and the angels and there are host of angels—can manage and take care of the whole universe and His special creation on earth.

We'll talk about the 'seven spirits of God' in just a little bit.

- What are they?
- What do they do?
- How do they fit in with what God is doing?

Revelation 1:4: "John to the seven churches that *are* in Asia: Grace and peace *be* to you from Him Who is, and Who was, and Who *is* to come; and **from the seven spirits that are before His throne**.... [the seven spirits have an awful lot to do with what God is doing] ...and from Jesus Christ, the faithful Witness, the Firstborn from the dead, and the Ruler of the kings of the earth. To Him Who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood" (vs 4-5). What about the seven spirits?

There are some other creatures there, which are called the 'four living creatures,' which are over the throne of God. We won't get into those, but Rev. 5 will tell us more about God and how God runs the universe.

Revelation 5:5: "Then one of the elders said to me, 'Do not weep.... [this is about the scroll with the seven seals] ...Behold, the Lion Who is of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has overcome to open the book, and to loose its seven seals.'" That's Christ in His *warring* side.

Verse 6 is Christ as Savior: "Then I saw, and behold, before the throne and the four living creatures, and before the elders, *was* standing a Lamb as having been slain, having seven horns and **seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God**..." What do those seven eyes do? We don't want to think of them as kind of like eyeballs, but these tell God what's going on. That's how God knows.

Today with our modern technology, we can understand some of this. If you have an iPhone, you can take your iPhone and you can literally be at home while you're away:

- you can call up on your iPhone
- you can set your TV
- you can record a movie
- you can set your alarm

All from right where you are. How is that done? *That is done by energy called 'electrical digital waves' that are transmitted on a frequency!*

2-Chronicles 15:1: "And the **Spirit of God** came upon Azariah the son of Oded." Very interesting. We'll talk a little bit about the Spirit of God. What is the Spirit of God? There are different forms/categories—not forms as in shape—of the Spirit of God! We'll talk about this later, but we'll just plug it in now.

When we are baptized and receive the Holy Spirit of God that comes directly from the Father and Jesus Christ and *is a begettal within our minds with the spirit of man* that God has created in us. That is special. That is personal. That is a begettal for *sonship* to be the son or daughter of God at the resurrection when you're born again.

Here, we will see that the Spirit of God comes upon Oded. That is the power of God comes upon him with a communication to speak from God. God is not there, personally, doing it. Just like with your iPhone, you can take care of things at home. So, God can send His Spirit to be upon anyone at any time.

We'll just interject here concerning Balaam. Mike and I had an interesting discussion about Balaam. Mike says that when God gave Balaam permission to go with the agents from Balak, the Hebrew actually means *to accompany* not *go take part*. Balaam saw all that wealth and his greed to hold of him. So, when he got up there to curse, the Spirit of God came upon him, even a false prophet, to make him speak the truth. God can make anyone do anything that He wants to, but let's also understand this: God has given us free choice so that we may choose. Here, in this case, God had a message for Azariah.

Verse 2: "And he went out to meet Asa, and said to him, 'Hear me, Asa, and all Judah and Benjamin. The LORD *is* with you while you are with Him. And if you seek Him, He will be found by you. But **if you forsake Him, He will forsake you.**'" A very fundamental thing!

We have in the New Testament what Jesus said, 'Seek, and you shall find; ask, and it shall be given; knock, and it shall be opened.' You can go to God in prayer and how does that prayer go to God? *It is spiritual from the Spirit of God within you—if you have the Spirit of God in you—or one of the seven spirits of God begins to answer those who are beginning to seek!*

Verse 3: "And for a long time Israel *had been* without the true God, and without a teaching priest, and without law. And when they turned in their trouble to the LORD God of Israel, and sought Him, He was found by them." (vs 3-4). We're at such a point right now in America. We've been throwing away God's way as fast as we can, even in the Protestant denominations, and been without God for a long time.

Verse 5: "And in those times *there was* no peace to him who went out, nor to him who came in, but great tumult *was* upon all the inhabitants of the lands. And nation was destroyed by nation, and city-by-city, for God troubled them with every adversity. But you be strong and do not let your hands be weak, for your work shall be rewarded" (vs 5-7). When Asa heard this, he went out and did what they should do.

2-Chronicles 16:7: (which was some years later): "And at that time Hanani the seer came to Asa king of Judah and said to him, 'Because you have relied on the king of Syria and have not relied on the

LORD your God, therefore, the army of the king of Syria has escaped out of your hand. Were not the Ethiopians and the Libyans a huge army with many chariots and horsemen? Yet, because you relied on the LORD, He delivered them into your hand,... [this tells us what the seven spirits do]: **...for the eyes of the LORD run to and fro in all the whole earth...**" (vs 7-9).

The seven spirits are active all the time, knowing what's going on. God is not just dealing with the people that He has called, alone. God deals with the rulers of the nations. He deals with the inhabitants according to their choices and how they conform to God's Law, whether very much or very little, in the letter or whatever may be, *God knows!* He's making judgments all the time based upon that. This tells us what the seven eyes are doing.

What else does God have as spirit beings? *He has angels!* Angels are the ones who carry out whatever God tells them to do. Are there angels over all the nations of the world? righteous angels and evil angels? *Yes!*

Hebrews 1:13—a comparison between Christ and the angels: "But unto which of the angels did He ever say, 'Sit at My right hand, until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet'? Are they not **all ministering spirits**, being sent forth to minister to those who are about to inherit salvation?" (vs 13-14).

So, we have angels that watch over us. Angels run things in the world; demons run things in the world. You can tell when there are demons in charge vs reasonable men and angels in charge. All you have to do is look at the most depraved nations in the world and you can conclude that demons are in charge. Even nations can become *possessed*.

- that's what happened with the Germans in WWII
- that's what happened in the reign of Stalin
- that's what happened in the reign of Mao Tse-Tung
- What happened? *Killing, slaughtering!*
- Remember the French Revolution? *Bloodiest thing that had ever happened up to that point!*

It was just demonic, satanic! After a while people give up on that. Then God begins to work with them in a more descent way.

Hebrews 2:1: "For this reason, it is imperative that we give much greater attention to the things, *which* we have heard, lest at any time we should slip away. **For if the word spoken by angels was enforced without fail...**" (vs 1-2). Let's take the angel Gabriel. I think he's in charge of the things concerning the birth of Christ and all of the things associated with that, because:

- Gabriel gave the 70-weeks prophecy to Daniel
- Gabriel talked to Zechariah the priest
- Gabriel talked to Mary, the mother of Jesus

Angels, we can conclude, are *created beings who are lower than God*, but they are spirit beings, separate individuals. I wonder how many angels there are that God has created. He doesn't tell us. We get an inkling of some of it.

What happened when Zechariah said, 'How is this going to be that I'm going to have a child? I am old and my wife is well stricken in age,' which means they were probably up in their 70s and the mechanisms don't work too good at that age. That was a reasonable question, but what did the angel say? What did he tell Zechariah? Pretty tough sentence. He said, 'Because you didn't believe, you're going to be mute. You're not going to be able to talk until all these things have been accomplished,' which didn't happen until John the Baptist was born and then, on the eighth day at circumcision he was able to speak.

- Was that word of the angel meted out?
- Did it happen exactly like it? *Yes, indeed!*

So, angels have power and control also over the earth and over people and I'm sure they're reporting to God.

Verse 2: "**For if the word spoken by angels was enforced without fail**, and every transgression and disobedience received just recompense, how shall we escape, *if we* have neglected so great a salvation; which was first received when it was spoken by the Lord, *and* was confirmed to us by those who heard *Him*; God also bearing witness with *them* by both signs and wonders, and various miracles and gifts of *the* Holy Spirit, according to His own will?" (vs 2-4).

So, God has a whole host of spiritual means to understand what's going on, on the Earth and to understand what's going on in the universe.

Verse 5: (key) "**For it is not to the angels that He has placed in subjection the world that is to come, of which we are speaking.**" We're going to rule and reign with Christ on the earth and the angels are not going to have charge over the nations.

What did Satan say when he was tempting Jesus? *If You'll worship me, all the power and glory of all the nations I'll give You!* That shows that Satan is the god of this world, that he controls some thing, angels of God control other things, God metes out judgment, justice and punishment. We need to keep that in mind when we see all the events that are taking place, because as we read in 2-Chron. 15, when people leave God they have various adversities

afflict them. Do we have adversities afflicting us? *Yes!* As a nation and personally? *Yes!*

- How does God create?
- How does God manage it?

We know that God takes care of everything. We know that the universe is in God's hands. Let's just talk a little bit about the universe.

I just happened to see on *National Geographic* some tremendous things about what the Hubble telescope has revealed to us. I think it's a most profound aspect of where the Earth is in the solar system, in the galaxy and in the universe, that affords it the ability to see all the things in the heavenly realm of what God has created, not all, but lots.

I'm personally convinced that God has helped, with the angels and technology, to design things like the Hubble telescope so that men will have no excuse that this just happened. I tell you what, anyone who can see those awesome pictures and things of the universe, see how glorious, fantastic and awesome that they are, if it doesn't affect you to the point that you feel like falling on your knees and saying, 'Ah! God! What a marvelous thing You have done!'

You probably have seen this picture where they look like huge, galactic pillars. There are three of them. They're billions of miles tall and however far out they are in the universe we don't know. They have been zeroing in on these pillars, as well as trying to find out about the different things in space, about black holes, dark energy and all of those different things. They showed these pillars and after observing it over now a period of several decades, *these pillars actually are the birthplace of new stars!* They actually saw a star being born with the pictures they've been taking. I thought: A star coming out of a star womb!

Do you think God stopped creating when He made Adam and Eve? **NO!** He creates all human beings. That's why abortion is so absolutely evil in God's sight; the killing of the most innocent.

Let's see how God creates, just a quick summary of it:

- **The Psalms** are your relationship with God and worship toward God; there are other things involved in the Psalms, too.
- **Proverbs** is how to change and train the mind of young people and how to keep your bearings concerning right and wrong, whether you're converted or not.
- **Job** is how never to think you know everything and how God is able to work with men directly and humble them. We

will see an interesting statement by Job here in just a little bit.

Psalm 146:6—talking about God: “Who made the heavens and earth, the sea and all that is in them; Who keeps truth forever.” That is quite a verse!

Note DVD: *Planet Earth*, especially the one with the oceans and the millions and millions of fish that are there. Some of the things that they have taken, especially when they have the sardine run on the east coast of South Africa, the sardines are just millions in this one whole school. There are sharks, tuna, and other fish coming in to eat and then you have all the seagulls and loons above coming down to eat what’s left over.

Yet, God created all of those for food. The one that really shows, I think, absolute love, care and nurture in the most trying and difficult circumstances is the Emperor Penguins. They come to Antarctica, the mother lays the egg and all the males stay there through the winter with winds up to 120mph. They all huddle together in a mass. Each male has the mother’s egg hoisted on top of his feet and has his body come down and cover the egg to keep it warm. When it’s finally hatched in the spring, he has one meal in his digestive system to feed the new hatchling. Shortly after that, here come all the moms back. *What a tremendous thing! In the most dire of circumstances, God has provided!* Just keep that in mind.

Psalm 147:1: “O praise the LORD, for it is good to sing praises to our God, for praise is pleasant and becoming. The LORD builds up Jerusalem; He gathers together the outcasts of Israel. He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds.... [talking about the ministry of Christ; God alone can heal the mind] ...He counts the number of the stars; He calls them all by their names.... [that is awesome, tremendous] ...Great is our LORD and mighty in power; His understanding is infinite” (vs 1-5). That’s quite a thing.

Psa. 148 is quite a Psa., because everything that God does in creating *is done by command!* He commands and it is so, which means then, that *before He commanded, He planned it!* How the twenty-four elders fit into that, I don’t know, but He and Jesus Christ planned it. Then He commanded it and they came into being. Once His creation is there, it all is praise and glory to God.

Psalm 148:1: “O praise the LORD! Praise the LORD from the heavens; praise Him in the heights. Praise Him, all His angels; praise Him, all His hosts. Praise Him, sun and moon; praise Him, all you stars of light. Praise Him, you heavens of heavens, and waters that are above the heavens” (vs 1-4). *That is awesome! That is tremendous!*

Everything that God does praises Him and reflects His creative abilities. Everything that God creates is created by:

- His plan
- His design
- His power
- His energy

Everything that God has created, whether large or small, seen or unseen, has a power that came from God—many different kinds of power.

In your body you have power. You have the ‘spirit of man’ in your mind. You have a brain that is made to control your whole body. What you put into your brain affects everything that you are—your whole body. The ‘spirit of man’ gives life. God does not have to be in us to give us life because He gave the ‘spirit of man.’ There are different kinds of spirit:

- God’s Holy Spirit
- the seven spirits of God
- the creative Spirit of God by which He commands and things are created, because His Words are spirit and life
- a spirit of animals, because they have life

Wherever there is life, *there is some sort of spiritual power that we would call energy*, also called, magnetic qualities or atomic qualities.

Everything that is made is composed of atoms; those must come from God. What is behind the atom nobody really knows. There is something greater than the atom which men are trying to find with their new kaleidoscopic thing that they have made in Europe.

(go to next track)

Let’s see what else God says about His creative powers. God is a separate individual spirit Being. Jesus is a separate individual spirit Being. They run and control the vastness of everything that God has created from the universe down to the most finite thing that we can say would be the smallest particle of power. All of it is held together by the power of God.

From my own view of stupidity in religion, is a temple in India that is reserved for rats only. Can you imagine worshipping rats? I wonder how many fleas they have in there. After the first part of Isa. 40 showing the stupidity of an idol and someone bowing down to it, then God wants people to get their perspective that you cannot make anything that you can claim as God, because whatever you use to make that idol, God has created. So, why would you make a statue, a crucifix, a Buddha, or whatever and think that that which has been created, can help you, who are a greater creation than the thing you’re worshipping? So God says:

Isaiah 40:12: “Who has measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out the heavens with a span?...” If you’re so great, *stand up*. That’s what He said to Job, remember that?

“...And who has comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance? Who has directed the Spirit of the LORD... [in doing these things] ...and who was His counselor that he might instruct Him?” (vs 12-13). ‘Oh, God, make it this way. Oh, God, make it that way.’ People don’t think that they do it, but they do with the commandments of God. ‘Oh, God, yes, I like this commandment, but not that one.’

Verse 14: “With whom did He take counsel, and *who* instructed Him and taught Him in the path of judgment, and taught Him knowledge, and made known the way of understanding to Him? Behold, the nations *are* like a drop in a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the scales; behold, He takes up the isles as a very little thing” (vs 14-15).

Men fight and war over who’s going to be in charge and who controls this land. Just look at the stupidity there in Palestine between the Jews and the Palestinians. You’d think that after a while they would get tired of killing each other and just be exhausted. That’s what happens when you give yourselves over to demonic powers that all you want to do is kill and destroy.

Verse 16: “And Lebanon *is* not sufficient to burn, nor the beasts of it sufficient *for* a burnt offering. All nations before Him *are* as nothing; and they are counted by Him as less than nothing, and vanity” (vs 16-17)—*unless it fulfills His purpose!* God is going to make it fulfill His purpose.

Verse 18: “To whom then will you compare God? Or what likeness will you compare to Him? The workman melts a graven image, and the goldsmith spreads it over with gold, and casts silver chains. He who is too poor for *that* offering chooses a tree that will not rot; he seeks for a skillful workman for himself to prepare a graven image that will not totter.... [a totem pole] ...Have you not known?...” (vs 18-21).

All you have to do, because it says in Romans 1 that through the creation of God He has manifest His Godhead and His power. All of these reflect the power of God enforced by His Spirit.

“...Have you not heard? Has it not been told you from the beginning? Have you not understood *from* the foundations of the earth? *It is* He who sits above the circle of the earth... [they knew it was round] ...and its people are like grasshoppers; *it is* He who stretches out the heavens like a curtain, and

spreads them out like a tent to dwell in” (vs 21-22). Isn’t that interesting how the universe is?

Verse 23: “Who brings the rulers to nothing; He makes the judges of the earth as vanity. No sooner are they planted, no sooner are they sown, no sooner do they take root in the ground, then He shall blow upon them, and they shall wither, and the whirlwind shall take them away like stubble” (vs 23-24).

What He’s saying is, ‘All right, all you human beings down there on earth, you reject Me? You want to go your way? Realize that things are going to happen. I’m not going to be mocked. I’m not going to sit here and let you continue in this without some kind of punishment coming upon you, because you are mocking Me and I am the Creator and Ruler of all that there is.’ That’s the message, here, that God is telling us.

Verse 25: “‘To whom then will you compare Me, or who is My equal?’ says the Holy One. Lift up your eyes on high...” (vs 25-26). This is how we begin to really understand about God, by understanding how great He is and how insignificant we are, but yet, God loves us and has created us for a great purpose.

“...and behold, who has created these *things*, who brings out their host by number? He calls them all by names by the greatness of His might, for He is strong in power; not one fails” (v 26). From this, we understand all of this is upheld by *the power of God*—‘*dunamis*’ or *energy*. He has made it all conform to laws.

Just take the Earth: The Earth is where it is in its orbit, spinning. We’re all on the Earth. God made it that way and we are here. God set before man choices:

- life and death
- blessing and cursing
- good and evil

God is going to work out His whole plan. What we to do, what we have to understand is that God upholds every thing *by His power*.

Verse 27: “Why do you say, O Jacob, and O Israel you speak, ‘My way is hidden from the LORD and my cause is disregarded by my God?’”

God doesn’t have to be there all the time to know what a person may think or do. Did He not give the spirit of man to every human being? *Yes!* Anytime He wants to, He can know what your thoughts are *by the seven spirits, by angels or to do it personally*. Isn’t it something that the first thing that human beings try to do is to go against God and think they can get away with it?

There was an advertisement about a TV series *Lie to Me*. The one whose doing it says that the average human being lies three times in ten minutes. What does the Bible say about the human heart? ‘The heart *is* deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?’ But men like to think they can lie and they can cheat. Look at the whole financial debacle that we are in today. Everybody from top to bottom lied, cheated, they stole and Bernie Madoff did a no-no, he stole from his buddies. *Bad news!*

- How many stole from everybody else?
- How many want to get something for nothing?
- How many people play the lottery? ‘*Oh, I’m going to win big time!*’ *Gambling!*
- How many people think they can go against God’s laws and enforce it upon God?

That’s the whole problem with the homosexual community. They want to enforce it upon everyone else; rather than just go to the Word of God and say, ‘Oh, God said that, yes, that’s right, let’s do it.’ What about the whole Christian community with Sunday *vs* Sabbath? You can go on and on and on. The greatest lies come from the pulpit where the Truth should come from.

Verse 28: “Have you not known? Have you not heard, that the everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth, does not grow weak nor weary? And His understanding no one can fathom. ***He gives power*** to the weary; and to him with no might, He increases strength” (vs 28-29).

I’ve got a book at home that I haven’t read, yet, which is all of the scientific knowledge contained in the book of Job. There’s a lot there. We’re going to read some of it here:

Job 26:6: “The grave *is* naked before Him, and destruction has no covering. He stretches out the north over the empty space, **and He hung the earth on nothing**” (vs 6-7). That’s quite a statement. How does God ‘hang the Earth on nothing?’ Well, nothing that can be seen.

We now know that the sun is a huge energy machine, not only providing heat, but providing electro magnetism. The magnetism goes through the whole solar system to keep the solar system on track. The magnetism is coming to all of the planets from the sun, and also is balanced out by Jupiter a great deal, because Jupiter is a big gaseous planet and it takes in most of the wandering asteroids so they don’t hit the Earth.

They know that magnetism comes to the Earth to the North Pole and to the South Pole. That’s all by the power of God—energy, magnetic energy. This energy, then, forms an invisible cushion around

the Earth to keep asteroids from coming into the Earth, most of them burn up in the atmosphere. It also reacts just like an electric motor, where you turn on the electricity and the electric motor goes. You set it at a certain level and it’ll run and run and keep going. You have the energy of electricity, which is another form of magnetic power. So, the Earth is held in space, all the planets and all the stars are held in space by magnetic power. Also, on the Earth there are magnetic fields, some stronger, some less strong. Magnetism keeps everything on the Earth.

What is magnetism? What power of God or creation of God produces the magnetic power to uphold the Earth to make everything that He has created, because everything has a creation signature of power?

Joseph Newman is a physicist and an electronics expert and he has studied Tesla and he has found several errors in Einstein’s ‘theory of relativity.’ So, he has come up with this proposal of what is the smallest unit of creation. It has to do with electro magnetic power. It’s smaller than an atom and he calls it an ‘electro magnetic gyroscopic particle.’ He draws it much like you would see a top with a pole, top and bottom, and it’s always spinning. Positive spins one way, and the same material turned up side down becomes negative the other way. You see this when you have magnets: north and south pull together; north to north repels; south to south repels. His proposition is that everything that has been created in the whole universe and *everything we see is made from that single electro magnetic particle*.

To me that makes sense. That is the source of power that God has put in everything in varying degrees. It’s in water, in our bodies and in everything that is made. That’s why they say that even something that looks solid is not solid when you start getting down into the finite part of it and trying to find out: What’s the smallest part of, say, this leather that covers the recorder or this table, or whatever thing you’re looking at? That’s how God keeps the universe, at least the Earth, together.

Let’s talk about something else and see if we can make some sense of this. God has:

- all power
- all wisdom
- all understanding
- all creativity

God is Truth! Let’s start out with God. Just for the sake of numbering:

7: God the Father and Jesus Christ are all powerful. They are separate spirit Beings. They have power that comes out from them to create. They have different things of their creation, beginning with angels.

#6: Angels are spirit beings who live in the spirit realm. They're separate entities. Angels have the ability to walk through walls, to go here, go there, or wherever they want to go. God uses them to take care of His creation. We can put fallen angels as less than six but they're still spirit but because of their sins, they cannot manifest themselves in a bodily form, but they're still spirit beings.

In the creation of the universe they are now discovering something that is almost beyond the understanding of the human mind, just barely enough that we can comprehend some things. They now know that from the physical universe that you see, there is also a power behind that which they call 'dark energy,' just from the fact that they can't see it. They know that it is much like a netting that holds the whole universe together. In his book *The Energy Machine of Joseph Newman*, shows that you can have perpetual energy.

I mentioned this to a man one time when I was first reading the book and I said, 'You know, there is such a thing as perpetual energy?' 'Oh, no. There's no such thing as perpetual energy.' I said:

- Well, what about the Earth?
- Does it continue going?
- Is that not perpetual?

So, God created it with His power, upholds it with His power and with the energy of His creation. To assist Him in administrating it, we have the angels and the twenty-four elders.

#5: Mankind—made a little lower than the angels, but for the purpose of coming up to the level of God, to become part of the God Family.

#4: Mammals and birds, a little less than men. They have life; they run by what God built into them automatically.

#3: the fish of the sea

#2: the reptiles

#1: the lesser, smaller things of life. You can have that as insects all the way down to amebas.

God has everything created and structured and each one of these things has *its own life signature!* All of this is done by the power of God. God is not in everything, everywhere. God controls it *with His power*, controls it *through His Spirit* and there are various forms of spirit.

How about angels who are spirit beings? They are of lesser spirit than God. Do they have clothes? Yes! Even 'manna' was called 'angels food.'

- Do the angels eat?
- What do they eat?
- Is it more than manna? *I don't know!*
- Is the throne of God created out of spirit? *It would have to be in order for God to be able to sit on it!*

There are some things that are just like in our realm of the physical. There are things made of the dust of the earth that are not human. We're made of the dust of the earth, formed by the hand of God. This table is made of the dust of the earth, but it's a different form of the dust of the earth. Just like with the Spirit that God has that He uses for the different things that He makes. Is New Jerusalem going to be composed of spirit? *Have to be for spirit beings to live in it!* There are things of spirit that are not spirit beings just like there are things in the flesh that are not creatures, but things.

Let's look at some of the powers that Jesus had. Jesus was filled with the Holy Spirit. We all understand that so we don't have to look at the Scripture there. He did His work and His miracles *by power* that came from the Holy Spirit, but not necessarily using the Holy Spirit directly. The Greek word for *power* is 'dunamis.' The Greek word for *spirit* is 'pneuma'

Mark 5:25: "Then a certain woman who had been *afflicted with* an issue of blood *for* twelve years, and had suffered greatly under *the hand of* many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was not benefited in any way but rather was getting worse, when she heard about Jesus, came in the multitude behind *Him and* touched His garment; For she said, 'If I can only touch His garments, I shall be cured.' And at once the fountain of her blood was dried up, and she knew in *her* body that she was healed from the scourge. **Now Jesus knew immediately within Himself that power had gone out of Him...**" (vs 25-30)

Not spirit, but *power*. Not the Holy Spirit, but power. So the Holy Spirit gave Him the power—energy—to heal, but it was under His control because, He said:

"...and turning in the crowd, He said, 'Who touched My garments?'" (v 30) He knew immediately that *power had gone out from Him!*

Verse 31: "But His disciples said to Him, 'You see the crowd pressing around You, and You ask, "Who touched Me?"' Then He looked around to see who had done this. And the woman, frightened and trembling, knowing what had been done in her, came and fell down before Him, and told Him all the Truth. Then He said to her, 'Daughter, your faith has cured you. Go in peace, and be whole from your scourge'" (vs 31-34). It was the power of the Holy Spirit. ***It was the Holy Spirit that gave Him the power!***

Let's see something concerning the begetting of Jesus Christ. After the angel told Mary what was going to happen, she said, 'How's this going to be?'

Luke 1:35: "And the angel answered and said to her, '**The Holy Spirit shall come upon you,**

and *the power of the Highest* shall overshadow you; and for this reason, the Holy One being begotten in you shall be called *the* Son of God.”

So, the Holy Spirit being “...***the power of the Highest...***” that is the greatest individual power that comes from God. With it we will understand why our having the Holy Spirit becomes such a great and a tremendous thing.

We have the Holy Spirit and we have power!

All Scripture from *The Holy Bible In Its Original Order, A Faithful Version* by Fred R. Coulter

Scriptural References:

- 1) Jeremiah 23:22-24
- 2) Psalm 139:1-4, 6-13
- 3) Revelation 4:2-5
- 4) Revelation 1:4-5
- 5) Revelation 5:5-6
- 6) 2-Chronicles 15:1-2-7
- 7) 2-Chronicles 16:7-9
- 8) Hebrews 1:13-14
- 9) Hebrews 2:1-5
- 10) Psalm 146:6
- 11) Psalm 147:1-5
- 12) Psalm 148:1-4
- 13) Isaiah 40:12-29
- 14) Job 26:6-7
- 15) Mark 5:25-34
- 16) Luke 1:35

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Revelation 4:1
- Romans 1

Also referenced:

Book: *The Energy Machine of Joseph Newman* by Joseph Westley Newman

DVD: *Planet Earth*

TV series: *Lie to Me*

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Spirit of God—Power of God II

Fred R. Coulter

Let's understand that all power emanates from God Who is Holy and *all powerful*. There are varying degrees and kinds of power, and in order for there to be life, there has to be power from God. Let's see the power that Jesus has.

There are two words in the Greek that have been translated in the *King James* as *power*—One is 'exousia' that means *authority*. That is, you have God's authority to do thus and such.

Matthew 28:18: "And Jesus came *and* spoke to them, saying, '**All authority**... [the *King James* has translated *power*, which is incorrect] ...in heaven and on earth has been given to Me'"—so that you can *exercise power*. Unless you have authority to do something, you can't exercise power.

Let's use an example: Though you may like to arrest someone because you see them doing something, you have not been given authority to exercise that power. So, you must first have authority, then you exercise power.

Hebrews 1:1: "God, Who spoke to the fathers at different times in the past and in many ways by the prophets, has spoken to us in these last days by *His Son*, Whom He has appointed heir of **all things**..." (vs 1-2)—each and everything, or you can say, if you want to use another word, the universe, which that includes everything within the universe.

"...by Whom also He made the ages" (v 2). There's another thing that I have translated, which is *into the ages of ages*, which is in the Greek: 'eis aion ton aionon,' which I translated, *into the ages of eternity*. David Sealoff took task for that, but let me ask:

- Are we in *the age of man* right now? *Yes!*
- Who created man? *Jesus!*
- Is this age part of eternity? *Yes!*

There are ages within eternity, timeframes!

- Was there the *age of the angels*? *Yes, until Lucifer rebelled!*
- Will there be the *age of the Kingdom of God*? *Yes!*
- Will God also unfold His plan for the rest of eternity? *Yes!*

That, I feel, is a correct translation, *into the ages of eternity*, because it's going to continue on and on and on—regardless of the various subdivisions of God's plan—within the framework of eternity.

Verse 3: "Who, being *the* brightness of *His* glory and *the* exact image of His person, and **upholding all things by the word of His own power**..." This word comes from the Greek

'dunamis' that means *power*, from which we have the English word *dynamite*. We'll talk about power and how that comes.

"...when He had by Himself purged our sins..." (v 3). Let's just summarize this for just a bit. We'll go back and see how God made man because God is intimately involved with mankind. This is His creation that He is working with *now*. He's doing it in a particular way. He's not calling all men now, because all men don't want to. So, He's calling those who will, and those who love God.

Since God created all human beings, we'll see that He is still creating human beings in the womb. That's why women hold a very special place in God's plan, because they are the custodians of future life. If all women understood that when they start reaching womanhood, then there would be, I am sure, far less promiscuity and there would be virtually no abortions. God is working directly with the 'spirit of man,' beginning with the time of conception, to form that new human life. Everything that has power within our bodies, has got to come from the *spirit of man*, "...by the word of His own power." Therefore, He alone is God:

- since He created us
- since He sentenced Adam and Eve and their descendants to have 'the law of sin and death' in them because Adam and Eve sinned
- since He made them, He alone can redeem them

Nothing less than Jesus Christ, Who was God coming in the flesh and offering His body as a sacrifice, can pay for the sins of all mankind. An animal can't because an animal is a lesser being. Another human being can't because another human being, **IF** a human being could be perfect—given 'the law of sin and death' within them they can't—could only redeem one other human being. That would be called life-for-life ransom. But the Creator of **all** human beings had to come so He could die and do it on His own, but yet have the **power** of God with Him to accomplish that.

Furthermore, one other thing, which is hard for some people to grasp: Though Jesus was *sinless* and never sinned, in order to overcome human nature, He had to take human nature upon Himself, which included the law of death. He was subject to death. He died. In order to overcome sin, how could He overcome sin without having also taken the part of human nature that is the law of sin within His members and yet not sin? That's how He can overcome sin. Otherwise, Jesus just could have gone through life:

- without any temptation
- without any difficulties
- without any sorrow
- He would have come to the end
- He would have been crucified
- His experience as a human being would have been very limited

There are some theologians who will take us to task over that. When you come to a verse like that in Heb. 1, there's a lot more to it than meets the eye.

Romans 8:1: "Consequently, *there is* now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus..." That means:

- you've repented
- you've been baptized
- you've received the Holy Spirit of God
- you're yielded to God
- you're walking in His way
- you're repenting of your sins as they come along

Because of God's grace, you can do that.

"...who are not walking according to *the* flesh, but according to *the* Spirit; **because the law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus has delivered me from the law of sin and death**" (vs 1-2).

How does that do that? *The* "...law of the 'Spirit of Life...' *is the working of the Holy Spirit in your mind*, the uniting of God's Holy Spirit with your spirit in your mind! That delivers you from sin. How does it do it? *The Holy Spirit leads you and you become conscious of sinful thoughts!* Whereas, before being converted, sinful thoughts were very natural. As we said before, the average person lies three times in ten minutes.

What happens with the Holy Spirit of God? *You become conscious of sin within!* That's where God's Spirit wants you to be: *conscious of it so you can repent of it so that He can clean, mold and develop your mind spiritually!* Every sin and evil deed that you've ever done or thought of has been recorded in your brain. You need to have it *spiritually cleansed* with the 'washing of the water by the Word.' When that's happening, there's no condemnation.

- Christ is there
- Christ will forgive
- He will lead you to repentance

If you go astray too far, He'll eventually make things in such a way in your life, whatever circumstances may be, that you will desire to come back, like the prodigal son. There's no condemnation!

Verse 3: "For what *was impossible for the law to do...*" Just understand this very simply. *No*

law anywhere has the power to make you do something! The law only has the power to tell you what to do. You shall not:

- commit adultery
- murder
- bear false witness
- steal

The law cannot make you quit adultery. *You* have to ***choose*** not to do it. So, the law is weak inasmuch as it cannot make you do something. The law is good because it gives you direction.

"...in that it was weak through the flesh, God, having sent **His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh...**" (v 3). The Greek means "...in the likeness..." *of sin and of flesh!* How can He be made "...in the likeness of sin..." without having *the law of sin and death* within His own fleshly members, while He was a human being, to completely overcome it? This means, "...in the likeness..."—'homoiomati'—*in the exact sameness!*

"...and for sin, condemned sin in **the flesh**" (v 3). His flesh; His own flesh; He "...condemned sin in the flesh..." because He had to carry *the law of sin and death* within Him. Maybe that will help you understand the *greatness* of what Jesus did, more than anything else. That's why you can go to Him as High Priest and you can confess your sins to Him. He knows it.

Hebrews 4:12: "For the Word of God... [that can be just the words that you're reading] ...is living and powerful..." Jesus said, 'The words that I speak to you, they are Spirit and they are Life.'

Also, the Word of God printed, that we read, "...is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword..." (v 12). When you sin and you're reading the Word of God, and you read that you have done wrong, it convicts you. There is a spiritual interaction between:

- what the words convey
- your mind
- the *spirit of man* that is in you
- God's Spirit working with you to lead you to repentance

"...piercing even to the dividing asunder of both soul and spirit, *and* of both *the* joints and *the* marrow, and *is* able to discern *the* thoughts and intents of *the* heart" (v 12).

How much wiggle room does that give you? *All human beings like a little fudge factor!* All human beings like a little wiggle room. That's not how it's intended to work.

Verse 13: "And there is not a created thing that is not manifest in His sight; but **all things are**

naked and laid bare before the eyes of Him to Whom we must give account.” *Laid bare* reminds me of the sacrifice in Gen. 15 where you had:

- the goat
- the ram
- the heifer
- the two turtledoves

Abraham had to take those three animals and split them down the middle and lay each part over next to each other so there was a path for God to walk through. That’s what reminds me of *laid bare*. You’re just cut down the middle, sliced open and you can see everything. God does not do this to make us fearful. God does this so that we can love Him and repent.

Verse 14: “Having, therefore, a great High Priest, *Who* has passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, we should hold fast the confession of *our faith*. For we do not have a high priest who cannot empathize with our weaknesses, but *One Who* was **tempted in all things according to the likeness of our own temptations; yet, He was without sin**” (vs 14-15).

I do not believe that He could have been tempted if He did not have ‘the law of sin and death’ in Him. How could you tempt Him? *You couldn’t!*

Therefore, here’s the sum result of it. Not to sit there and think, ‘Oh, no, all hope is lost.’ *NO!* All hope is there and what He’s relating to you is that human beings, yes indeed, cut off from God, are in a hopeless situation. There is no escape, but God has rescued you from that and He has given you an opportunity through Him. That’s what He’s talking about, here.

Verse 16: “Therefore, we should come with boldness to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.” Think about that. The One Who was Creator of all mankind came down and did this for us to complete His creation. *That’s something!* Keep that in mind when you come before God.

What does it mean to *walk in the flesh*? *You’re just concerned about:*

- carnal, physical things
- you don’t care anything about spiritual things
- you don’t care anything about God
- you’re interested in everything that the world is in

To *walk according to the Spirit* begins by:

- wondering about God
- where is God
- seeking God

- beginning to apply yourself to find out about the Truth of God

That’s the beginning of *walking in the Spirit*. When you come to repentance and you’re baptized and receive the Holy Spirit, then God’s Spirit *leads you* to help you overcome and to give you the mind of Christ.

When it says that ‘He Himself purged our sins,’ let’s see what He did.

Hebrews 1:3: “...**when He had by Himself purged our sins** sat down at *the* right hand of **the Majesty** on high”—that is God the Father.

Now let’s go back to the beginning—Gen. 1—and everything that God made:

- He made the earth
- He spoke and it came into being
- He spoke and there was light
- He spoke and the land came forth
- He spoke and the waters were filled with the fish
- He spoke and commanded and the animals were created

Man was different! He didn’t go up to a clump of earth and say, ‘Dust, become a man.’ He didn’t treat us like that. *We’re intimately from creation involved in God’s plan*, whether we know it or not. Here’s what He did:

Genesis 1:26: “And God said, ‘Let Us make man in **Our image, after Our likeness**; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the fowl of heaven and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that crawls upon the earth.’ And God created man **in His own image...**” (vs 26-27)—for what purpose? *To become like Him!* That’s the rest of the story of the Bible.

“...in the image of God He created him. He created them male and female” (v 27).

We will see the intimate relationship that God has with man and still does in a little different way, but people don’t realize it. This is a detailed description of what God related in Gen. 1:

Genesis 2:7: “Then the LORD God **formed** man *of the* dust of the ground...” Formed him, made him, shaped him; intimately involved with him. We are made in His image. Jesus told Thomas, ‘If you’ve seen Me, you’ve seen the Father.’ *Isn’t that something!*

I also believe that God made the various monkeys, chimpanzees and apes nearly like man to prove a point: They do not have the *spirit of man*, they do not have the ability of man and God made them limited so that man would understand that he is

special and man has mistaken that to say, ‘Oh, we evolved.’ *Not so!*

The Spirit in Man:

The special handiwork of God, of forming. What did He do to create Eve? He said, ‘All right, Adam. I’m going to put you to sleep and I’m going to do a little handiwork.’ He took out a rib and formed a woman. We know that he understood what was going on because, what did he say after God brought the woman to him? God must have told him what he was going to do.

Verse 23: “And Adam said, ‘This *is* now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh. *She* shall be called Woman because *she* was taken out of Man.’” So, God formed both man and woman for **His** purpose. Man and woman in marriage also participate in the creation of God by bringing forth children.

Let’s talk a little bit about children, how they are made and how we are formed, and so forth. I really like to read Elihu’s response to Job. That’s really quite eloquent, but we won’t get into all of that. After he saw that they didn’t answer and his wrath was kindled:

Job 32:6: “And Elihu the son of Barachel the Buzite answered and said, ‘I *am* young, and you *are* very old; therefore I was afraid, and dared not show you my opinion. I said, “The aged should speak, and the multitude of years should teach wisdom.” But **there is a spirit in man...**’” (v 6-8). That spirit is what:

- gives him life
- gives him intellect
- empowers the brain to work

“...and the inspiration of the Almighty gives them understanding” (v 8).

Job 33:4: “The Spirit of God has made me, and the breath of **the Almighty gives me life.**” You need the *spirit of man*, which comes from God, and at the moment of conception, that’s when the *spirit of man* begins to work. It sets in the pattern that God established now, to create a brand new life. If the *spirit of man* leaves, he is dead. Today, they can measure that. When they say they’re brain dead, there’s no activity at all.

James 2:26: “**For as the body without the spirit is dead,** in the same way also, faith without works is dead.” It is the *spirit that gives life*, as Jesus said. This *spirit of man* is in and connected to our brain. You can’t see it because it’s spirit, but let’s see what it does.

1-Corinthians 2:6: “Now we speak wisdom among the *spiritually* mature; however, *it is not the*

wisdom of this world, nor of the rulers of this world, who are coming to nothing. Rather, we speak *the* wisdom of God in a mystery, *even* the hidden *wisdom* that God foreordained before the ages unto our glory which not one of the rulers of this world has known (for if they had known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory); but according as it is written, ‘*The eye has not seen, nor the ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God has prepared for those who love Him.*’ **But God has revealed them to us by His Spirit, for the Spirit searches all things**—even the deep things of God.... [the Holy Spirit of God in this particular case] ...For who among men understands the things of man **except by the spirit of man** which *is* in him?” (vs 6-11).

God breathed into Adam’s nostrils the *breath of life* and probably breathed in the *spirit of man* at the same time and formed him with His own hands. The same way with Eve, breathed into her the *spirit of life*. Whenever there is a newly conceived child, the Spirit of God automatically gives the *spirit of man* at that time and sets in motion all of the things that automatically take place to create the new life within the mother. He does that with the instructions of what we would call genes and chromosomes. You have the *spirit of man*, which then empowers the body, right from the very start. The things of God, God reveals by His Spirit to us.

The Human Brain:

Let’s talk a little bit about us as human beings. God has given us the fantastic thing of what we call the human brain. It is the most marvelous creation, in the flesh, of anything that God has created. Our brains were designed to learn continuously through our whole lives. How you think, how you speak, *everything is impressed upon your brain and is made to record*, and everything that you do is recorded in your brain. That’s why you’ve heard of you have to ‘unlearn’ something.

It doesn’t stay there as perpetual memory all the time, because you can flush out some of those memories. That’s why don’t think upon things that you don’t like or don’t want, flush it out of your system. That’s also part of *cleansing* your brain. You have a part in it by denying those thoughts and asking God to help you overcome those thoughts. Nevertheless, you can remember, sights, sounds, and smells even back to when you were a child.

The brain is *empowered by the spirit of man* and it gives the power to the brain. The brain then is able to be activated through the nervous system, through the hormones and through the whole structure of the body so that now you have power in your body through these other subsidiary things that are part of the body:

- you have breathing
- you have blood
- you have digestion
- you have the lymph system, which is more elaborate than the blood system

The lymph system is most important in cleansing out toxins and keeping your body pure:

- you have sight
- you have touch
- you have feel
- you have automatic things that you do

I can talk and move my fingers and I don't have to direct my brain and say, 'Move finger one, move my thumb, move my index finger and all that.' It does it automatically. You train the brain to do things and many of them are just automatic. *This is how man is special to God*, because He made us. He gave us the spirit of man so that when we receive the Spirit of God, that unites with the *spirit of man*, we become the begotten children of God. *That's quite an operation!*

All of this is without seeing one bit of evidence, except:

- you can take the pulse
- you can measure the temperature
- you can take brain waves

But you can't really see the spirit. You can see the result of the power that it puts into the body. This is why, with the Holy Spirit of God and growing and overcoming, that God is intimately also involved with that; because we receive power from God the Father begetting us *in our mind*, so that we can be *recreated spiritually* in the very image of God. Then at the resurrection, we now have a spirit body and a spirit mind. *That's quite a thing!* All of that is accomplished by the power of God.

The Angelic Realm:

Let's talk about angels and a little bit about demons, Revelation 5:11: "And I saw and I heard the voices of many angels around the throne, and the voices of the living creatures and the elders, and thousands of thousands."

How many angels are there? *I don't know!* We're told in another place that whenever one sinner repents, the angels of God rejoice and He also said, 'Don't despise one of these little ones because God's angel is watching over them.'

Verse 12: "Saying with a loud voice, 'Worthy is the Lamb Who was slain to receive power...'" That doesn't say 'spirit,' because He is a spirit Being. Now He receives power to do things and authority to do things.

"...and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory and blessing" (v 12). We have

the throne of God. Here we have all of the angels who were not there when John first saw the throne of God, now they're all around there and they're all singing and praising God. The angels have their work to do to help men.

We're going to see that there is a spiritual angelic realm that assists God in carrying out His will among men.

2-Kings 6:15: "And the servant of the man of God arose early and went out. And, behold, an army surrounded the city, and horses and chariots. And his servant said to him, 'Alas, my master! What shall we do?' [he's talking to Elisha, the prophet] ...And he answered, 'Do not fear, for those with us are more than those with them'... [he saw Elisha and himself] ...And Elisha prayed and said, 'I pray You, LORD, open his eyes so that he may see.' And the LORD opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw. **And behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha**" (vs 15-17).

There's a whole angelic army on the side of Elisha to fight the Syrians. That's how the Syrians were defeated. A mountain full of horses and chariots, there are some angelic beings that are like horses. What do we have with the four cherubim? *One is like a man, one is like an eagle, one is like a lion and the fourth one is like an ox!* Don't ask me to explain those; I can't! It just describes to us some of the angelic things that are there.

Angels can also appear as men because Paul wrote in Hebrews that to be careful entertaining strangers because you may 'entertain angels unaware.' I don't know if I've done that or not, but I can tell you that there've been times I know that there's been an angel that has rescued me and saved me from things, even clear back when I was a kid. There's the whole angelic realm that is out there.

Let's look at the situation concerning demons because there's the angelic realm of demons. We find in Rev. 12 where Satan and his angels fought against Michael and his angels. There are spirit battles that take place. Let's see how that works. The demons can do no more than God will allow. *They must have permission!* God does not want us to be afraid of demons at all because He has given us *power*—'dunamis'—over all the demons.

Job 1:6: "Now, there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD. And Satan also came among them. And the LORD said to Satan, 'From where do you come?' Then Satan answered the LORD and said, 'From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it'" (vs 6-7).

Satan is a spirit being and can manifest himself in a certain form, but fallen angels cannot

manifest themselves in the form of men. They are called apparitions.

Here Satan is going to and fro. What is he doing? *Walking up and down in the earth looking for anyone he can devour*, that is to spiritually cause a lot of problems for them! Satan has certain powers:

- he got permission from God to do certain things
- he was able to call down fire from heaven.
- he was able to rouse up the Sebians to come and take off Job's children, kidnap them, take the cattle and everything.
- he was able to afflict Job with boils from his head to his toe,

But Satan couldn't take Job's life! We also know that Satan, the devil, is the father of liars.

(go to the next track)

This is why we are not to be afraid of any of the demonic powers. Jesus is sending 70 out to do some things:

Luke 10:16: "The one who hears you hears Me; and the one who rejects you rejects Me; and the one who rejects Me rejects Him Who sent Me."

I've heard preachers use this in several ways. 'If you reject what I tell you, then you're rejecting Christ and rejecting God the Father.' **Only if** he is telling you the Truth of God, not as a prerogative of leverage of authority over people to put them in fear.

Verse 17: "Then the seventy returned with joy, saying, '**Lord, even the demons are subject to us through Your name.**'" Sometimes you may encounter a demonic experience. What do you do? *You do the same thing as Jesus!* You rebuke it in the name of Jesus Christ and tell it, '**Be gone and don't come back!**'

We've had instances where we've cast demons out of people and cast them out of homes. There are such things as haunted houses. They **must** obey. They have no alternative. If you are weak and say, 'Would you please go. I hope you go.' *It isn't going to happen!* You use all the authority of the name of Jesus Christ and you tell them, '**Be gone! Get out!**' So, the 70 were delighted that that happened.

Verse 18: "And He said to them, 'I was watching when Satan fell from heaven like lightning.... [when he fell in the rebellion] ...Behold, **I give you authority to tread upon serpents and scorpions, and upon all the power of the enemy**, and nothing shall injure you in any way'" (vs 18-19). We don't have to worry about the demons.

We're going to see that as we get into the events at the end-time, there're going to be a lot of

demons loosed out that are still held in the abyss that are not out on the earth right now.

Verse 20: "Yet, do not rejoice in this, that **the spirits are subject to you**; but rejoice that your names are written in heaven." *That's something! Think about that!* God takes note and writes it down in the Book of Life., That's why:

- we are not to be fearful
- we are to be inspired
- we are to know that God's calling is special

and not to be held up as something to other people in the world; 'I belong to God. Who do you belong to?' **NO!** You don't do that! You show that you do by your love and by your fruits and what you do. Every single one that God has called is important to God.

- Why call someone if you aren't important to God?
- Why apply the sacrifice of Jesus Christ to you, to make it available to you, unless God loves you and wants you to repent and to accept His gracious goodness towards you?

That's something! That's why I gave the sermon series *Why God Hates Religion*. Religion is to bind people to a certain set of standards that different people have conceived stealing a lot from God to make it look authentic, and then exercising authority over people that God never intended them to exercise over people.

Luke 8:27: "And when He went out on the land, *there* met Him a certain man from the city **who had been possessed by demons for a long time**; and he was not wearing *any* clothes, and did not dwell in a house, but in the tombs. Now when he saw Jesus, he cried out and fell down in front of Him, and said with a loud voice, 'What do You have to do with me, Jesus, Son of God the Most High? I beseech You, do not torment me.' For He had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. For many times it had seized him, and *each time* he was restrained, being bound with chains and fetters; but *after* breaking the bonds, he was driven by the demon into the desert. And Jesus asked it, saying, 'What is your name?' And it said, 'Legion,' because many demons had entered into him. **Then it begged Him that He would not command them to go away into the abyss**" (vs 27-31).

The Abyss:

The abyss is *the prison or the holding tank*, as it were, for demon spirits. They asked to go into the swine. So, Jesus said, 'Go!' They went into the swine, and as soon as they entered the swine they ran down the steep right into the Sea of Galilee and died. Let's see something concerning the abyss. It's called *the bottomless pit* in the *King James*.

- Where is the abyss? *I don't know! The Bible doesn't tell us!*
- Is the abyss like the Bermuda Triangle? *No!*

I think the Bermuda Triangle is a strong magnetic field at that particular place in the Atlantic and likewise clear over in the far western Pacific, you have a Devil's Triangle over there, which is almost directly opposite. It doesn't tell us where the abyss is. It doesn't look like it's in the ocean.

Rev. 8 begins with God's involvement with the seven angels and the plagues of the seven trumpets that the angels have.

Revelation 9:1: "And the fifth angel sounded *his* trumpet; and I saw a star... [that's probably an angel in this particular case] ...*that* had fallen from heaven to the earth, and there was given to him the key to the **bottomless abyss**. And he opened the bottomless abyss; and there went up smoke from the pit, like *the* smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by the smoke from the pit. Then locusts came onto the earth from the smoke; and **power was given to them**, as the scorpions of the earth have power. And it was said to them that they should not damage the grass of the earth, or any green thing, or any tree, but only the men who did not have the seal of God in their foreheads. And it was given to them that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months; and their torment *was* like *the* torment of a scorpion when it stings a man" (vs 1-5).

Verse 11: "And they have over them a king, **the angel of the abyss**; his name in Hebrew *is* Abaddon, but *the* name he has in Greek *is* Apollyon." Those are names of Satan. There are demons which *are not* roaming the earth right now. When this takes place 'all hell is going to break loose.' That's true! ***All hell is going to break loose!***

Revelation 20:1: "Then I saw an angel descending from heaven, having **the key of the abyss**, and a great chain in his hand. And he took hold of **the dragon, the ancient serpent, who is the Devil and Satan**, and bound him *for* a thousand years. **Then he cast him into the abyss**, and locked him *up*, and sealed *the abyss* over him, so that he would not deceive the nations any longer until the thousand years were fulfilled; and after that it is ordained that he be loosed *for* a short time" (vs 1-3).

There's one other place that we can look at, Revelation 9:13: "And the sixth angel sounded *his* trumpet; and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar that *is* before God; *and* it said to the sixth angel, who had the trumpet, **'Loose the four angels who are bound in the great river Euphrates'**" (vs 13-14). Apparently, somewhere along the Euphrates there are four demons that are confined to that place.

Verse 15: "Then the four angels, who had been prepared for the hour and day and month and year, were loosed, so that they might kill a third of men." That is, open the way for the armies to come in to kill a third of men. *That's something!* There's the demonic world.

Spiritual Things:

- there are *spirit beings*
- there is *God the Father and Jesus Christ*
- we are going to *become Their sons and daughters* through the operation of conversion and the resurrection
- there are *angelic beings* in addition to the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders
- there are in heaven things that have been created out of spirit much like we have physical things that are created out of the dust of the earth

The Physical:

- we have *matter*—liquid, gas, solid
- we have *power*, likened to *energy*
 - ✓ electronics
 - ✓ magnetics
 - ✓ chemical

God accomplishes the things that He does *by His power* and there are different aspects of God's Spirit that are not necessarily God's *Holy Spirit*.

Questions on a variety of subjects:

- the spirit of man; *when* life becomes life

Where it says that the 'life is in the blood' that is not talking about the spirit of man but rather it is talking about *the physical, chemical life that the blood brings*. The physical, chemical life is what the Bible calls the *soul*; 'the soul that sins, it can die' (Ezek. 18).

The *spirit of man* would have to be given right at conception. There is a book that says that at the instant of conception there is a miraculous thing that takes place. The sperm penetrates the egg and the egg immediately, miraculously puts up a shield so no more sperm can penetrate it. That's a miracle in itself. When that happens there is purported to be an instantaneous 480,000-volt of electricity. I would have to say that what they measure a volt of electricity has got to be ***the spirit of man to begin the creation of that new human life!***

The Jews say that since 'the life is in the blood' and there's no blood for fifteen days, it's okay to abort for the first two weeks. That sounds like a typical, Jewish legal argument around the fact of life. ***You are who you are at the time of***

conception! From there on, the Spirit of God—which is manifested not as the Spirit of God but the spirit of man that God has given—directs all the DNA and RNA to create the new human being.

This is just as much a modern description of life as we could describe today, Psalm 139:14: “I will praise You, for **I am awesomely and wonderfully made**; Your works are marvelous and my soul knows it very well. My substance was not hidden from You when I was made in secret...” (vs 14-15).

The very first conception and then the subsequent division of cells, even today in scientific knowledge is called ‘substance.’ That was David’s ‘substance’ to begin making him as a person.

“...and **intricately formed** in the lowest parts of the earth...” (v 15). That is symbolic for the womb. David says here very clearly that he was made in secret, God did it, and intricately formed me, that is, You, God—being the subject—intricately formed me:

Verse 16: “**Your eyes did see my substance, yet, being unformed...**” Whatever David was at that point it was the one to become David, yet to be formed through the process of growth.

“...and in Your book all my members were written, which in continuance were **fashioned, when as yet, there were none of them**” (v 16).

What do they have today in their scientific investigation of human genes? There’s a book called *Genome* by Matt Ridley. I forget where it’s from, but someone sent a DVD to me called *The Ghost in Your Genes* by Horizon, a BBC Documentary {youtube.com}. They thought when they had numbered and named all the genes that they had it down pat, but there’s so many intricate variations within the genes coming from:

- grandmother
- grandfather
- grandfather, once removed, twice removed
- grandmother three time removed

—that affect the current person. I thought that was really interesting. It’s called *The Ghost in Your Genes* So, it’s still David.

Verse 17: “How precious also are Your thoughts to me, O God! **How great is the sum of them!**” God had to think out, plan out and make all of this possible. I tell you what, when you look at a new born baby, and especially a mother after she’s carried it, that has got to be a tremendous, awesome, experience to understand that here is a new life created. It’s God’s purpose to have many, many human beings, though He’s not calling them all right now, from the point of view that there is the second

resurrection. Take a pen and make a little point on your paper and that’s the size of what you were when you were created. Isn’t that something?

Here’s one that science doesn’t even know, yet, with all that they’re supposed to know. Jesus said that you put a seed in the ground, you water it, you watch it day and night and it grows, *but you don’t know how it grows*. They have yet to figure out why, when you put a seed in the ground and give it water and there is enough nutrients in the ground, that it will start to grow. They’ve even taken wheat out of the pyramids in Egypt, which was 2, 3 or 4-thousand years old, plant the wheat and it grows. We can use that as a parallel. It doesn’t matter when the human beings lived, if they died, God can resurrect them. He knows all about them and He’ll take care of the matter.

Ecclesiastes 11:5: “As you do not know **what is the way of the spirit...**” That is how God’s Spirit works or even how the spirit in man works, any spirit of all. You don’t know the way that any spirit works at all—do we?

“...or how the bones *grow* in the pregnant woman’s womb; even so **you do not know the works of God Who makes all**” (v 5). There’s just a lot of thing we don’t know.

Ecclesiastes 3:19^[transcriber’s correction]: “For that which happens to the sons of men also happens to beasts—even one thing *happens* to them...” Remember the DVD *In the Womb*? Now they show animals in the womb. They’ve shown twins in the womb. I don’t know if they’ve shown triplets. Now they show dogs in the womb, cats in the womb, elephants in the womb. God made the same process for them to be created. There has to be a *spirit of life for animals*, who have brains. It talks here, a little bit about the spirit of the beast.

“...As the *one* dies, so dies the other; yea, **they all have one breath; so that a man has no advantage over a beast**; for all *is* vanity” (vs 19). *That is without God you have no advantage above a beast!*

Verse 20: “**All go to one place; all are of the dust, and all return to dust again.** Who knows the spirit of man whether it goes upward...” (vs 20-21). You can’t tell, it goes back to God. It must go upward, but you can’t tell.

“...and the spirit of the beast whether it goes downward to the earth?” (v 21). At least they understood there was a spirit of animals. Can’t tell you any more than that. Don’t ask me about it, I can’t tell you.

I think a dog is a good example. A dog is a wonderful pet, but it is a dog it is not a human being. If you watch Caesar Milan on *Dog Whisperer*, he

tells you, ‘Don’t treat dogs like human beings because you ruin them. They have to be a ‘pack leader,’ because dogs were made that way.’ I’ve noticed that those people who treat their dogs like human beings have trouble controlling them because a dog doesn’t know what to do when treated like a human being, because it’s not a human being. It just barks, wags its tail, pants its tongue and that’s a dog. One thing about a dog:

- a dog is very loyal
- a dog is very loving
- a dog will be very beneficial to the mental health of people who are depressed

They use this for prisoners and the mentally ill, and it helps them a lot. One thing they’ve found out about some of the prisoners, they put them on some of these work farms where they have to work with horses and cattle. The prisoners find out: Hey, you got to control them. That teaches them, ‘I got to control me.’ There’s something about it there.

- Life is in the blood, that’s what the Bible tells us

If you cut off blood to you hand, it’s going to die. If blood stops flowing in your body, you’re dead. You may not be brain dead at that particular point, but that’s soon to follow. You can be brain dead and the rest of you will die. However, they can keep a brain dead person on artificial respiration to keep:

- the heart going
- the lungs going
- the blood flowing

They do this long enough so that they can get the organs and transplant them. The life in the blood is what the Bible talks about as the *soul*, the *living being*. That would have to be the soul, because the *spirit of man* gives the life and the power to the brain. The brain activates all the rest of the body and everything in the body when it’s given breath.

When a person is brain dead that is probably an indication that the spirit is gone. There’s nothing ‘upstairs,’ no activity, because the spirit of man empowers the brain. So, if the brain is dead, the person is dead. I think that’s a general test that they use now—brain dead and you’re officially dead.

If they keep the body alive temporarily through artificial means, though they’re brain dead, does that mean you are alive? It means that the brain is dead, but the body is artificially kept alive. It’s artificially keeping alive. That doesn’t mean really alive. It’s just the rest of your body is able to sustain itself for a while if they can keep up the breath, the temperature and the blood.

- What about death and *near* death experiences?

Let’s call them *near* death experiences. You see lights and things like this. They claim they’ve seen lights. That happens when you’re knocked unconscious, too. It doesn’t necessarily mean that you’re visiting the heavenly realm; it just means that when you’re close to death your brain does funny things, because it’s not functioning properly. People can recover from that because the spirit hasn’t left them entirely. We have the instance where the spirit came back into someone who died. So, if the spirit has not left them, I think they can be revived.

I got sick on a plane after I ate a tuna sandwich that I shouldn’t have eaten. It was at five in the morning when I got the tuna sandwich. I look at the tuna and the guy stirred it up and I said, ‘Oh, no!’ It was out there overnight. It may have been there the day before. Then he got some of the mayonnaise and stirred it up and I said, ‘Ohhh!’ I ate it because I was hungry and when I got on the plane I had an upset stomach. I was leaning back in the seat and all of a sudden I saw a pink background with yellow things going every which way. I thought, oh no, what did I eat? Needless to say, I made the trek back to the little place on the plane a little later. I was close to vomiting, but didn’t vomit. I tell you, stay away from two or three day-old looking tuna fish when you see it.

You can have different things like this happen to you under unusual circumstances. That doesn’t mean that you have visited heaven. That doesn’t mean any of those things. I am sure that there are demons that come along and try and convince people that, yes, they went into heaven and they saw their relatives and they saw all this other thing. Since no one is in heaven and when the dead die, they know nothing, these near death experiences can create some of those phenomenon, but you cannot rely upon that as proof of anything, because it’ll be different from person to person.

- faith as the grain of a mustard seed

This is the case, not the mustard seed in this particular case, but the cursing of the fig tree and its shriveling up. They were coming back into the temple area.

Mark 11:21: “Then Peter remembered *and* said to Him, ‘Look, Master! The fig tree that You cursed has dried up.’ And Jesus answered and said to them, ‘Have faith *from* God’” (vs 21-22). This is interesting in the Greek: ***Have God’s faith***, which really means the faith that comes from God, which has to be through His Spirit.

Whenever we ask anything, there are also other conditions to go with it. Is it His will? Is it something that really needs to be done? Nevertheless, He says:

Verse 23: “For truly I say to you, whoever shall say to this mountain, ‘Be taken away and be cast into the sea,’ and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that what he said will take place, he shall have whatever he shall say.” That shows that our request to God can be virtually unlimited but it has to be within the realm of His will. There’s one thing harder to move than a mountain—*changing the human mind* is harder than moving a mountain.

If it would serve the purpose of God to do so, it will happen. Also, in praying, for example: If you’re caught in a situation that there are some people who are actually turning against you in such a way that they are your enemy, you don’t know what to do and you ask God to take care of them, my experience has been that somewhere down the road, *God takes care of them*. We don’t have to execute vengeance. We don’t have to get mad or angry about it. We can just say, ‘God, they’re in your hands. You do with them according to your will. You promised you would fight our battles for us. What can we do to stand up against them?’ Then God lets them fall into their own trap. It may take a little process of time before it happens, but I’ve seen it over and over again through the years.

- God being omnipresent, present everywhere

God is in one place where His throne is. His **power** is everywhere, but not God. God is omniscient, meaning He knows everything. He can find out about us at any time through His Spirit because He’s a *heart-knowing God*. He doesn’t pry into everybody’s private life just because He has the power, because ***He wants us to choose!*** Isn’t that something? God has all that power and uses it only when necessary. God is omniscient, knowing everything, but He is not omnipresent, being everywhere. We saw how He knows, through His Spirit, through His angels, etc.

- going through mountains

I don’t know that the Panama Canal and the Suez Canal applies, even though they went through mountains, although the Suez Canal was through the desert. It’s a mountain of earth. I don’t know how much they prayed to do it. It seems as though they used steam shovels and dynamite, but they did it. I don’t think it applies in that particular case that we’re talking about here. Nevertheless, they did build the canal and they did go through mountains.

- What happens if someone has a child born with a cleft lip/palate, deaf or other deformities?

Let me try and answer the question this way: Obviously, in the point of being deaf those that we’re discussing here did not recover their hearing or didn’t have hearing at all. In reference to a cleft

palate, let me just mention that several years ago, they were noticing frogs in Minnesota that were born deformed. At first they thought it was because of some chemicals that men were putting in there. Perhaps, maybe even estrogen coming out of the sewer and getting into the water. What the found was, it was a parasite. It was not a chemical.

In Southeast Asia, they have a large percentage of children, more than other places, that have cleft palates. I just wonder if that is not a parasitical deformity, more than anything else. I have to salute the American doctors that volunteer and go down there and have the cleft palate surgery program. They go down there gratis and do 100s of these babies and straighten out their nose, their palates, and their lips and fix them up. I think that’s a wonderful thing that they do.

I would have to say that on some of these other things, lots of times when we think God ought to do something and He doesn’t do something, like heal someone’s children who are deaf, we don’t know the personal lives of the individuals involved. We don’t want to say, ‘Oh, they had deaf children because they were sinning.’ We don’t know if they were or not. *We can’t make that judgment!*

We may have a situation where that there are even some children born who are neither male nor female. Some of them have part of both. Again, I think that may be more due to a parasitical situation of parasites than necessarily bad behavior or sin. Those things we can’t answer right off and say ‘yea or nay’ why did God do this? Lots of times we have to accept what is, from the point of view that God wants to see, do we love that person in spite of it. Lots of time some of those children or people who have those kind of handicaps turn out to be very inspiring, because they overcome a great deal and really show what human beings can do. Likewise, with helping and assisting them.

Many of the things that we have today along those lines we can attribute to many different things other than saying that it’s sin to the third and fourth generation. Who sinned? What was the sin? Why did this person come from this line over here and they had all kinds of sins and nothing happened to their children? But it happened to these children over here? ***We can’t make any of those judgments!*** The only thing we can do is just say that what we have, we have. We deal with what we have and ask God to help us and do the best that we can with it.

That doesn’t necessarily mean a condemnation from God. Sometimes some of those things are so that God will see how we respond to it:

- Are we going to respond as the Nazis and exterminate them all?

or

- Are we going to respond with compassion and kindness and help them?

Just like children with autism. You have those even now. There's even a television program that has an autistic child as an actor for whatever the television show is. I don't know what it is, but I've seen things and he's doing just fine. A lot of it, too, is:

- Are we going to accept them?
- Are we going to love them?
- Are we going to help them?

We have to put all of that in the mix, too.

One other factor needs to be brought out. ***All these physical difficulties or deformities that happen, God is eventually going to take care of it!*** Just like He said of the eunuch, 'Don't worry. I'll give you a better name than many children.' Jesus said that there are eunuchs born that way, made of men—that is actually castration—then there are eunuchs for the Kingdom of God's sake, that is those who don't marry so that they can do all the extra traveling and things like that and serving God that way.

Also referenced:

- Book: *Genome* by Matt Ridley
- Sermon Series: *Why God Hates Religion*
- DVD—BBC Documentary: *The Ghost in Your Genes* { youtube.com } by Horizon

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All Scripture from the *Holy Bible In Its Original Order, A Faithful Version* by Fred R. Coulter

Scriptural References:

- 1) Matthew 28:18
- 2) Hebrews 1:1-3
- 3) Romans 8:1-3
- 4) Hebrews 4:12-16
- 5) Hebrews 1:3
- 6) Genesis 1:26-27
- 7) Genesis 2:7, 23
- 8) Job 32:6-8
- 9) Job 33:4
- 10) James 2:26
- 11) 1-Corinthians 2:6-11
- 12) Revelation 5:11-12
- 13) 2-Kings 6:15-17
- 14) Job 1:6-7
- 15) Luke 10:16-20
- 16) Luke 8:27-31
- 17) Revelation 9:1-5, 11
- 18) Revelation 20:1-3
- 19) Revelation 9:13-15
- 20) Psalm 139:14-17
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- 22) Ecclesiastes 3:19-21
- 23) Mark 11:21-23

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Genesis 15
- Revelation 12
- Ezekiel 18

Judge Righteous Judgment I

Fred R. Coulter

Greetings, brethren! We are going to cover *Judge Righteous Judgment* and there is a booklet that we have to go along with this series.

Why is that important? *I think this is one of the most key things that we need to understand!* Let's see that that's what is going to be given to us.

- How are we going to judge the world, if we don't learn how of make righteous judgments now?
- How is that possibly going to be?
- How is God going to give us the rulership of the world if we don't have a clue as to what we are supposed to do?

We realize that when we're resurrected, and are spirit beings, we're going to have added abilities and added things given to us, but the basic character we need to build *now* and the basic decision-making process needs to be formulated *now*, ***before the resurrection!***

Revelation 20:4: "And I saw thrones..." Remember that Jesus said that He 'sat down in His Father's throne' and ***if we overcome, we'll sit down with Him in His throne!*** That doesn't mean we'll all be sitting in His throne. That means, *we will be under the judgment jurisdiction of Christ* and we will administer—based upon His authority that He gives to us—judgment for the whole world.

Verse 4: "And I saw thrones; and they that sat upon them, and ***judgment was given to them...***" This becomes a very important thing for us to understand:

- how we need to exercise judgment
- how we need to put it together today

Let's see what Jesus said concerning judgment during the Millennium and on into all eternity, because we're still going to have to continuously do judgments. Let's see how this also explains what I said that ***whatever we do is going to be under the judgment throne of Christ!***

He's going to delegate it to us, just like the rulership of the world, where it says 'well done good and faithful servant'; you be over ten cities and you be over five cities and you be over two cities. We have to learn:

- how to rule
- how to judge
- how to make right decisions

We also have to realize and understand that

all of this comes under Jesus Christ.

John 5:27: "And has also... [the Father] ...***given Him authority to execute judgment*** because He is *the* Son of man." Of course, the final day of judgment comes upon everyone. Those of us who endured to the end now—accomplished our mission and are put in the grave to await the resurrection—the final judgment has been rendered on us. God is the Great Judge and there are varying degrees of judgments that He uses:

- on the world
- on nations
- on individuals
- upon His saints

Here's a mistake that a lot of people make: they say that because God is love—especially under the doctrine of eternal security—that there's no such thing as the unpardonable sin, and there is no such thing as conditional security. But when you read the Bible and you read the New Testament and you look up all 1200 ***ifs*** in the Bible you're going to see that everything is conditional upon our response to God.

- That's why Jesus told the young man, '***If*** you will enter into life, keep the commandments.'
- That's why Jesus said, '***If*** you love Me keep My commandments.'

So, a lot of people make the mistake that God will not execute judgment. God *has* to execute judgment. Yes, there is mercy and when there is forgiveness, and when there is the blotting out of sins then God will suspend the judgment.

Let's take, for example, Manasseh—the worst king of all the kings of Israel and Judah—he reigned for 55 years and got involved in demonism, spiritism, the occult, sacrificing children to idols, building idols in the temple of God, and everything.

What happened? *God sent the Assyrians and they carried them off into captivity into Babylon!* There he repented, and God brought him back to the throne. But after he repented, ***God's judgment was:*** though you come back and are on the throne, you are going to be a vassal king under the Assyrians. And what he did with that repentance: he went in and he destroyed all the idols that he made, he took out all the things that he had made to pollute the temple and the whole area.

Even though God executed judgment, when he extended mercy there was still a penalty upon Manasseh in God's judgment so that he would not

sin again. Likewise, when David sinned, when he orchestrated the thing with Bathsheba's husband Uriah the Hittite and had him killed in the battle and got Bathsheba pregnant, remember what happened: *God forgave the sin, but he gave a disciplinary thorn in the flesh for the rest of David's life*, which was that **'your whole household will be against you.'** And it began that very day with Absalom and Tamar, even though he repented deeply. So all of those things are part of the judgment of God.

Today, *the whole church is living under the judgment of God!* But part of the things that God has done for good and for punishment is that He has scattered the Church, and there are many, *many*, *many* Churches of God with varying degrees of understanding of doctrine and understanding of the Bible, and different things like this, because *free choice is an important part of judgment!*

But, because of that and because of God's judgment—though He has given mercy, kindness and forgiveness to those who have repented—there is still the judgment that God has determined that the churches are going to remain small so that we can all learn the lesson; *our relationship is with God the Father and Jesus Christ:*

- not in an organization
- not in a corporation
- not in a social setting
- not if you belong to this corporate church you're guaranteed salvation
- *No!*

The only way that anyone is guaranteed salvation, is with a 'humble heart and contrite spirit' and 'loving God with all your heart, mind, soul and being, and keeping His commandments.' That's the guarantee! That's what God wants us to learn because of the circumstances we find ourselves in. That's why, that even though the heavy hand of God's judgment has come, we need to realize this in everything that happens:

- whether in the world
- whatever nation we live in
- whatever is with our family
- whatever is in our lives

'all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.' God is the Judge!

Let's see about God being Judge. Psalm 75:7 is a very important verse to understand; let's really put this all together and sharpen our pencils and by that I mean *our minds!*

Psalm 75:4: "I said to the arrogant, 'Do not boast'..." Here's a very important thing today, everyone is 'dealing foolishly' (*KJV*). And one of

the things is that you are going to see *how absolutely devoid of right judgment that most people in the world are!*

"...and to the wicked, 'Do not lift not up the horn; do not lift up your horn on high; nor speak with a stiff neck.' For promotion comes neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south" (vs 4-6).

Everyone wants a promotion. Human nature likes to be uplifted, and when you get uplifted in vanity, in pride, and in everything like this, witness Nebuchadnezzar and what happened to him. When he got lifted up in pride and he looked around and he saw this great Babylon and he said, 'Oh, look what **I** have done' (Dan. 4). God struck him down and said, 'The proud are going to be brought down.' ***That's God's judgment!***

Verse 7: "But **God is Judge**; He puts down one and sets up another." That's why it is foolish to put yourself forward—any of us—to exalt ourselves. Think about how the ministry has done that with the brethren, and think of all the damage and problems that have come because of that. ***God is Judge!***

Psa. 96 is one of the Millennial Psalms, so this tells us about *judgment that God is going to do!* Psalm 96:13: "Before the LORD; for He comes, for **He comes to judge the earth; He shall judge the world with righteousness and the people with His Truth.**" That's really very profound!

This is why the whole process of our growing and changing and overcoming—the process of conversion:

- is a spiritual thing that takes place
- is a spiritual education that takes place
- is a spiritual thing that occurs in your mind to build the character of God

It is based on faith, hope and love, and then we grow and we develop in the way that God wants us to. God has called us to rule the world! So, the Apostle Paul also said that 'He [God] is judge of all.'

Now let's see that that involves the resurrection, involves our eternal spiritual life, in coming before the throne of God, ***God is judging!*** When we understand it, God is judging everyone—everywhere, in all places, in the whole world—for what their conduct is; varying degrees of it. Those who know the Truth of God are going to have the severest judgment because they know. Those who reject the Word of God are going to have an even more severe judgment upon them. Those who do not know the Word of God and sin, it says, 'The one who knew to do good and did it not will be beaten with many stripes. The one who did not know to do good and did it will be beaten with few stripes.' ***The judgment and the penalty still comes!*** We need to

understand that.

Heb. 12 shows that God is judging us all the time. You don't need to be in fear of that. You don't need to sit back and say 'Oh, God is judging me. How am I going to make it?' *NO!* Don't do that because God gives mercy, God gives grace, and if you are in a relationship with God the way that you ought to be, through:

- prayer
- study
- keeping the commandments of God
- living by every Word of God
- loving God with all your heart, mind, soul and being

your judgment is going to be for eternal life!

Hebrews 12 22: "But you have come to Mount Zion, and to *the* city of *the* living God, heavenly Jerusalem; and to an innumerable company of angels; *to the* joyous festival gathering; and *to the* Church of the Firstborn, registered in *the* Book of Life in heaven; and to God, ***the Judge of all...***" (vs 22-23)—*everyone!*

Leading up to Pentecost—go through day 49 again—you will see the whole message to the seven churches is one of:

- encouragement
- repentance
- judgment

all the way through. We need to realize that is how God deals with us in all of our lives.

Psa. 50 tells us about God in judging the world, in judging the earth, and so forth. We're going to see a little bit later on that God made us so that we must make judgments.

Psalm 50:3: "Our God shall come, and He shall not keep silent; a fire shall devour before Him..." Note Rev. 16, seven last plagues: What does it say there? *All of those horrible and devastating plagues that are going to come upon the enemies of God!* What have the angels said, 'Righteous and Holy are Your judgments O God, for they are worthy, for they have shed the blood of the Saints.' ***God is going to render His judgment:***

"...a fire shall devour before Him, and it shall be very tempestuous all around Him. He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth so that He may judge His people" (vs 3-4)—and also judge *for* His people.

When Christ returns, after the resurrection—judgment is on the house of God, as we know—***He is going to judge the enemies of Israel***, for Israel on their behalf. And then He's going to judge all of those nations that refuse to repent, if they don't

come up to the house of God to learn of His ways; ***He is going to judge them!***

So, it is very important that we understand that. It's important that we understand just ***how God judges*** and ***what forms the basis of His judgment***. Since He is Judge, how is God going to do it? Well, let's look at it this way, since God is Judge of all the earth, ***as God His way is perfect!*** He's got a perfect standard to measure by.

Psa. 18 is important for us to understand and this is what we need to realize, concerning God's way, and this is a judgment that every person needs to make when they approach the Word of God, when they approach how to interpret the Bible, whatever they do.

Psalm 18:30: "As for God, **His way is perfect**; the Word of the LORD is tried..."

Psalm 12:6: "The words of the LORD are pure words, like silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times." So the Word of the Lord is tried.

Psalm 18:30: "...He is a shield to all those who take refuge in Him, for who is God besides the LORD? Or, who is a Rock except our God? The God who girds me with strength and ***makes my way perfect***" (vs 30-32).

The Spirit of God is going to ***lead you into the perfection of Christ***. Of course, that's what Jesus said back there in

Matthew 5:48: "Therefore, you shall be perfect, even as your Father Who *is* in heaven is perfect." That is the whole overarching goal of everything that we do.

I need to emphasize again, because I see a time when the Word of God is not going to be here. As a matter fact, it is prophesied that there is coming 'a famine of the hearing of the Word.' And when we have it, when we understand it, when we have got all of God's word, and we have the opportunity to put it together:

- What are we going to do with it?
- Are we going to become lazy?
- Are we going to go to sleep at the switch?
- Are we going to be so involved in the world and things of the world, that we slack up on growing in character and grace and knowledge?
- What is it that we're going to do?

He wants to make your way perfect! Now, think about that, and ***righteous judgment is part of the perfection of God!***

Psalm 18:33: "Who makes my feet like hinds' feet, and sets me on my high places. He trains

my hands for battle...” (vs 33-34).

We have a spiritual warfare today. When we’re resurrected and we come down and fight with Christ, He is going to teach us how to fight.

“...so that my arms can bend a bow of bronze. You have also given me the shield of Your salvation; and Your right hand has held me up, and Your gentleness has made me great” (vs 34-35). ***That’s the judgment to God!*** When we understand, first of all, *His way is perfect*.

Let’s see something else concerning the Law of God. This is the standard that He uses. God does not give some kind of judgment that He has not already declared in His Word. We need to understand that because ***where no law is there is no sin!***

Psalm 19:7: “The Law of the LORD is perfect, restoring the soul...” When you go back and read about the laws of God in the Old Testament, those are perfect for a carnal society. When you go to the New Testament and read how Jesus amplified the Law—

- magnified it
- made it honorable
- made it spiritual
- giving it a higher standard

—it is perfected even more!

“...the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple” (v 7). This is how we begin to understand how to make righteous judgments.

Verse 8: “The precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandments of the LORD are pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever; the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether” (vs 8-9).

Notice how important that it is, v 10: “More to be desired than gold, yea, much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.” It’s just like Jesus said, ‘If you come to Me you’ll never hunger and you’ll never thirst.’ That’s why it’s important that we keep coming to Jesus Christ in everything that we do.

We need to realize that God is Isaiah 57:15: “...the high and lofty One Who inhabits eternity; Whose name is Holy...”—yet, He dwells with the humble.

Here’s something we need to understand about the very character of God. This is important to understand. Not only is God love, but love brings out all of these other things. Before we get into *how to judge righteous judgment*, we need to have the basis and the foundation of ***how God does it***, because

that’s the way He wants us to do it, and then He gives us more detailed information on how we carry it out and we’ll look at many of the things there.

Jeremiah 4:2: “And will swear, ‘As the LORD lives’... [God lives forever, eternity] ...**in truth, in judgment, and in righteousness.**”

Those are the three pillars upon which everything hangs that God does. You have ***God is love*** and from there comes:

- ***Truth***
- ***judgment***
- ***righteousness***
- ***mercy***
- ***grace***
- ***forgiveness***

In going through these things, we don’t have one Scripture fighting the other Scripture, but we put it all together to get the whole picture and understanding of it.

So ***Truth, judgment and righteousness*** are actually expressions of God’s love, and this becomes the substance or the basis for the criteria of righteous judgment. So therefore, since:

- God is love
- God is true
- God is merciful
- God is just

all of His judgments are just! We need to understand that with our relationship with God. When we come before Him in prayer, we have direct access to God the Father through Jesus Christ, and our prayers go *directly* to God the Father.

God *loves* judgment. One of the Psalms says, ‘It is joy to the just to do judgment.’ Why? ***Because you have the knowledge of God and the Spirit of God*** to make a right and a proper judgment.

Isaiah 61:3: “To appoint unto those... [all that come out of the Tribulation] ...who mourn in Zion, giving to them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the mantle of praise for the spirit of heaviness; so that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that He might be glorified.”

Let’s add to that Ps. 11 and put this together, because that’s God’s judgment when He comes back. That’s what He is going to do. His judgment is going to be one of forgiveness, grace and mercy, especially after the punishment that He extracted and brought upon all mankind. Then He’s going to give mercy and judgment. He’s going to change their heart, mind and soul so that they will be converted.

Psalm 11:4: “The LORD is in His Holy

temple; the LORD'S throne is in heaven. His eyes behold; His searching gaze tests the children of men."

Note sermon: *Spirit of God, Spirit of Man, Seven Spirits of God*, and how God judges the world, what He's doing, how He's communicating with the world. And this ties right in with that.

Verse 5: "The LORD tries the righteous..." Yes, that's why we have tests, decisions to make and things to overcome. He wants to perfect our character.

"...but His soul hates the wicked and the one who loves violence. Upon the wicked He shall rain snares, fire and brimstone; and a scorching wind shall be the portion of their cup, for **the LORD is righteous, He loves righteousness**; the upright will behold His face" (vs 5-7). In other words, we are righteous in that, and we read that all of His judgments are true and righteous today.

Now let's see something else that is important, because we will come down to judgment of individuals, but since God is looking down upon the whole world, let's see how God weighs in the balance the things that He's doing.

Let's put Jer. 18 in conjunction with what were doing today because this is important for us to understand. This renders God's judgment:

Jeremiah 18:7: "If at any time I shall speak concerning a nation..." So, God is involved in all the nations of the world. Let's understand what God is doing right now, because Satan wants to develop his whole world government, his whole world religion, and, of course, that's prophesied that it would take place so we know it's going to happen. God is going to let them raise themselves up, and in doing so all the way along we are going to see lack of righteous judgment.

We're going to see corruption, greed, killing, all of these things, because that is the way of Satan. Then when he finally gets it where he wants to get it, then he is going to raise up *the beast*, who will come in with a great peace plan for whole world, be declared the savior of the world, and the *false prophet* will have miracles. Right now, as God has done all the way through history, ***He judges the nations!*** When you read the history of the world, the history of different nations, you will see that through it, all of that is a result of God's judgment. And what are the *sore judgments* that He uses?

Verse 7: "If at any time I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck it up and to pull it down, and to destroy it."

Think about what is going on in the world, and realize that *all of it is the judgment of God*. And

realize that God is going to take care of the final judgment of this, through the Great White Throne Judgment, in the second resurrection, as we will see on the Last Great Day.

Verse 8: "If that nation, against whom I have spoken, will turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do to them."

We have a perfect example of this, with Jonah and the Assyrians and the capital city of Nineveh, Jonah was sent there and he preached 'Repent because God's destruction is coming upon you.' And, lo and behold, greater than this is a Gentile nation and its repentance is in the Old Testament in the book of Jonah to show and to use as an example against Israel. Very rarely did Israel repent with this kind of repentance. So what happen?

The king said to declare a fast; everyone—every human being, man, woman—and beast: 'do not eat anything, do not drink any water, dress in sackcloth and ashes and petition the Lord that He would take away the punishment that He said.'

What happened? *God was merciful and He held off His judgment*—that's an action here—that He would repent of the evil He thought to do.

Verse 9: "And if at any time I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build it and to plant *it*; if it does evil in My sight..." (vs 9-10).

- based upon His righteous laws
- based upon His righteous judgments
- based upon the things that He has given

He judges all the nations according to the letter of His Law, because in reality God expects all the nations of the world to keep His laws in the letter of the Law. This would give them God's blessing, this would give them peace and security. But because they don't, then death and destruction comes, as He says here.

Verse 10: "If it does evil in My sight, **that it not obey My voice**, then I will repent of the good with which I said I would do them good."

Now let's see how God executes His judgments. Look at any war, look at any nation that is brought down, plus couple that with when God gave the blessing. Then you couple that with what God promised Abraham, where He said, 'I will bless those that bless you,' and that means all of his descendants, 'I will curse those that curse you.'

Of course, those that hate us God is going to mete out His correction and His destruction upon them. Let's think about this in relationship to the war on terror, and let's think about this concerning some

of the events that have taken place. Who has hated us the most? *The radical Muslims!* And one of the nations that has caused the greatest trouble, has been Indonesia, and the next one is Pakistan because they've cursed us, even though we're not righteous before God as we ought to be.

But because of God's promise to Abraham He said He would 'curse those that curse us.' What happened to them? *Look at the tsunami that took place, and look at the problems and difficulty still going on in Indonesia!* Look at the earthquake that took place in Pakistan. *Where did it take place? Right up in the high mountains, where all of the radical Muslims and those of al-Qaeda are!* And it makes you wonder, how many of the enemy died because of the hand of God, which was much more perhaps than we could do through our munitions. So, let's think upon that.

God always offers repentance. That's what we need to understand. God offers a way out before judgment comes. So, this is why it's very important when you're going through an experience a difficult thing, **do not harden your heart to God!**

The men of Israel came before Ezekiel and said, 'Oh we want to hear to hear of the Lord.' God said to them, through the prophet Ezekiel, 'Why do you come to Me? You that have idols in your minds and in your hearts.'

- God is interested in the heart
- God is interested in the repentance

Here's what God says, because the idols estranged them from God. As we're going through here, use some of this as some correction upon yourself, ask yourself:

- What are the idols I have?
- How can I get rid of those?

Ezekiel 14:6: "Therefore, say to the house of Israel, 'Thus says the Lord GOD, "Repent and turn yourselves from your idols, and turn away your faces from all your abominations. For every one of the house of Israel..."' (vs 6-7). What we're seeing is *individual* judgment and *national* judgment. Let's see how God does it:

"...or of the stranger who lives in Israel, who separates himself from Me... [going away from God] ...and sets up his idols in his heart... [which can be anything] ...and puts the stumbling block of his iniquity before his face..." (v 7). People sin, make wrong judgments, it's just like laying stumbling blocks out there. You're destroying and ruining your way.

"...and comes to a prophet to ask of him concerning Me... [listen to what God says]: **...I the LORD will answer him Myself**" (v 7).

If there is not repentance, then you're going to fall to the harsh judgment of God. If there is repentance, then the judgment of God—based on truth, righteousness and mercy—is forgiveness. That's how God always works.

But if not, He says, v 8: "And I will set My face against that man, and I will make him for a sign and for a proverb. And I will cut him off from the midst of My people; and **you shall know that I am the LORD**. And the prophet, if he is deceived, and he speaks a word..." (vs 8-9)—anyone who preaches.

- if God's way is perfect
- if God's way is righteous
- if God's way is righteous judgment

What can man do to add to it to make it better? That's kind of a ridiculous thing— isn't it?

When man, who is sinful by nature, inadequate by himself, is facing death, what can he add to God? **Nothing!** But through repentance, and a contrite spirit, and a humble heart, and loving God, **God can add to him or to her.**

God says, "...I the LORD have deceived that prophet. And I will stretch out My hand upon him and will destroy him from the midst of My people Israel. And they shall bear the punishment of their iniquity... [judgment] ... the punishment of the prophet shall be even as the punishment of him that seeks unto him" (vs 9-10).

One of the judgments of God is this: if you want evil, lies and deceit, **you will have them!** If you come along and try and add to the perfect way of God the lying and deceitful things of human nature and false teachings, **you will have them!** Those will become a snare and a stumbling block to you, just like He says here. He's going to do this to the false prophets *and* of those who seek Him.

Verse 11: "So that the house of Israel may never again go astray from Me, nor be defiled again with all their transgressions, but that they may be My people, and I may be their God," says the Lord GOD.' The Word of the LORD came to me, saying, 'Son of man, **when a land sins against Me...** [keep in mind what we just read in Jer. 18] **...by trespassing grievously,** and I stretch out My hand on it, and break the staff of its bread, and send famine on it, and will cut off man and beast from it" (vs 11-13).

Now this is getting right down to the utter destruction of the nation because of sin. We don't know how greatly the sin is going to be, or how much more magnified it's going to be, but we know in Rev. 18, it says the sins of Babylon the Great have reached unto heaven. So that shows you what's going to happen at the end-time.

Verse 14: “‘And *though* these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they should deliver *only* their own lives by their righteousness,’ says the Lord GOD.” That’s important for us to understand. This is seeing the judgment of God in action.

(go to the next track)

We’re going to see, that what God is talking about here is part of the four judgments that He has which are called ***My four sore judgments!***

1. **famine** (v 13)
2. **noisome beasts** (v 15)

Now remember in all of these if Noah, Daniel or Job were there, they wouldn’t deliver but only their own lives.

3. **a sword**

Verse 17, God says: “Or *if* I bring **a sword** upon that land, and say, ‘Sword, go through the land’...”

4. **pestilence** (v 19)

In each case He says that Noah, Daniel or Job were there, the three most righteous men this side of the Flood.

Verse 21 gives us a summary of it: “For thus says the Lord GOD, ‘How much more **when I send My four evil judgments** against Jerusalem, **the sword, and the famine, and the destroying beast, and the pestilence,** to cut off man and beast from it?’ There’s going to be a remnant that He says is also part of the pattern in judgment of God, which is whenever He brings correction and judgment *there is also a remnant that fear God*, and He is merciful to them.

Verse 22: “‘Yet, behold, there shall be left a remnant in it that shall be brought out, both sons and daughters. Behold, they shall come out to you, and when you shall see their ways and their doings, then you shall be comforted concerning the evil that I brought on Jerusalem, *for* all that I have brought upon it. And they shall comfort you when you see their ways and their doings. And **you shall know that I have not done without cause** all that I have done in it,’ says the Lord GOD.

None of the judgments of God are arbitrary; we need to understand that! Whether it’s for an individual, for a nation, a state here in America, or a city.

Now we’ll just summarize some of these things. When God announced to Abraham what He was going to do to Sodom and Gomorrah, and this was the final judgment upon it, let’s understand that God probably had Lot—who was witnessing to them all the time—because it says there in 2-Peter that Lot was frustrated with the behavior of the wicked when he saw what was going on. Apparently Lot was the

one who warned them.

So, the Lord and two angels came, and Abraham met them, and God said, ‘We’re not going to withhold what we’re going to do from our servant Abraham.’ He told them what they were going to do, and then Abraham bargained with Him from 50 down to 10. But the way that he approached God was this: ‘Oh Lord God the Judge of all the earth, shall You not do righteously?’ That was a good way to petition God.

Now let’s understand a very important thing concerning our life and our existence, our creation as God made us. God made us to make personal choices. Personal choices are a matter of judgment and apply all the way down through from a nation, to a King, to individual, to groups of people. What we need to realize is that when we understand it, *life involves choices*, and choices are *judgments*. So, life is filled with discernment, decisions, and judgments.

A lot of people don’t like the word judgment, but the truth is that those who don’t like the word *judgment*, judge everyone else for judging them in their evil; that’s how it goes. We have been made to judge, to choose, to decide. In our daily life we have to make a judgment, a decision:

- when to get up
- when to go to work
- what to wear
- what food we buy
- what to eat
- what we are going to read
- what we watch on television?
- when to pray
- when to study

All of those things are *individual* judgments. Then you have financial judgments that you need to make and so forth:

- purchasing things
- buying a home
- renting a home
- buying furniture
- buying a car
- paying bills

All of those are all choices or judgments that we have to make.

Of course, one of the most important or the greater, as it were, financial matters that we do, we determine our increase and what we render to God and what we render to Caesar. That’s all a part of it. Likewise with our family, we’re always making decisions and judgments in husband/wife relationships, child-rearing and things like this.

How about in our spiritual life, we make

judgments concerning our relationship with God. We must *choose* to love God. Remember this: ***every choice or decision is a judgment***, because God made us to function by choices, decisions and judgments, whether we have the Spirit of God or not. But having the Spirit of God, the *first choice* is that we love God with all our heart, mind, soul and being. That's key to our relationship with God. So, we need to really understand that and realize how that is.

Here's a very important part of how God explains this. Let's understand that no person alive can live or function without ***choices, decisions, and judgments***, whether they know God or they don't know God. This is important for us to realize so that when we come before God in our relationship with Him that we always remember that:

- God is perfect
- His way is perfect
- His laws are perfect
- His salvation is perfect
- His grace is perfect

When we come before God, we make the decision:

- to love God
- to pray to Him
- to worship Him
- to exalt Him His son Jesus Christ
 - ✓ His way
 - ✓ His laws
 - ✓ His commandments
 - ✓ His Truth
 - ✓ His faith
 - ✓ His hope
 - ✓ His plan for all mankind

God sets this before every human being. Let's see what else God has said; He has not made it difficult. That's why there are so many Bibles in so many languages.

Let's go through Deut. 30 and again see something very important: ***repentance is always involved in God's consideration of judgment, in our relationship with God!***

That's why the model prayer tells us that we're to ask God to forgive us our sins *daily* as we forgive others. That is also a matter of *judgment* in both cases: God forgiving us and us forgiving other people. God does not like it when you come to Him and boo-hoo and ask Him to forgive you your sins; then you get up off your knees and you go out and you are self-righteous, judgmental and condemning the people; giving no grace, no mercy, no understanding or anything like that. ***You have just defeated the very thing that you pleaded God to give to you!*** There has to be repentance.

Deuteronomy 30:8: "And you shall return...

[after you've gone through all the curses, the enemies and the judgment of God] ...and obey the voice of the LORD, and do all His commandments which I command you today" (vs 7-8). You can add to that everything in the New Testament.

Verse 9: "And the LORD your God will make you abundantly prosperous in every work of your hand, in the fruit of your body, and in the fruit of your livestock, and in the fruit of your land, for good, for the LORD will again rejoice over you for good as He rejoiced over your fathers"

If! It's conditional what we choose in our judgment, decisions, and choices to do.

Verse 10: "***If*** you shall obey the voice of the LORD your God to keep His commandments and His statutes which are written in this Book of the Law..."

If!—two of them right in a row!

"...and ***if you turn*** to the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul" (v 10). That's important to realize. When we do that, that is an attitude of repentance, because whenever it says, '***If*** you return' (KJV) in the Old Testament that means, ***if*** you repent and come back to God.

He makes it very simple, v 11: "For this commandment which I command you today ***is not hidden from you, neither is it far off.***" Not like they have today, not like the book on Jesus papers, the Gnostic Gospels or the Da Vinci Code where they have got to go find it. Hidden away some place, in some dark little corner, the super dungeon four stories below the castle, and you find a little box that contains the secret of God, and you've got to have someone find it and decode it for you. Nor is it buried in the desert of Egypt because God hates and despises the things of Egypt, so what makes you think any good can come out of there? ***No! God hasn't done it this way!***

The thing that is obvious in the whole world that everyone is overlooking, how many billions and billions of Bibles are there in the world? And it has remained the #1 best selling book, almost forever. Why? ***Because God promised that it would be published in all the world!*** It's not hidden from anybody. If a person doesn't happen to have a Bible at home they can go buy one. If they can't afford to buy one, then they can go to the library and they can read one there. It's available to everyone.

"...***is not hidden from you, neither is it far off.*** It is not in heaven..." (vs 11-12). Just think of all the work, and money that would happen if it was said 'Ah, it's on Mars! God has hidden His Word and His purpose. Now we've got to develop this great rocket. We've got to develop men and machines to go up there, to search, to explore and to

find it.’

“...*that you should* say, ‘Who shall go up to heaven for us, and bring it to us, so that we may hear it and do it?’ Neither *is* it beyond the sea *that you should* say, ‘Who shall go over the sea for us to bring it to us, so that we may hear it and do it?’ But the Word *is* very near you, in your mouth, and in your heart, so that you may do it” (vs 12-14).

In other words, it’s in the language that you speak. That’s a judgment God has given so that when He sets it before every human being, they’re going to say, ‘God, why didn’t You ever tell me about this?’ He’s going to say, ‘*I did!*’

Verse 15: “Behold, I have set before you this day life and good...” And that’s what God set before Adam and Eve, all those people before the Flood, that’s what God set before Abraham, and then Isaac and Jacob, and then the children of Israel, and before us and before every human being on earth.

“...and death and evil; in that **I command you** this day to love the LORD your God...” (vs 15-16). The commandment to love, becomes the primary one from which everything else that God does flows.

“...to walk in His ways, and to keep His commandments and His statutes **and His judgments** so that you may live and multiply. And the LORD your God shall bless you in the land where you go to possess it” (v 16).

Now today it’s not the land that we’re going to inherit, ***it is the Kingdom of God***, and inherit a position in the Kingdom of God to rule on the earth. That’s the choice. First of all God says, love Me, keep My commandments, My statutes, and My judgments and *I’ll bless you!* Add to that everything contained in the New Testament.

Verse 17: “But if your heart turn away so that you will not hear, but shall be drawn away and worship other gods and serve them, **I denounce to you this day...**” (vs 17-18)—a warning! God gives warning—doesn’t He? What does He say?

What did He say to the prophet Ezekiel? ‘*If I give a warning, you are to tell the people. And if you don’t tell the people, I’m going to judge you accountable for not telling them, and their blood shall be upon you. But if you warn, the wicked men to turn from his way, then you shall save your soul, and his blood shall be upon him.*’

So, here we have the same thing. God says ‘All right, you want to go your way, you want to worship other gods, you want to add all the pagan religions to My way, and create yourself a pagan way of god, and a pagan Christianity’:

Verse 18: “**I denounce to you this day** that

you shall surely perish; you shall not prolong *your* days on the land where you pass over Jordan to go to possess it.”

Here’s what God sets before every human being, and there is no doubt. Even atheists recognize that there is the earth and there is the heaven. Meaning you’re without excuse. God didn’t have witnesses, like the Mormons say, where it’s all written down on tables of gold, and then that was translated and put on paper, and then revised and revised. No one has ever found the golden tablets claimed by Joseph Smith. The reason is because they didn’t exist. God doesn’t operate that way. He lays it all out front, lays it out in the open, and *He uses the heaven and the earth as a witness against all human beings*. What He says here:

Verse 19: “I call heaven and earth to record this day against you...” Meaning you have no excuse. You’re free to choose what you want to do: ‘to love Me, or to do evil!’

“...*that* I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing. Therefore, choose life, so that both you and your seed may live” (v 19). How did He start out? *I command you to love God!* How did he end up? He says:

Verse 20: That you may love the LORD your God, *and* may obey His voice, and may cleave to Him; for ***He is your life***...” Not only physically, but eternal life.

Everyone wants eternal life, no one wants to die. Yet, they don’t realize there’s only one way to eternal life and that’s through Jesus Christ. And since that is true, you can’t have it both ways. It’s either going to be God’s way or no way. And if you go your way, which is no way, then all these things are going to come upon you. But notice His appeal:

Verse 20: That you may love the LORD your God, *and* may obey His voice, and may cleave to Him; for He is your life and the length of your days, so that you may dwell in the land...” and you can put in there, in the Kingdom of God and live forever.

“...which the LORD swore to your fathers—to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob—to give it to them” (v 20). Let’s understand a very important thing as we connect this to God’s judgment with the people of God today. We’re being judged all the time, but you need not fear that, because God is merciful, loving, kind, forgiving and gracious.

Now let’s see that upon the Church, it says it very clearly, the ***judgment is now upon the house of God***. 1-Peter 4 will give us some understanding of what we’re doing, where we’re going, and so forth.

1-Peter 4:17: “For the time *has come* for

judgment to begin with the household of God; and if it first *begins* with us, what *will be* the end of those who do not obey the Gospel of God?" Yes, with great difficulty we enter into the Kingdom of God that is true.

- we have to overcome *self*
- we have to overcome *sin*
- we have to overcome *Satan*
- we have to overcome *the way that this world is*

Verse 18: "And if the righteous are saved with much difficulty..." The reason that God wants it that way is so that we come to really love God when we see how futile our ways are, which is a judgment. That we come to see how much we need God, His mercy, kindness, forgiveness and His Spirit. How much we really desire eternal life and ***that's what the judgment is for; the judgment is for life*** if we continue in the way that God wants us to go.

"...And if the righteous are saved with much difficulty, what will become of the ungodly and the sinner? For this reason also, let those who suffer according to the will of God commit their souls to Him in well doing, as to a faithful Creator" (vs 18-19).

Let's see how God works. Much to the chagrin of a lot of people, at the only thing that comes out of the book of Romans is God's graciousness, God's grace, mercy and forgiveness. Once we have that done and everything is all accomplished, you have eternal security. **No!** Let's see what God says here for Jew and for Gentile both. Then we'll see something very important in the way that God operates and the way that God judges.

Romans 2:4: "Or do you despise the riches of His kindness and forbearance and long-suffering, not knowing that the graciousness of God leads you to repentance?"

That's the first of God's judgment! When a person sins, God's judgment is not to come in and punish and destroy immediately, unless the sin so grievous that that requires it the first thing. What does He do? *He leads you to repentance so it can be forgiven!* He does that to draw you to Him. God *leads you* to repentance.

Now, if you don't, v 5 is consistent with what we read in the Old Testament. So, what Paul is doing here *is laying out the judgment of God* on a spiritual basis. Just like we read in 1-Peter 4, the ***judgment now is on the house of God!*** So, Paul is making the difference here.

Verse 5: "But you... [I'm speaking primarily to the Jews in this particular case, but it applies to anyone] ...according to your own

hardness and unrepentant heart..."

- if you keep resisting God
- if you're stubborn against God
- if you don't do the things that you need to do
- if you don't maintain a relationship with God
- if you just set your jaw
- if you just set your mind

to go against God, what are you going to do?

"...are storing up wrath for yourself against the day of wrath and **revelation of God's righteous judgment**" (v 5). There it is, right there, ***judge righteous judgment!***

Verse 6: "Who will render to each one according to his own works." ***God is going to do it on what you do:***

- not what you intend, but what you do
- not what you think, but what you do

because all of your actions are a result of choice, a decision or a judgment. Some may be impetuous, whatever they be, but nevertheless *according to his own works.*

Verse 7: "On the one hand..." Now Paul gives the comparison. Notice how this follows along with Deut. 30, about setting before you *life and death, blessing and cursing*, and so forth.

"...to those who with patient endurance in good works... [you have to keep doing it] ...are seeking glory and honor and immortality... [He's going to give them] ...eternal life."

But you have to seek it God's way, of course, with all your heart, mind, soul and being. What did it say here for those who are seeking glory, honor, immortality and eternal life? He says, '*Seek and you will find, knock and it shall be open, ask and you shall receive.*' Everything you need to change, grow and over come:

- with the help, strength and power of God
- with His Spirit in you
- with His love and mercy and forgiveness that He wants to pour out upon you

which is the judgment that He wants to give to you, then He's going to give you eternal life.

I want you to think about this, not only in relationship to the world, but I want you think about this of those in the Church who many have attitudes in degree, that have some of this, which needs to be repented of, because they've made the choice to do these things.

Verse 8: "On the other hand, to those who

are contentious and who disobey the Truth, but obey unrighteousness—indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish—upon every soul of man who works out evil...” (vs 8-9).

God is judging everyone on the earth everywhere, all the time, one degree or another. He’s judging His people after one standard; He’s judging the world after another standard, which is by the letter of the Law.

Verse 10: “But glory and honor and peace to everyone who works good, both to *the* Jew first, and to *the* Greek, because there is no respect of persons with God” (vs 10-11).

What happened for those who really didn’t want to believe Jesus Christ, didn’t want to obey the Truth, what did they say. ‘Oh, we’re Abraham’s seed, therefore, God has got to respect us. We’re his descendants, how can God do anything to us? Even though our works are as evil as they are.’ **No!** “...to everyone who works good, both to *the* Jew first, and to *the* Greek, because there is no respect of persons with God.”

Verse 12: “For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law; and as many as have sinned within *the* Law **shall be judged by the Law**”—which is perfect, righteous, Holy and good. *That’s how God judges righteous judgment!*

How NOT to Judge:

Let’s move into the area of *how* to judge righteous judgment. First of all, we need to look at how we are **not** to judge. This is an important thing to understand that there are times to make judgment and there are times **not** to make judgment. Then we are going to see *the greatest sin* that people do, and you see it every night on the television news:

- What do you think?
- What did you hear?
- What is the latest from the grapevine?
- What is the latest from your leak?
- *Tell us!*

Matt. 7 starts out with the attitude. You’ve got to have the right attitude for judging in the first place.

Mathew 7:1: “Do not condemn *others*, so that you yourself will not be condemned.”

Let’s understand something that happens with all people, all the time,. You’ve done it! I’ve done it! Everyone has done it! In particularly women do this more than men. They look at people, see what they’re doing, and immediately condemned them in their mind. ‘Oh look at what this person is doing.’

What happens is that you go shopping and you see someone, and you look at them and you make a judgment. If you’re overweight and you look at some one thin and you say, ‘Oh boy I wish I could be like that.’ If you’re someone thin, you see they’re overweight and say ‘Oh, look at those overweight people, they don’t have any control or anything about them.’ What are you doing? *You’re judging their heart!*

I’m firmly convinced that every person who has access weight doesn’t want it. And you need to, rather than condemn them in your mind to exalt yourself, which is what you’re doing when you do that, feel sorry for them, and realize they don’t want to be that way. But unfortunately, because of the things that they do and some of the choices that they make, and the inheritance that they have, they’re that way. But you don’t know the heart and the mind—do you? **No!** That’s important to understand.

Verse 2: “For **with what judgment you judge, you shall be judged...**” And there’s another Scripture that says ‘If you desire mercy, you give mercy.’ Because the merciful man will receive mercy, the unmerciful man or woman will not receive mercy. Too many times in our judgment of people we want mercy for us, but not for them, because we know better and we have repented, and these people are rotten and nasty. You let God judge them. Is God capable of judging them? **Yes!** So, He gives this:

“...and **with what measure you mete out, it shall be measured again to you...** [never forget that] ...Now, why do you look at the sliver that *is* in your brother’s eye, but you do not perceive the beam in your *own* eye?” (vs 2-3). That’s the biggest stumbling block in judgment, *the perception of self*. Rather than:

- God’s way
- God’s Truth
- God’s love
- God’s mercy
- God’s law

All that should come first! Not your condemning perception of other people of who they are, what they are and what they are doing.

Verse 4 “Or how will you say to your brother, “Allow *me* to remove the sliver from your eye”; and behold, the beam *is* in your *own* eye?” You know, you can just imagine that, ‘Oh, I see a sliver in there,’ and you’ve got this big beam, and you go BONG! hit him on the head and you knock him out, ‘Oh, oh I’m sorry, I’m trying to get the sliver.’ BONG! You hit him again. And you bend down to get it out and BANG! you hit him right on the forehead and almost blind him! That’s what Christ is talking about. Before you approach any

kind of judgment with other people, He says, ***‘Examine yourself.’***

Verse 5: “*You hypocrite, first cast out the beam from your own eye, and then you shall see clearly to remove the sliver from your brother’s eye.*” That’s what’s important to do.

What happens when people don’t do that? I want to cover something very important here that we find listed not only in the Old Testament but it is also in the New Testament. When you see or perceive a problem, ***when not to judge!*** We might not get to it until part two, but hold on, we’ll get there.

Leviticus 19:16, here is a command: ***“You shall not go as a slanderer among your people...”*** That’s one of the greatest problems between brethren within the Church.

- Have you heard?
- Did you know?
- Guess what I saw?
- Guess what so and so did?

And you have no basis for understanding why they did it, what the problem was, what their state of mind was, and so forth.

Verse 17: “*You shall not hate your brother in your heart....*” That’s what happens when a lot of these things come up. When people start condemning as Jesus said here in Matt. 7, “*They judge and hate the brother in their heart.*”

We’re going to see a little later on, because God is ***a God of love, mercy and truth!*** He always leaves the door open for repentance! What happens is that we all want it for ourselves, but rarely do we desire it for the other person. We want to slam the door and cut them off. If there’s total evil that’s going on, then that’s what should be done.

Let’s see what else the Bible tells us about tale-bearing, and what it causes. We also need to realize, that within the Churches of God there is a lot of tale-bearing, gossip and things going on. When we’re finding out about all the evil that was going on within the Church, it wasn’t a matter of tale-bearing necessarily, but it was a matter of an underground conveyance of truth so that we would know what’s going on. In that case you need to differentiate from that.

Proverbs 11:13—this applies to other things too: “*A talebearer is a revealer of secrets...*” If someone confides something to you, you are ***never*** to repeat it to anyone else. I make that an absolute rule in what I do in counseling people. I do not discuss my counseling with any of the brethren, with anyone else, unless I need wisdom from one of the elders. I do not discuss it with my wife, I do not discuss it with anybody else in the Church, because

if a person has a problem and difficulty they need to overcome, they need the encouragement of understanding that when they come to a minister they are not going to be embarrassed to have someone else tell it back to them, because the minister has a big blabbing mouth.

“...but one who is of a faithful spirit keeps the matter hidden” (v 13)—while you are overcoming the difficulty. This doesn’t mean that you are condoning sin. This means that *it is a matter that needs to be solved* and you don’t go blab it to everyone on earth. Today with the telephone, with the Internet, with everything we have, everything can be out there and it can gain a life of itself, and it can burn and destroy. You need to understand that. I’ve been through all of these things myself. I know what I’m talking about with it, and I know what it is with people and the things they have, and the things that they do.

Once you say it, you can’t take it back! What does it do? This is all a part of *getting rid of the beam that is in your eye*, to help someone who has the sliver in his eye.

Proverbs 18:8: “*The words of a talebearer are as wounds, and they go down into the innermost parts of the belly.*” Right into the innermost part of your being.

How many relationships have been destroyed because people are tale bearers? They just can’t wait to run up and down in the camp, with the phone:

- Did you know?
- Did you hear?
- I’ve talked to so and so.
- Oh, did you see this?
- Did you see that?

What does all this cause, in addition to hurt feelings and difficulties?

Proverbs 26:20: “*Where there is no wood, the fire goes out; and where there is no talebearer, the quarreling ceases.*” I’ve seen this and experienced it in the Church

Some talebearers, not only being gossips, become very contentious. I know when I was dealing with a very severe matter that there were people who were so impatient that they couldn’t wait. They wanted their judgment, rather than letting me take my time to get all the facts, which we’ll talk about later.

What did they do? *They had to get on the phone*, and they had to call people in Canada, and they to call people in other states.

- Did you know?

- Did you hear?

They didn't have all the facts. They may have had some, but you see what happens when you do this?

- you close the door for repentance
- you close the door for a person to come back
- you create strife and contention

Verse 21: "As charcoal to burning embers, and wood *is* to fire, so *is* a contentious man to kindle strife. The words of a talebearer *are* as wounds, and they go down into the innermost parts of the belly. Burning lips... [can hardly wait to talk] ...and a wicked heart *are like* a broken piece of pottery with silver dross. He who hates *and* disguises it with his lips stores up deceit within himself. When he makes his voice gracious, do not believe him, for seven hateful things *are* in his heart" (vs 21-25). And we've also seen that too!

- How many times have tale-bearing been lying?
- Do you know all the facts?
- Were you there?
- Did you see it?
- Did you understand it?
- Did you know what was going on in the mind of the person?
- Did you assume it?
- Did you make a judgment against it?
- What did you do?

We're going to see, *there are times not to judge*.

Verse 28: "**A lying tongue hates those afflicted by it, and a flattering mouth works ruin.**" *They do not have righteous judgment!*

- 17) Jeremiah 18:7-10
- 18) Ezekiel 14:6-14, 17, 21-23
- 19) Deuteronomy 30:8-20
- 20) 1 Peter 4:17-19
- 21) Romans 2:4-12
- 22) Matthew 7:1-5
- 23) Leviticus 19:16-17
- 24) Proverbs 11:13
- 25) Proverbs 18:8
- 26) Proverbs 26:20-25, 28

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Daniel 4
- Revelation 16
- Ezekiel 14:15, 19

Also referenced:

- Booklet: *Judge Righteous Judgment* by Fred R. Coulter
- Sermon: *Spirit of God, Spirit of Man, Seven Spirits of God*

FRC:bo
Transcribed:12-18-15

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version* by Fred R. Coulter

Scriptural References:

- 1) Revelation 20:4
- 2) John 5:27
- 3) Psalm 75:4-7
- 4) Psalm 96:13
- 5) Hebrews 12:22-23
- 6) Psalm 50:3-4
- 7) Psalm 18:30
- 8) Psalm 12:6
- 9) Psalm 18:30-32
- 10) Matthew 5:48
- 11) Psalm 18:33-35
- 12) Psalm 19:7-10
- 13) Isaiah 57:15
- 14) Jeremiah 4:2
- 15) Isaiah 61:3
- 16) Psalm 11:4-7

Judge Righteous Judgment II

Fred R. Coulter

Greetings brethren! As we saw, God is going to give judgment to all the saints all during the Millennium. And we also know that Jesus told the twelve apostles that they would sit on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel. The way that it appears from the Bible is that David would be king over Israel and then all the apostles will work with King David. Quite a tremendous relationship and understanding that we need to realize

When Not to Judge

There is a time to judge; there is a time not to judge, and we'll talk about a lot of things concerning judgment because it covers an awful lot of ground. Let's understand something that is very important for us to realize:

1. Is it your business?

If it is not your business, then don't judge!

2. Is it within the realm of your authority?

If it is not in the realm of your authority then don't judge!

As we covered in part one, *don't turn around and talk about it to other people*, because this really causes a lot of problems. What happens is that you end up with a lot of gossip and talking, and putting a brother or sister in a bad light. Why would you want to do that?

We need to realize, as we are going to cover here where it says, 'Love covers a multitude of sins.' What does that mean? *First of all, God is love Who forgives sins!*

Does that not cover sins? *Yes!* We are to love each other as Christ has loved us. Is that not true? *Yes!* So, when there are sins that we are aware of, that doesn't necessarily mean that we make it our business and go to the person and have a discussion with them. The best thing you can do is to pray about it. That is showing the utmost love. Don't go talking to other people about it.

When not to judge is when it is a personal preference. What we're covering is in this booklet *Judge Righteous Judgment*, and I am basically following the outline that is there although I am not reading directly from it. Let's understand something concerning personal choice, personal conviction.

They had a problem in the early church that we don't have a problem with today, and that is there were a lot of people who were vegetarians because they chose to be vegetarians. There were other people who chose to be vegetarians because they didn't want to get their meat from the temples where

they were slaughtered. You had this problem intermixed with the problem in Rome. Then the third problem that we find in Rom. 14 is that certain ones who ate meat would eat it on certain days.

The *King James Version* of the translation of Rom. 14 is completely and absolutely wrong in its basic assumptions. This does not have to do with the esteeming of one day above another day for a day of worship, but it has to do with esteeming a day on which to eat meat or not.

Let's go through Rom. 14 and we are going to get a very important principle that we need to understand.

Romans 14:1: "Receive the one who is weak in the faith, but not for divisive arguments." This is how the whole situation comes about. There are personal preferences that a person may have, which you may not agree with, which you may think are really silly, but *it's not your business!* If it is a personal preference before God, and God accepts them, then rejoice in it, don't start arguing.

Verse 2: "Now on the one hand, one believes he may eat all things *that are lawful*." The *King James* says, 'may eat all things.' Of course, you know we are not to eat unclean foods, so this means "...all things *that are lawful*."

"...but on the other hand, another one, who is weak, eats only vegetables" (v 2). There is nothing wrong with being a vegetarian. As matter of fact, those who find out that they have cancer had better get on a raw vegetable and fruit diet exclusively, immediately. You can look up any site on the Internet and find out about that. You can go to Dr. Lorraine Day's website and she'll tell you about that.

Here is what happens; people tend to look down on each other, v 3: "The one who eats *meat* should not despise the one who does not eat *it*. And the one who does not eat *meat* should not condemn the one who eats *it*, for God has received him." God has received both, so this is to eat meat or not to eat meat; it has nothing to do with a day of worship.

Verse 4: "Who are you to be judging another man's servant? To his own master he stands or falls. And he shall be made to stand because God is able to make him stand. Again, on the one hand, someone may prefer one day above another day *for eating meat*..." (vs 4-5). That's for eating meat, because that's the whole context of Rom. 14.

"...but on the other hand, another may hold every day *to be alike*... [eat meat on a day, or not eat meat at all on any day] ...Let each one be fully

convinced in his own mind” (v 5). So, this is a matter of *personal choice*.

Verse 6 makes it clear: “The one who regards the day *in his eating* is regarding *it to the Lord*; and the one who does not regard the day is not regarding *it to the Lord*. The one who eats *meat* is eating *to the Lord* because he gives thanks to God; and the one who does not eat *meat* is abstaining *to the Lord*, and is giving thanks to God.” That is for the vegetables that he eats.

Verse 7: “For no one among us lives to himself, and no one dies to himself. For if we live, we should live unto the Lord; and if we die, we should die unto the Lord. So then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord’s. *It is* for this very purpose *that* Christ both died and rose and is living again, so that He might be Lord over both *the dead and the living*. Now then, why do you judge your brother? Or why do you despise your brother? **For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ**” (vs 7-10). Always remember that.

Verse 11: “Because it is written, “For *as I live*,” says *the Lord*, “every knee shall bow to Me, and every tongue shall confess to God.” So then, each one of us shall give account of himself to God” (vs 11-12). That’s another important thing to understand. We are all going to come before the judgment seat of God and give an account to God.

Verse 13: “Therefore, we should no longer judge one another...” there are times *not* to judge, and if it is a personal preference, and if it is not sin, then rejoice in it, and if it personally causes you some second thoughts or something, work around it.

- be happy
- be friendly
- be kind
- be good to the person

Don’t try to convince them one way or the other or try to change their mind.

Verse 13: “Therefore, we should no longer judge one another, but judge this instead: Do not put an occasion of stumbling or a cause of offense before your brother.” Don’t cause needless problems with self-righteous, super-hypocritical judging and condemning. Don’t do that!

Verse 14: “I understand and am persuaded by *the Lord Jesus* that nothing *is* common of itself...” This is an important thing to understand, because this is an intermixture of what some of the Jews were doing. Because Jews had a classification of things that were called *common*, and *common* amounted to this: If a Gentile handled the food, or made the bread with the supervision of a Jew, it was *common*, but edible.

Even the clean things, such as bread, lawful

meat, vegetables, and things like this, if a Gentile handled it, and a Jew was not supervising, then even that which is declared in the Word of God as clean, was counted by the Jew as *unclean*. This is why he is saying what he is saying. The *King James* says, *unclean*. That is a completely improper translation. It should be *common*.

Verse 14: “I understand and am persuaded by *the Lord Jesus* that nothing *is* common of itself, except to the one who regards anything to be common—to that one *it is* common.... [some of these things become a matter of personal choice] ...But if, because of meat, your brother is offended... [whether to eat or not eat] ...you are no longer walking according to love.... [that’s the whole key to ***when not to judge***] ...With your meat, do not destroy the one for whom Christ died. Therefore, do not let your good be evil spoken of. **For the Kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking; rather, it is righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit**” (vs 14-17).

We see in the New Testament that that is a higher level of conduct than just the small little things and preferences that people have.

Verse 18: “Because the one who serves Christ in these things *is* well pleasing to God and acceptable among men. So then, we should **pursue the things of peace and the things that edify one another. Do not destroy the work of God for the sake of meat....**” (vs 18-20)

Now remember this, the greatest work of God that He is doing is *in each individual to create Christ in them*. So, don’t destroy that by causing problems and difficulties.

“...All things *that are lawful* are indeed pure...” (v 20). You can’t have something that God calls unclean and make it lawful by saying that you don’t believe that unclean applies today.

“...but *it is* an evil thing for someone to cause an occasion of stumbling through his eating. *It is better...*” (vs 20-21). Now you get the whole context here and you understand this: has to do with:

- eating meat
- eating vegetables
- drinking wine/not drinking wine
- choices of conscience or preference

That a person decides for him or herself, and *has nothing to do with righteousness or sin*, and so therefore, *we should not judge them*.

Verse 21: “*It is better not to eat meat...* [that’s what we’re talking about] ...or drink wine, or *anything else* by which your brother stumbles, or is offended, or is made weak. Do you have faith? Have *it to yourself* before God. Blessed *is* the one who does not condemn himself in what he approves. But

the one who doubts is condemned if he eats because *his eating is not of faith...*" (vs 21-23).

If someone eats and really doesn't have faith in doing so, then he is condemning himself because, here is a principle:

"...for everything that *is* not of faith is sin" (v 23). So, what you do, you sin against your brother!

Now let's take it one step further. Since you're in an area of not judging; **What do you do when you see someone sin?**

- How do you handle that?
- How should that be?

1-John 5—let's see a very important principle here; let's understand it because if we see somebody sinning:

- we have to make a judgment concerning it
- we have to make a right judgment
- we have to make this judgment in accordance with love and mercy

If we don't do this, if we judge a person's heart, *then we are judging God*, and if we are judging God, then what we are doing, we are putting ourselves in the seat of God and we end up like Job. Remember what God had to say to Job? 'Who are you to disannul My judgments? Who are you to say you are more righteous than Me?'

Let's see what we have here concerning what to do if someone sins. The answer is to *pray about it!*

1-John 5:14: "And this is the confidence that we have toward Him: that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us." Is it God's will that a person understand what the sin is and be able to repent? *Of course it is!*

Verse 15: "And if we know that He hears us, whatever we may ask, we know that we have the requests that we have asked of Him. **If anyone sees his brother sinning a sin that is not unto death...**" (vs 15-16)—*a forgivable sin!* Here is what you're to do.

"...he shall ask..." (v 16). Go pray for that individual. So, the first thing that you do before anything else is *put it in God's hands*. Ask Him to intervene! If you see the sin, does not God see the sin? *Of course!* What are you doing? *You're showing love to the individual by praying for the individual*, by asking God to intervene and change the mind of that individual. After all isn't God more capable of changing the mind of an individual than any of us? *Of course!* What does this do then? *This helps you show your love for that person by praying for that person* and asking God to intervene and help him or

her to overcome the sin which is not a sin unto death.

"...and He will give him life for those who do not sin unto death. There is a sin unto death; concerning that *sin*, I do not say that he should make *any supplication to God*" (v 16). If you want to know about the *unpardonable sin*, we have that in the book, *Occult Holidays or God's Holy Days—Which?*

Verse 17: "All unrighteousness is sin, and there is a sin not unto death." So, we pray and ask God—Who knows the hearts of all men and women—'Please open the mind of this person to see what they need to do. Work out circumstances in their lives so they will come to understand what they need to do.'

Now just to give you an example of something that happened. There was a woman and her daughter and the woman is quite elderly, she is about 84 or 85, and she hasn't heard or seen from her son for three or four years, and both of them have been praying, 'Oh, God, please cause my son to call. Please have him get in touch with us.' And, lo and behold, just the other day a bolt-out-of-the-blue, guess who called? *The son did!* That is a perfect example of how that with persistent prayer, with patience and understanding, putting it in God's hands, God is able to deal with the situation, and to cause the circumstances to change.

When we see it occur let's realize that all of us sin and come short of the glory of God, we all want our sins forgiven, so pray for that individual to have his sins forgiven. When you have something else, then you show yourself to be merciful and when you need mercy God's going to give it to you. Remember this: ***If you show mercy, you're going to receive mercy. If you show no mercy, don't think you're going to get any!*** God judges righteous judgment. Let's keep that in mind.

So that we get our bearings and know what we are talking about, v 18: "We know that anyone who is begotten by God does not *practice* sin; for the one who has been begotten by God keeps himself *by the power of God*, and the wicked one does not touch him." That's what's important to understand and to realize in this. So, the first thing you do is **pray** for the individual.

- How long should you pray for the individual?
- How long do you think it may take?

Well, let me give you another example, which I may have covered before, but this is well worth bringing out. I remember when I first started pastoring in Boise, Idaho, in 1965, a man came up to me real serious and he said, 'I don't think I ought to take the Passover.' I said, 'Well, why is that?' And

he said, 'Well, I haven't quit smoking, yet.' And I said, 'That's the very reason you need to take the Passover so you can have the strength from God's Holy Spirit to overcome.'

So, the next year a little before Passover, he came up to me again, and he said, 'I don't think I should take the Passover.' And I said, 'Well, why? Have you quit smoking yet?' And he said, 'Well, I've cut down, but I haven't quit.' And I said, 'Well, you take the Passover again this year and let's see how you do.'

So, he came up to me the third Passover and he said, 'I have quit.' That took well over two years, so you see, let's not bring in the vanity-filled, self-centered immediately solve every problem all at once, because that's the modern way of thinking. Let's have *God's way of thinking*.

- Does God give time?
- Does God give space?
- Does God give repentance?
- *Yes, He does!*

Isn't that what God is interested in? *Yes!*

While you're praying for someone you have seen sin a sin not unto death, that they repent, also ask God to forgive you *your* sins. And who knows, maybe someone is praying for *you* because they may have seen you sin a sin not unto death, and they are praying for you. That's how *love covers a multitude of sins*, and that's *how* you are not to judge and *when not* to judge.

Now let's take this one step further and see what we need to do if that doesn't work. Remember this: just think how backbiting and divisive that the whole Church would become if we all ended up:

- correcting each other
- backbiting each other
- talking about each other

and *that's a great sin in the greater Churches of God!*

There are some things based on false doctrine that we need to be aware of. That's a different story; let's understand that. Many of the things that people get all upset about are really small, little problems, and I liken it to a fly on the wall. The most destructive way to kill a fly on the wall is that you get a 105-Howitzer and you aim perfectly and you kill the fly. You do, but you blow up the whole house! *And many times a wagging fiery tongue going through the congregation does that!* So, we don't want to do that.

John 7:24, Jesus said: "Judge not according to appearance, but judge righteous judgment."

When it gets to a point where it is a personal

problem, when it gets to a point that it is really a difficult situation, then Christ gives us the steps on what we should do. We have prayed about it first, we put it in God's hands, we asked God to work it out, and if it continues to persist then you may need to go to the brother or sister *privately*.

Matt. 18—God wants this done as rescuing, because He gives the parable of the man who has a hundred sheep and one has gone astray, and he goes out to find it until he recovers it and brings it back and rejoices over it. God doesn't want to lose anyone. So, when it comes down to Matt. 18, I've seen this worked in a right way, and I've seen it worked in a very self-righteous way to get at people and to exercise power over them.

Matt. 18 is one of these things that you only do when it's a really difficult problem. Let's see what Jesus said. I know a lot of people cannot resist the temptation of talking to other people about it first, and a lot of people have used another Scripture to talk about it first with another person, by saying, '...in a multitude of counsel there is wisdom.'

Well, if it is a personal problem between you and the individual, ***do not involve anybody else!*** and ***do not spread it abroad!*** And even in this, ask God for the proper opportunity so that you can bring it up to the individual.

Now let's see what Jesus said, Matthew 18:15: "So then, if your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault **between you and him alone**.... [that's how to do it] ...If he is willing to hear you, you have gained your brother." That's what it is.

It doesn't tell us that we're only to do this once and say, 'All right! I've come to you once, now I'm coming back with two more, and we are going to nail your hide to the wall!' *NO!* God doesn't want us operating that way. You may have to go to him several times. Maybe he or she doesn't see the fault right away. Maybe it's one of those things that they're completely unaware of, and some times when you first bring it up, maybe they will even bristle a little bit, so you need to be prepared for that, too. If you go to your brother or sister because of a fault, you go alone, but you pray about it first.

Now then, after you have done that maybe two or three times, maybe four times who knows how many times it will take?

Verse 16: "But if he will not listen, take with you one or two others, so that in *the* mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established." This is a very serious matter; it's only serious matters that come to this level.

The two or three of you should also work with the individual *privately, quietly, patiently* more

than once, how many ever times it takes. God doesn't limit the number of times to go. I've had people say, 'Well, I've taken two or three others, now I'm going to take it to the Church' and writes a letter to the whole mailing list!

- Is that love?
- Is that covering sin?
- Is that trying to work it out?

No!

- that's creating strife
- that's creating division
- that's creating *unrighteous* judgment

If it's a very serious problem, you may have to take the same two or three with you, and

- still keep it private
- still keep it confidential
- still keep it between you and the individual and the one or two others that go with you

Now then, when it comes to that point, and I have learned that the proper way to disfellowship a person is to let *them*, him or her, *disfellowship themselves* by seeing the problem and if they are unwilling to change, say, 'I'm going to step aside for a while.' And you know what? *That works the best because in every case God wants the door to be left open upon repentance!*

Verse 17: "And if he fails to listen to them, tell *it* to the Church...." That means the *local* congregation. If it's a big congregation then the whole congregation doesn't have to get involved. The Church may be able to appoint those to sit on a committee to go over it, and select the right ones to make a judgment. Then you tell it to the Church and the Church makes a decision.

"...But if he also fails to listen to the Church, let him be to you as the heathen and the tax collector" (v 17).

You need to understand that the power of judgment given here is exactly the same power of judgment that God gave to the judges of ancient Israel, and we will cover a little bit later the qualifications for a judge and so forth.

Verse 18: "Truly I say to you, whatever you shall bind on the earth will have already been bound in heaven; and whatever you shall loose on the earth will have already been loosed in heaven. Again I say to you, that if two of you on earth shall agree concerning any matter that they wish to request, it shall be done for them by My Father, Who *is* in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in My name, there, I am in *the* midst of them" (vs 18-20).

In other words, Christ is there helping solve

the problem. And when you make a decision, it is binding and will be upheld in heaven, but it has to be based on:

- the Word of God
- the laws of God
- the commandments of God
 - ✓ with love
 - ✓ with concern
 - ✓ with understanding
 - ✓ with repentance

The whole key in every one of these things is *repentance and change*.

{note sermon: *Are you God's Policeman?*} Too many people, rather than focusing on their own problems...because it brings us back to Matt. 7...

First, you are to *get the beam out of your own eye* so you can see to get the sliver out of your brother's eye. ***We are not to make it our business to go around judging the brethren!*** It causes strife and division.

I've only had two occurrences in all the years in Christian Biblical Church of God where it came to the third step. In both cases, because of the situation, the individuals involved disfellowshipped themselves. Now, there may come a time of forceful disfellowshipment, but the whole purpose in everything is *repentance*.

Verse 21: "Then Peter came to Him *and* said, 'Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him? Until seven times?'" You know, keep a little notebook, that's once, that's two, that's three, that's four up to seven. All right, I have forgiven you seven times, that's it!

- Do you have a long-term problem that you have been working on?
- Do you have a weakness that keeps coming back upon you?
 - ✓ Every one of us do!
 - ✓ I do!
 - ✓ You do!
 - ✓ Everyone else does!
- What do we do? *We go to God and ask Him to forgive us!*
- Do we believe that He has forgiven us? *Of course, we do!*

Jesus didn't want Peter to get away with just seven.

Verse 22: "Jesus said to him, 'I do not say to you until seven times, but until seventy times seven'"—490 times! That's an awful lot. If it's once a day every day, that's a year and a quarter.

- Is that merciful?
- Is that longsuffering?
- Is that kind?

- *Yes, indeed!*

Then He gives the parable, which is very important in judgment. I'll let you read it in the booklet; the one who was thrown in jail for just a few pence after he was forgiven: ***if you want God to forgive you for your sins, you must forgive others for their sins!***

What are we dealing with? *We are dealing with the New Testament judgment from God!* Now let's get the sum of this:

Verse 32: "Then his lord called him *and* said to him, 'You wicked servant, I forgave you all that debt, because you implored me.'"

We all want our sins forgiven, but we just don't want to forgive this person his or her little sin. We become all self-righteous and super-critical. Notice what He says in v 33. Very important! This is a New Testament judgment given by Jesus Christ to help us understand how to judge righteous judgment in love and mercy and understanding.

Verse 33: "'Were you not also obligated to have compassion on your fellow servant, even as I had compassion on you?' And in anger, his lord delivered him up to the tormentors, until he should pay all that he owed to him" (vs 33-34).

This is also another very important thing in judging, that ***if you do not forgive when they have repented, God is not going to forgive you!*** And He is going to take all your forgiven sins and put them back on you. Because that's what he did here with this one servant who wouldn't forgive. "...And in anger, his lord delivered him to the tormentors, until he should pay all that he owed to him."

Verse 35: "Likewise shall My heavenly Father also do to you, ***if each of you*** does not forgive his brother's offenses from the heart" That's an important part of judgment. When there is repentance, there is mercy and forgiveness.

Let's see another situation that was really difficult and Paul had to make the judgment, because the brethren didn't make the judgment. You know this was the case of the man who was committing incest with his step-mother and when they came to the Church they were all saying, 'Oh my, we are all broad-minded, you know, we'll accept this.' And Paul said, 'No! When you're gathered together...'—notice because they didn't make the judgment:

1 Corinthians 5: 2: "You are puffed up and did not grieve instead, so that he who did this deed might be taken out of your midst." There is a time of enforced disfellowshipment because of grievous sin and no repentance. As we know, this is all done to help that person repent. We find in 2-Cor. that he did.

Here's what Paul said, v 3: "For I indeed, being absent in body but present in spirit, have already judged *concerning* him... [because he knew what needed to be done] ...who has so *shamelessly* committed this *evil deed* as if I were present: In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when you are gathered together, and my spirit, together with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ" (vs 3-4).

That sounds exactly like Matt. 18. When you make a decision, Christ is there in the midst of it. Paul was making a decision of judgment because the congregation did not do it properly.

Verse 5: "To deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus." Even disfellowshipment is to bring a person to repentance so that they can be saved.

Now let's understand something about disfellowshipment, the wrong use of it. Many times it's used because a minister does not like the person, does not like the questioning, does not like the things that someone is doing. Also, you have political disfellowshipment. I was a victim of that when I left one of the major Churches of God, and all of those are wrong disfellowshipments, but here it shows the right disfellowshipment, and what to do.

Then Paul starts talking about why it was so important for them to make this judgment. So, he asked them, since they didn't do this and it was a congregational thing that they should have followed in following Matt. 18.

1-Corinthians 6:1: "Does anyone among you who has a matter against another dare to go to a *court of law* before the unrighteous, and not before the saints?" Here we have a situation that they were running off getting lawyers, going to court, judgment and all of this sort of thing.

I can tell you this, if there is one thing we have learned in the Churches of God in the experiences that we have been through, if we go to court, brother against brother, sister against sister, church against church, ***we are a stench in God's nostrils***; because *God wants us to make the right and proper judgment and settle the matter between ourselves!*

(go to the next track)

Let's learn something very important, which we have already touched on.

1-Corinthians 6:1: "Does anyone among you who has a matter against another dare to go to a *court of law* before the unrighteous, and not before the saints?"

In either case, you can get a bad judgment if the saints have not prepared themselves and

equipped themselves to make righteous judgment, because we are going to see what it takes to make righteous judgment.

Here is the reason, v 2: “Don’t you know that the saints shall judge the world?...” Isn’t that what we saw back in Rev. 20, that thrones were put down, those who were in the first resurrection and judgment was given to them. Now notice this question; this is a profound question:

“...And if the world is to be judged by you, are you unworthy of the most trivial of judgments? Don’t you know that we shall judge angels?...” (vs 2-3). Doesn’t that really tell us the responsibility that God is going to give us? And why it’s so important that we do judge *righteous* judgment?

- that we understand what it is
- that we understand how to develop it
- that we understand the very basis for it

“...How much more then *the* things of this life? So then, if you have judgments *concerning the* things of this life, *why* do you appoint *as judges* those who have no standing in the Church?” (vs 3-4).

You put someone up there so that you know it isn’t going to work. It sounds like the judges we have today in America. They put judges up there in most cases so they know that it isn’t going to work.

Now Paul says, v 5, “Now I say *this* to your shame. *Is it* because there is not a wise *man* among you, not even one, who is able to decide between his brothers? Instead, brother goes to a *court of law* with brother, and this **before unbelievers**” (vs 5-6). I cannot help thinking of that when I have seen the Church have a full-time legal staff and we are ending up suing people. Amazing!

Verse 7: “Now therefore, there is altogether an utter fault among you, that you have lawsuits with one another. Why not rather suffer wrong? Why not rather be defrauded? Instead, you are doing wrong and defrauding, and you are doing these things *to your brethren*” (vs 7-8).

Then he gives a warning, v 9: “Don’t you know that the unrighteous shall not inherit *the Kingdom of God*?”—because they can’t make righteous judgment.

“...Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor abusers of themselves as women, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit *the Kingdom of God*” (vs 9-10).

We’re all a collection of people needing forgiveness, needing mercy and kindness from God, and then to get our heads screwed on right so we can make righteous judgment.

Verse 11: “And such were some of you; but **you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.**” We need to realize how important this righteous judgment is.

Since judging righteous judgment is so important, let’s see how we are to do this. Let’s learn some things from the Bible, because remember Jesus said, “Do not judge according to appearance, but judge righteous judgment.” We’re going to see how to develop *righteous* judgment.

We need to understand the term. As exercised according to the principles of God’s Word, we can define it this way: ***A judgment is a decision or conclusion based upon the spiritual intent of God’s laws, statutes, and judgments where the will of God may or may not be specifically stated!*** When official judgments are required, the one who is making such judgment must be qualified according to the standards that God has set forth to clarify, to decide, and to resolve a controversy. *Judgments can have far-reaching and lasting consequences!* That’s why Jesus said, ‘Judge righteous judgment.’

The first basis of righteous Godly judgment is the love of God! The Bible says God is love. It also says that God is Judge, and we will all appear before the judgment seat of Christ. Righteous judgment can only be based on love for God and love for neighbor. ***It’s impossible***—let’s understand this—***to have love without judgment, or to have judgment without love!*** You can have judgment without love, but that’s *not righteous* judgment. This is the basic fundamental foundation *for judging righteous judgment*.

Let’s see the system of judges under the Old Covenant. As we go through and study this, let’s look at whatever country you are in, and let’s compare the judicial system of that country *with the judicial system that God set forth for Israel* with judges.

All the judgments that the judges make in the land, especially if it comes to the top court of the land or as it’s called in the United States, the Supreme Court, their judgments have lasting effects. Let’s just take one: *the judgment that abortion is legal* had a lasting effect of killing, just in America, over 47-million innocent children; worse than the Holocaust against the Jews.

Yet, it is inconceivable that many of those people who scream about the Holocaust, advocate abortion. Many of those who ‘boohoo’ about the Holocaust never consider all of the incendiary white phosphorus bombing that was done by the Allies against the Germans, which killed German people. They do not consider, they scream bloody murder over 6-million who were supposedly killed in the incinerator camps, but they forget all of the numbers

of American troops that were sacrificed, all the wounded with them. They forget all of the Russians that were killed. War is a terrible judgment of God, and when God metes out His judgment with war, it impacts *everybody*.

When you have that system of judges—back to the thing concerning abortion—it affects everybody with long-lasting ramifications. Then if you saw the statistics, nearly one billion innocent babies have been killed in the womb because of the *judgment* that abortion is legal.

Let's see the system of judges under the Old Covenant. Let's see God's instructions, how it should be done and the way it should be done. Let's first of all understand that once God gives the judgment, we need to understand where we came from and what we need to do, and not take a high, exalted, self-righteous opinion because God has called us.

Deuteronomy 7:6 "For you *are* a Holy people to the LORD your God..." As we read these things, I want you to put a New Testament emphasis upon it, because Deut. has a lot of New Testament principles and laws in it because Deuteronomy means *the second giving of the Law*.

"...you *are* a Holy people to the LORD your God. The LORD your God has chosen you to be a special people to Himself above all people that are upon the face of the earth" (v 6). Now today:

- to train us to love God
- to serve God
- to learn righteous judgment
- to walk in His paths
- to walk in His laws

Verse 7: "The LORD did not set His love upon you nor choose you because you were more in number than any people, for you *were* the fewest of all people" Look at the Church today, scattered everywhere, and yet, God is training us for these tremendous positions. Think about that!

Verse 8: "But because the LORD loved you and because He would keep the oath, which He had sworn to your fathers... [Abraham, Isaac and Jacob] ...the LORD has brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you out of the house of bondage from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt. Therefore, know that the LORD your God, He *is* God, the faithful God Who keeps covenant and mercy with them that love Him and keep His commandments, to a thousand generations" (vs 8-9).

Loving God is the first principle of judgment! God also does the repaying too, v 10: "And he repays those who hate Him to their face, to destroy them. He will not be slow to repay him who

hates Him. He will repay him to his face. You shall, therefore, keep the commandments and the statutes and the judgments which I command you today to do them" (vs 10-11). Now let's see how we are to go ahead with this; we're to do them.

Verse 12: "And it shall come to pass, **if**..." there's that word again; the condition is always given to **us**. God needs no condition because He is *righteous, true, Holy, eternal and cannot lie!* If He says it, it is so! If He proclaims it, He will do it. This is why it is with **us**.

"...**if** you hearken to these judgments... [of God] ...to keep and practice them, *then* the LORD your God shall keep with you the covenant and the mercy, which He swore to your fathers. And He will love you..." (vs 12-13)—because God loves righteous judgments.

"...and bless you and multiply you. He will also bless the fruit of your womb, and the fruit of your land, your grain, and your wine, and your oil, the increase of your cattle and the flocks of your sheep, in the land, which He swore to your fathers to give you. You shall be blessed above all people. There shall not be male or female barren among you or among your livestock" (13-14).

So, God gave all of these things **if** they would love Him, keep His commandments, and keep His judgments.

Exo. 18 is really quite a misunderstood thing because a lot of people go back here—ministers who believe in a hierarchical government—and say that this gives the structure that God wants with the Church. No, this has nothing to do with church government or hierarchical government. *This sets the standard for judges!* Here is the problem that is the basis for this.

Exodus 18:13: "And on the next day it came to pass that Moses sat to judge the people. And the people stood by Moses from the morning to the evening."

Guess what would happen if you were at the end of the line and you have two contending parties. Just kind of bring in some of these things in the judging shows that they have on TV, and here are two people back in the line talking, and they've got a long way to go, and saying, 'Now who is this Moses? I am standing in line and I want to get a judgment out of this!' Sometimes you need to take the advice of other people; so this is what Moses did.

Moses' father-in-law, who also by the way was a descendant of Midian, and Midian was one of the sons of Abraham through Keturah. They understood the Law of God at that time. This is before the Midianites went off, all of them, into their

paganism. At least Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, was righteous.

Verse 14: "And when Moses' father-in-law saw all that he did for the people, he said, 'What is this thing which you do for the people? Why do you sit alone by yourself, and all the people stand by you from morning to evening?' And Moses said to his father-in-law, 'Because the people come to me to inquire of God. When they have a matter... [a dispute] ... they come to me. And I judge between one and another, and I make known the statutes of God and His laws'" (vs 14-16). Well now, that's fine, but for 1.8-million people?

Verse 17: And Moses' father-in-law said to him, 'The thing that you do *is* not good. You will surely wear away, both you and this people that *are* with you, for this thing *is* too burdensome for you. You are not able to perform it alone. Hearken now to my voice. I will give you counsel, and God will be with you. You be for the people toward God that you may bring the causes to God. And you shall teach them ordinances and laws...' (vs 17-20).

This is exactly what we have said that we are trying to do with the Church. We don't want to run your lives for you. We want to teach you how to run your own lives. We want to teach you

- the Word of God
- the laws of God
- the commandments of God
- the statutes of God
- the Old Testament
- the New Testament

so you can run your lives, and so that you can **walk in faith, believe in hope, and live in love**, and you will be able to make right decisions in your own life.

Sometimes you'll make decisions that are not right. What does that do when you find out they're wrong? It gives you a chance to repent, a chance to change, a chance to make it right. So even in that sense that's good— isn't it?

So here Jethro is telling Moses, v 20: "And you shall teach them ordinances and laws, and shall make them know the way in which they must walk, and the work that they must do." Number one principle in judging: ***You can't live anyone else's lives for them!*** That's why when we started out, God 'set before us, life and death, blessing and cursing,' and we are to *choose*. So, here we have this based upon that principle.

Verse 21: "And you shall choose out of all the people able men..." for *judging!* Not as hierarchical authority.

This is very similar to what we have in any system of judging in any country. You have local

judge. Yes, generally called Superior Court in America. Then you have county judges, county courts. Then you have various state judges and state courts. Then you have the state Supreme Court.

Likewise with the United States government, you have different courts under the jurisdiction of the eleven regions of the United States, and then it goes up from there. Then you have the district courts, and then the Supreme Court. We have the same principle here.

This is for judging, not for ruling, there's a difference. The system of judging is not the system of administering the law, that's for the ones who are elected to run whatever part of the government they are to run.

"...able men, such as fear God, men of truth..." (v 21). They want truth, seek truth, nothing but the truth and so forth.

"...hating covetousness... [so they won't be able to be bribed] ...And place them over the people to be leaders of thousands... [rulers, as judges] ...and leaders of hundreds, leaders of fifties, and leaders of tens. And let them judge *for* the people at all times" (vs 21-22). So, the system of judges as rulers was not a hierarchical church government, their rule came because of judgments.

Now look at it in America, we are ruled by judges. Who has to submit to the rule of the judges? *Everybody!* That's important for us to understand. This in Exo. 18 is an important thing for us to realize.

Verse 22: "And let them judge *for* the people at all times. And it shall be, every great matter they shall bring to you, but every small matter they shall judge. And make it easier for yourself, and they shall bear *the burden* with you. If you will do this thing, and God command you *so...* [which God did] ... then you shall be able to endure... [you're not going to kill yourself] ...and all this people shall also go to their place in peace.' And Moses hearkened to the voice of his father-in-law and did all that he had said. And Moses chose able men out of all Israel..." (vs 22-25).

Verse 26: "And they judged *for* the people at all times..." So there we have it, an important principle: break it all down to the smallest matters. That's the same thing we have in the Church, you judge your life, if there is something between you and someone that you need to resolve, you resolve it yourself. So, we have the same principle involved here.

Let's see some commands concerning instructions given to those who are judges. And he explains why he set up the system of judges.

Deuteronomy 1:9: "And I spoke to you at

that time, saying, ‘I am not able to bear you by myself. The LORD your God has multiplied you, and behold, today you *are* as the stars of heaven for multitude’” (vs 9-10).

Then he says what he did, that in order to make the judgment he passed on to them what they needed to do:

Verse 13: “Choose wise and understanding men, and *those* known to your tribes, and I will appoint them leaders over you.” That’s how they selected them out. It was an arbitrary decision to appoint them.

Verse 14: “And you answered me and said, “The thing which you have spoken *is* good to do.” And I took the heads of your tribes, wise and experienced men, and made them leaders over you, leaders over thousands, and leaders over hundreds, and leaders over fifties, and leaders over tens, and officers among your tribes. And I commanded your judge at that time saying...” (vs 14-16). This was rulership by judging; not rulership by hierarchy.

“...’Hear *the causes* between your brethren, and judge righteously between a man and his brother, and the stranger with him. You shall not respect persons in judgment. You shall hear the small as well as the great. You shall not be afraid of the face of man, for ***the judgment is God’s***...” (vs 16-17).

When they came before the judge, they were literally coming before God because the judge was to make the judgment, render the decision based on the laws and commandments of God, the statutes of God and so forth.

“...’And the cause that is too hard for you, bring to me, and I will hear it.’ And I commanded you at that time all the things which you should do” (vs 17-18)—and so they did.

Let’s see that even Israel had a supreme court, and with exactly the same rule of law with teeth of enforcement that was put into it. Now let’s see what it was that they were to do.

Deuteronomy 17:8: “If a matter *is* too hard for you in judgment, between blood and blood...” I want to tell you, the absolute worst conflicts come up when you get all the relatives involved and there are umpteen dozen different positions, and everyone is hostile, angry, carnal, greedy and wanting it; especially when someone dies and leaves a big estate. They just fight over it, and I’ve seen too many family estates withered away to nothing because of the cost of lawyers and judges. When it is finally settled, there is virtually nothing to give to anyone.

“...between blood and blood, between plea and plea, and between stroke and stroke, *being*

matters of strife within your gates, then you shall arise and go up to the place which the LORD your God shall choose. And you shall come to the priests, the Levites, and to the judge that shall be in those days and ask....” (vs 8-9).

If you want to know how this worked, you read through the book of Judges, then also read about Samuel, because Samuel was a prophet, a priest and a judge.

“...And they shall declare to you the sentence of judgment. And you shall do according to the sentence....” (vs 9-10). They were to do it according to the laws, commandments, judgments and statutes of God.

“...which they declare to you from that place which the LORD shall choose. And you shall be careful to do according to all that they tell you. According to the sentence of the law...” (vs 10-11)—*not opinion, but judgment based on law*.

“...which they shall teach you and according to the judgment which they shall tell you, you shall do. You shall not turn aside from the sentence which they shall show you, to the right hand or the left” (v 11).

Notice the ultimate enforcement. In the New Testament we saw the ultimate enforcement, which was *disfellowshipment*. Under the Old Covenant they had the ultimate enforcement that was the *death sentence*.

Verse 12: “The man that acts presumptuously and will not hearken to the priest who stands to minister there before the LORD your God, or to the judge...” It was a dual thing: the high priest and the judge.

If you won’t do it, “...even that man shall die. And you shall put away the evil from Israel. And all the people shall hear and fear, and do no more presumptuously” (vs 12-13). So, this gives us some good guidelines on the commands and the instructions for judges and what was to be done.

What you need to do is study these things that we have done here and look at Matt. 18 and see how that the basic steps were followed right along. Start with the least, one to one; then go to the next, two or three; then go to the next, to the local congregation. If that doesn’t solve it, then you bring it up if there is someone else, if there is another minister who is able to handle it, then bring it to him for an impartial judgment.

We see the same thing here; so you see that God’s way is the same—Old Testament and New Testament—how to carry out the penalty of it. *It’s important to understand that **the Church does not** exercise the death penalty*. The reason is that the

Church is in many sovereign nations and God has made all the nations sovereign and those civil and judicial authorities within the land. *They judge the land, and they exercise the sword of death.* It's up to them to make that decision.

The Church can only exercise the authority of disfellowshipment, and the reason being is because *God will only deal with one sovereignty within a nation!* You cannot have two sovereignties within a nation, because you split it and you divide it.

God never gave it to the Church! And besides, think what would happen in a nation where there was a church that executed the death penalty. They would be going contrary to the laws of the land. And God is the One Who set them up as the ministers to carry out the civil judgments. That's why the Church only has disfellowshipment as the highest form of punishment that the church can do.

Now let's look at some additional instructions for the judges. Here is another very important thing to do. If you are asked to make any judgment, you must focus on the circumstances and the situation. You are to *remove yourself and your feelings* from the problem at hand.

Deuteronomy 16:18: "You shall appoint judges and officers for yourself in all your gates... [every one of your cities] ...which the LORD your God gives you, tribe by tribe. And they shall judge the people with righteous judgment." exactly the same as Jesus said, 'Judge not according to appearance, but *judge righteous judgment.*'

Verse 19: "You shall not pervert judgment; you shall not respect persons, nor take a bribe, for a bribe blinds the eyes of the wise and perverts the words of the righteous. You shall follow that which is altogether just... [or righteous] ...so that you may live and inherit the land which the LORD your God gives you" (vs 19-20).

Now let's stop here for just a moment: What happens to any nation that has unjust judges? *They soon create a society of lawlessness*, and that's what's happening in America. And what we are going to see happen in America, and I need to make this very clear, is *we are moving from common law, constitutional law, to canon law, after the European pattern!* Because we have five Supreme Court justices that are Catholic, you are going to see more judgments come down bringing out the basis of canon law rather than common law. The most infamous one in the summer of 2006 was what, 'the no-knock' in issuing a search warrant; just bust your door down and come in. Everyone says, 'Oh well, if we can't allow evidence in because these are evil and wicked people and let them go free, we shouldn't do that.'

But then on the other hand, what is it going to be *when the true Christians are declared to be enemies of the state?* Stop and think a minute: How did they arrest all of those destined for the extermination camps? *The judges made judgment that they could come and arrest them with no search warrant*, just a sentence from the judge to arrest them and send them off; no due process.

Gradually in the United States because of the lawlessness that is being developed here, those kinds of laws are going to be coming down and gradually more and more control, which is the opposite of what God wants. God wants the people to be taught how to live their lives *the way that God wants them to live them*, and to make them responsible for their lives to do what is good to keep the commandments of God.

So, you see what happens when they get rid of God, and throw away His judgments, statutes and commandments. You start getting in expediency and you start getting in harsh laws because they don't teach the people to control themselves and the state must control them, and *that is the complete opposite of righteous judgment!*

You need to realize that and grasp that! Watch and see how that certainly is going to be happening more and more in the future!

Deut. 25 says—and there are other Scriptures that you could add to this and I want you to, by all means, take this booklet—*Judge Righteous Judgment*—and:

- read it
- study it
- make notes in it
- educate yourself

so you can be thinking in terms of righteous judgment according to the love, mercy and kindness of God, and *according to the righteousness* of His commandments, and statutes and so forth.

Deuteronomy 25:1: "If there is a controversy between men, and they come to judgment, and they have been judged, and the righteous one is declared righteous, and the wrongdoer declared guilty, then it shall be, if the wrongdoer *is* worthy to be beaten, the judge shall cause him to lie down. And one shall strike him in his presence, enough for his wrong, by a certain number. He may give him forty stripes, no more, lest he should exceed and beat him above *that number with many more stripes*, then your brother be degraded in your sight" (vs 1-3).

That was a punishment that they had, but it was to be administered by the court before the eyes of the judge that even that would be done justly and not as some inquisition that has been executed by religious leaders down through time.

Let's see a little bit more of the things that the judges were instructed to do; Leviticus 19:15: "You shall do no unrighteousness in judgment. You shall not respect the person of the poor, nor honor the person of the mighty, *but* you shall judge your neighbor in righteousness." And that's what God wants it to be. That's the true basis of *judge righteous judgment*, which comes from God.

John 7:24, Jesus says, "Judge not according to appearance, but **judge righteous judgment**." That's how it is to be done. We're going to learn how to judge now by training ourselves. So, think of yourself as this: you are in training like an attorney or a judge is attending law school so that when they are trained properly they will be able to go out and be attorneys and be judges and things like this.

God is going to give us the judgment of the Kingdom of God! We are going to judge the world; we are going to judge angels. Look at part of the things that you are to be training for in this life. You are in law school, greater than the secular law school.

You are in school being taught by God, day by day on how to become the spiritual sons and daughters of God so that when you enter into the Kingdom, God is going to give judgment to each one of us!

We will have written in our heart and our mind and in our character

- the love of God
- the Truth of God
- the mercy of God
- the laws of God
- the commandments of God
- the discernment of God
 - ✓to know what is right
 - ✓to know what is wrong
 - ✓to make judgments

All of this starts everyday with the choices that you make! That's why Jesus said, 'Judge righteous judgment!'

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version* by Fred R. Coulter

Scriptural References:

- 1) Romans 14:1-23
- 2) 1-John 5:14-18
- 3) John 7:24
- 4) Matthew 18:15-22, 32-35
- 5) 1 Corinthians 5:2-5
- 6) 1 Corinthians 6:1-11
- 7) Deuteronomy 7:6-14
- 8) Exodus 18:13-26
- 9) Deuteronomy 1:9-10, 13-18

- 10) Deuteronomy 17:8-13
- 11) Deuteronomy 16:18-20
- 12) Deuteronomy 25:1-3
- 13) Leviticus 19:15
- 14) John 7:24

Scripture referenced, not quoted: Rev. 20

Also referenced:

- Booklet: *Judge Righteous Judgment* by Fred R. Coulter
- Book: *Occult Holidays or God's Holy Days—Which?* by Fred R. Coulter
- Sermon: *Are you God's Policeman?*

FRC:bo
Transcribed: 12-18-15

Judge Righteous Judgment III

Fred R. Coulter

Greetings, brethren! This will be the last one we are going to cover on *Judge Righteous Judgment*. Of course, it is not only judging in a formal setting, but it also has to do with making decisions and everything like that, because all of these things are judgments in our lives.

Let's understand something that's very important: ***God the Father is the Source of all true, righteous judgment***, and He has committed judgment into Jesus' hands, and then Jesus said, 'I am not able to do anything of My own,' but if He judges, His judgment is just because He is not seeking His will but the will of the Father who has sent Him.

Jesus said that He came into the world 'to judge the world' (John 9:39). That judgment is going to be when Christ returns. However, as we've seen, God judges all the nations, judges individuals, through His laws, through His commandments, and they are living laws and commandments so if you sin then the penalty automatically comes upon you. That's just the way that God has set it up so that it would be.

Now let's understand something that's very important here, before we get into seeing the twelve things that causes judgment to be unrighteous. ***Sin destroys judgment!*** We can see this in the whole life of Solomon. What did he do? *He asked God for wisdom to judge Israel!* Not only did He give him judgment, but He gave him wisdom and riches. What happened when he came to the full in all of those things? *Solomon did evil in the sight of God* (1-Kings 11) and turned from God and worshiped and served other gods.

Now let's look at some Proverbs here concerning judgment. Let's see what it says concerning how judgment is perverted.

Proverbs 28:5: "Evil men do not understand justice [judgment]..." That's very clear! You can see that affecting the world in all aspects of life, from the lower rung of life to the higher rung of life, even to the Supreme Court and the Justices that we have.

We also know, that when judgment is turned upside down that they 'call evil *good* and good *evil* and they put bitter for *sweet* and sweet for *bitter*' and then they come after the righteous one to destroy him. But God is going to judge them for the way that they live their lives!

Let's look at some things here. In the booklet, *Judge Righteous Judgment* is Isa. 59 showing just like it is today that 'none calls for justice'; there is no judgment, there is no justice, it's

far from us. When that happens 'truth falls into the street.' Then the one who wants to do right and do judgment, lives God's way, he or she makes himself a prey; that is *a victim*. God saw all of this because there was no judgment!

Now, let's look at a couple of Proverbs to see to make proper judgments. Here are some Proverbs that tell us clearly about judging:

Proverbs 29:4: "The king establishes the land by justice, but he who takes bribes tears it down." So, that is self-evident and you see that is happening in the world today.

Twelve Common Pitfalls and Errors in Judgment

We've already given a lot of background coming up to this point so we should be able to go through these in pretty good order here. We must always be aware that when any major, basic error in judgment occurs ***righteous judgment becomes impossible!*** So, let's see what we need to do and realize that in our lives we need to regulate and judge our lives according to:

- God's way
- His judgments
- His laws
- His commandments
- His truths

1. Being Opinionated and having a Closed Minded

This is easy because everyone has opinions and especially today. And look what happens when you get personal opinions and things in there and it can be brought out in such things as: the Communists are the cause of all our troubles. *Or* a religious person might say:

- Well, I don't care what the Bible says, I am going to heaven.
- I know this person is always a trouble maker.
- Well, I won't listen to you until you get rid of your bad attitude.

But maybe that attitude toward that person is causing the bad attitude.

Proverbs 26:12: "Do you see a man wise in his own conceit? *There is* more hope for a fool than for him."

If you are close-minded and if you are opinionated, how can you possibly come to a judgment or *righteous judgment*?

2. Being One-Sided—Unwilling to Listen to Every Aspect of the Situation

I have personally had an experience like this where a minister told me, ‘You cannot say anything to justify yourself and even if I am wrong, you still can’t say anything to justify yourself, because of what I have heard from others that has convinced me that I am totally right.’

Well, you see what happens with that; you must not be one-sided and unwilling to listen to every aspect of the situation.

3. Believing that “He Who Comes First is Just”

This is a real Achilles heel and you see this played out on television all the time if you believe that the one that comes first is just. All of these news programs that bring in law cases that are happening and so forth and so on. The one who is first *seems* right. You have to realize that in particular if there is any gossip or talk or hearsay in it, realize this:

Proverbs 18:17: “The one who is **first** in his own cause *seems* just... [seems right; seems good] ...but his neighbor comes and searches him out.” In other words he is going to bring some other facts to show that whatever the person says who comes *first*...

Isn’t that the way it is today, get out and get it in the headline *first*, get it on the television *first*, and you’ll never be able to change it, because people listen to who comes *first*.

What happens with that? That ties in with the Proverb that ‘every of a man seems right in his own eyes.’ Here is another thing that happens, too: Everyone who comes *first* minimizes his own faults and his own mistakes. This is a living principle when you watch news.

4. Failing to Get ALL of the Facts

Very important in any situation that you are dealing with.

- What are the facts?
- How did it happen?
- What is taking place?
- What occurred?

This is especially true for ministers if they are dealing in divorce and remarriage situations. Get all the facts because the one who comes first—especially the bleeding heart and all—you get yourself in trouble. You can make a wrong decision. We can see this also in the things that take place in government. They don’t want you to know all the facts so they can get in everything that they want to get in and not tell you what is in there. So, when you

fail to get the facts, and it also includes overlooking and minimizing certain facts or overemphasizing other facts. In general failing to discern what is truth and what is fiction.

5. Being a “Respecter of Persons”—Showing Partiality

Proverbs 24:23 “...To have respect of persons in judgment is not good.” Showing partiality falls into three categories:

A) Liking or not liking that individual

Because he is your friend, you can overlook it. Or because you don’t like the look on the face of that person you don’t care for him or her, therefore, you won’t listen to them. That means that *favoritism is fatal to judgment!* Always is! We’ve seen that time and time again.

As we go along you will see that these are tied together one after another and all fit together.

B) Following the majority

That reminds me of all these polls that they run on television. Mostly the polls are rigged because they ask the question in a way that they get the answer they desire, or they don’t bring out all the facts in their poll. Or if they want to get a Democrat in trouble they go to a Republican territory and ask, ‘What do you think about it?’ If they want to get a Republican in trouble they go to a Democratic area and ask, ‘What do you think about it?’ Whatever the majority is.

The majority many, many times—if not mostly all the time—are not right. Where would the Church of God be today if we followed the majority? Well, just look what happened to one of the larger Churches of God when they decided to follow the majority.

- the majority are not always right
- the majority can be deceived

So, following them is just like following along in a herd whether cattle or sheep, just going along with it. When people do that, when they follow the majority *and go against God’s righteous judgment*, then they are placing *their* judgment ahead of *God’s* righteous judgment. The other side of the coin is:

C) Excusing the minority

- because he has been oppressed
- because he has had things happen to him in the past

So therefore, *we excuse it!*

How many vicious criminals have been let

loose on society because judges favored the minority? It doesn't matter, the minority, even though they have suffered, cannot be compensated in the same way by making all of the minority have all majority rights. You can see all the problems that come along with that.

Proverbs 18:5: "*It is* not good to favor the person of the wicked, nor to overthrow the righteous in judgment."

Proverbs 17:15: "He who justifies the wicked and he who condemns the just, even both of them are an abomination to the LORD."

So, you have both. You are not going to condemn the just and you are not going to justify the wicked and this leads to a great deal of problems. Look at all the difficulties and problems we have in society today because of these very things.

6. Allowing Gifts to Blind the Eyes

This is instruction to judges: And this should be to everyone who is serving people, whether it be in politics, in the ministry, in just a small organization or not, it doesn't make any difference.

Exodus 23:8: "And you shall take no bribe [gift], for the bribe blinds the wise and perverts the words of the righteous."

Then it says in Proverbs 17:23: "A wicked *man* takes a bribe out of the bosom to pervert the ways of justice [judgment]."

It's called *corruption*! Look how corrupt politics have become. Look how corrupt it is from top to bottom, because of this very thing. This is the whole thrust of lobbying. You come to the legislators to lobby and you give donations to their campaign fund and they pass laws that will benefit the one who has given the money. And look how obtrusive some of these laws and things have come.

Remember the bridge to nowhere up in Alaska? \$170-million for a bridge *to nowhere*! Well, they finally struck that down. How about the congressmen who have been indicted for taking bribes? How about judges who take bribes?

It says that 'a gift destroys the heart.' So, this is what happens in judgment. All of these things mount up. If you have every one of these things in one single person or one single group of judges, you are going to have a hard time getting any judgment that is correct. And I think that in many cases that's the way too many of the courthouses are today. Now, sometimes it is planned for a long way down the road, just get a little here and a little there and build it up and then sooner or later they're going to call in the gift. 'You remember when I did such and such?'

7. Rendering a Judgment Before Really

Hearing the Matter

That is so easy to do. This ties right in with the one that comes first seems just in his cause. Isn't that true? If you hear something, and you make a judgment, right away and have made up your mind. And it also comes in the way of attitude of being a know-it-all. The proverb says and labels exactly what this is:

Proverbs 18:13: "He who answers a matter before he hears it, it *is* folly and shame to him." Just plain stupid!

As we are going through this, I want you to think about your own life, your own decisions, your own judgments that you have to make. What's important in this is not only learning how to become judges, when we reign and rule with Christ, but it's important that you learn how to make decisions in your own life everyday. How to do it, and how to handle it.

When that happens, rendering a judgment before really hearing the matter, it is absolute "...folly and shame..." and causes all kinds of problems. It's like saying, 'Don't bother me with the facts, my mind is already made up. I don't need to hear that, I already know.' Well, how do you know, if you haven't heard anything?'

8. Looking at Outward Circumstances and Physical Appearances

This is very important, because first impressions are often the lasting ones. Whenever there's a case that goes to court the prosecution wants the one he wants to put in jail, or sentenced to life, or sentenced to death. They want to make him look scruffy, mean; the very worst they possibly can.

The defense attorney, on the other hand, wants to clean him up, shave him, or in the case of a woman, dress her up, comb her hair, make her look acceptable, so when she comes into court, she will set a first impression.

First impressions can be wrong! Another thing that is true in judging people: If the man or the woman is good looking, then it is hard to convict them. But if they are plain or simple, or look like they don't have much common sense, it is easy to condemn them and overlook them. Three famous TV shows of old: Perry Mason, Matlock and Columbo. All three of these designed their whole show around this very thing:

- outward appearances
- first circumstances
- impressions

You find out that what you may think about it in the first part of the program comes out entirely

different in the last part of the program. The things that you think are wrong are not wrong in the same sense that you think that they are. In many cases, even the evidence that is presented which looks factual may not be factual when everything is all put together and all the facts are there.

So, when you look on the outward appearance you are violating what Jesus said. 'Judge not according to appearance, but ***judge righteous judgment.***' In dealing in anything, don't just look at the outward circumstances and the appearances. Even little kids know about this. They try to appear righteous when they get caught in something; they like to try and appear as innocent as possible and so forth.

9. Not Knowing the Intentions of the Parties Involved

This is a hard one to know and get into. You don't know why. Many times someone will come for advice or seek counsel on a particular matter and give 'a reason,' but that is often not the real reason at all. Sometimes, this is done to gain personal favor or over someone else. Or often, as in the case of a husband/wife problems... I'll tell you the courts have turned everything upside down with husband/wife problems and the way that they have treated the men and gotten rid of the father out of the house and given everything to the woman. Just everything upside down!

When women come and cry, and I've seen women cry and just turn it on. I know a woman I was counseling one time, she started crying and I said, 'Well, I know all about that,' and immediately she quit crying. How can you turn down a crying, offended woman? She may or may not be right; you don't know what the intention is.

When you are dealing with people, especially if you are dealing with people, as we have seen happen in the Church. Someone comes in and they want to curry favor and you don't know the motive of the person involved, until they are promoted. Think about how false doctrine came into the Church by those who were in high positions.

- Was that their motive when they first started, when they first came?
- How did they get up into these higher positions unless they were satisfied by giving a different kind of intention or a different kind of purpose as to what they were doing?

Then, lo and behold, out comes the other. This is strictly true with spies. All spy stories, all spy novels are based on this: you don't know the intentions, you don't give the true reality of what you are doing and also you don't give the

appearance. ***You must know the intentions of the parties involved.***

Acts 5—about Ananias and Sapphira. What did they do? They said, 'Oh, yes, we're going to sell our property and we will give all.' That was the pledge. Apparently, they got far more money than they anticipated and they decided, instead of saying, 'Look we said we would give all and here is more than we ever expected.' ***No!*** They came in and they said, 'Yes, we did sell it for thus and such.'

Remember what happened when God inspired the Apostle Peter to say, 'Why did Satan put this in your heart to do this?' It shows *God's judgment* upon that kind of thing. When there are double-minded people serving two purposes, themselves and making out like they are doing something else. So, Ananias and Sapphira is a perfect case in that, trying to hide their sins.

If you don't know the intentions of the parties involved then you have to do diligence to find out. You can do this by

- asking questions
- double -checking with other people
- prayer, asking God to give you insight, so you can see and understand what the intentions are

10. Doing What is Expedient

This is a great political ploy. The reason people do that is there is so much pressure coming on that you've got to have an immediate solution to the situation. It can be so great that you don't consider the long term consequences. Now, a good example:

Remember what happened during Katrina? 'Oh, we got to get this money to these people right away. Oh, yes, we have to overlook our normal standards of checks and balances, when we get it out so that there won't be fraud.' What happened? *They gave out all of these debit cards and people bought all kinds of luxury items!* People even faked names, faked addresses; some were not even from New Orleans. Guess what it cost the government? Because they said, 'Oh yes, we have to hurry and get it there, the victims are suffering, and Bush is wrong; he caused the hurricane.'

Well, if you go back and examine the facts after it is over you will see that everything was done to get it in there but the governor of Louisiana and the mayor of the city held back the government from doing it. Now they said, 'hurry up and get it.' So, guess what they wasted? ***\$1.3 billion!*** Then they had other restrictions which were put on the mobile homes that they bought for people to live in temporarily. They had such restrictions on it, a year

after the hurricane, most of the mobile homes are still sitting in the lot where they were parked. Doing what is expedient and tie that in with *slowness in judgment*.

We've seen this from the pulpit, too. It's expedient to make a person's sins public from the pulpit so that all the rest will hear and fear. Now, I tell you what, they don't realize the long-term consequences that happen with that. And then, too many times the minister, instead of teaching people how to live their lives and teaching them how to make proper judgments, he does what is expedient: he condemns them and puts them into fear and causes a whole lot of problems that way. We have seen that many, many times within the Churches ourselves. Of course this also happens within our own lives, we do something expedient and then it doesn't work out right.

Proverbs 29:20: "Do you see a man hasty in his words?... [that's expedient] ...*There is more hope for a fool than for him.*" When you just do something that is expedient, just to lift the pressure off of you and you don't consider the long term consequences, then it is going to come back and bite you again. ***It can be foolish and dangerous!***

11. Getting One's Personal Vanity Involved

Vanity is an extension of self, and involves coloring everything and everyone with his own ideas and personal point of view. In his own human self-centeredness then we tend to picture ourselves as ideal and desirable, and have a strong tendency to remake others *in our own image!* Now, God doesn't want that. He wants us made in the image of Christ! That's why His laws are true and fair and everything like that. So you can't do that.

Maybe someone has a different way of doing something that you do, and it might even be better. So, don't get your vanity involved by saying, 'Well, we have always done it this way.' Where would we be if that was said concerning the automobile? 'We've used horses, mules and jackasses for thousands of years, if it was good enough for all them, it's good enough for us now.' Good example you can take almost anything like that and just apply it.

Don't get your own vanity involved! In other words, it also comes down to a matter of humility! Remember that 'every way of a man is clean in his own eyes,' and if it's only from his own vain, self-centered point of view, you know that he's 'got to be right,' and no one is going to change his mind. No one is going to get him to examine all the facts.

Proverbs 28:16: "A ruler lacking understanding *is* also a great oppressor..." That is

exactly what happens when people get their own vanity involved and they want it *their* way, and they want it now. They want it to be in the manner, in the time, in the way that they want it and they won't listen to anything else. Now, you never, *never, never* want to come before a person like that for any kind of judgment. And you never want to become that kind of person yourself.

12. Applying an Over-Generalized Solution

These are great pronouncements and lofty solutions, which kind of skim the surface of the problem. They can apply in some cases, but judgments with specific solutions are usually needed.

A person can say if they are having a problem and they generalize: '***You need to overcome.***' Well, hey, everybody needs to overcome, everybody! I need to overcome; you need to overcome and so forth. But, what is missing?

- He doesn't tell a person *what* to overcome
- He doesn't tell them *how* to overcome
- He doesn't tell them *why* to overcome

Another one would be, '***You need to pray more.***' That may be true; I am sure all of us need to pray more. But that doesn't tell you how to pray and the attitude to pray. It doesn't give them instructions on that they need to do! So, over-generalization, where specifics and details are needed, just doesn't work.

For example: if you get something to put together, say you go to the hardware store, or you go to another store and you buy something that needs to be put together. You look at the outside of it and you make up your mind, you immediately know you can put it together. What is going to happen? *You are going to find that you didn't put it together right!*

Remember this: *Don't have over-generalization solutions!* When all else fails, read the instructions, and ***especially God's Instruction Book.***

These are ***the 12 common pitfalls and errors and faults that block righteous judgment!***

Seventeen Keys to Righteous Judgment

This will take us a little bit longer. So here is the key to render a fair, righteous and loving judgment is one of the most pleasing things to God that we can do. In fact, it is the essential heart and core of how we are learning to become kings and priests under Christ in the coming Kingdom of God.

That's why in our lives, we have trials and difficulties come along, because

- we need to make judgments

- we need to make decisions
- we need to find out what we need to do in a right and a proper way
- by righteous judgment, the land is established.
- by righteous judgment, the Church of God is established

If there is righteous judgment all the way through, with all the ministers and elders and the brethren are taught righteous judgment then it's going to help people solve their own problems and know how to live their lives.

Proverbs 21:3: "To do righteousness and justice *is* more pleasing to the LORD than sacrifice."

Proverbs 20:8: "A king who sits in the throne of judgment scatters away all evil with his eyes."

Proverbs 21:15, which is the motto of this booklet: "*It is* joy to the righteous to do justice..."

This is why it is imperative, we need to learn how to judge righteous judgments. Everything we do in our lives has to do with decisions and judgments. Some have more consequences than the other, but ***learning to judge righteous judgment is vitally important for us so that we become the kind of kings and priests that Christ wants us to become!***

1) Remember, the Judgment is God's—Not Yours

Whenever it comes to a serious matter. Same way in our lives. We need to live our lives

- according to God's laws
- according to God's commandments, statutes and judgments
- according to faith, love and hope

All of these things are all involved in it. But when there is a judgment to be made and it involves other people, remember *the judgment is not yours, it is God's!*

It was given by the king to the judges, 2-Chronicles 19:6: "And he said to the judges, 'Take heed what you do, for you do not judge for man, but for the LORD'"

Now, just think for a minute how much more blessed this nation would be if they did that. Just think about it! If you do unrighteousness in judgment instead of justice in judgment: take for example the judgment Roe vs Wade, the judge who did that, his daughter was the one who persuaded him to write that abortion is okay because she needed one.

The way that judgment is written it is so bad,

but look at the results of it. It is so terrible that there is not even any foundation in the Constitution or the laws of the land to warrant abortion. But, yet, just in America, over 44-million unborn have been killed in that holocaust, because they forgot that ***the judgment wasn't theirs!***

You can take that judgment and you can probably line up everything on how not to make righteous judgments and you'll probably find most of those violations in the judgment of Roe vs Wade.

2) Know Yourself—and Get Sin Out of Your Life

Don't give into your weaknesses! Before you can fairly and objectively judge others, *you must be able to accurately and realistically judge yourself before God!* You have to know your own strength; you have to know your own weaknesses. That's just a matter of being mature and spiritually honest on your part.

1-Corinthians 11:31: "Now, if we would examine ourselves... [knowing yourself] ...we would not be judged."

If we are judging ourselves and repenting and getting sins out of our lives, then God will not have to judge us. That is a very key, important thing.

You must know yourself so you can avoid, as much as possible, the mistake of reading yourself into any judgment. If you have certain weaknesses, you must take steps to be certain that these weaknesses do not cause you to render a poor decision or judgment. For example: if you tend to be forceful and domineering, you must be sure to avoid forcing your personal will into the decision.

God is molding people into the image of Jesus Christ. Not in the image of the one who is making the judgment. So, we need to really focus in on that.

Going hand-in-hand with knowing yourself and getting sin out of your life, since the ability to make sound judgments and decisions is directly related to your level of loving God and righteousness toward Him, you need to be on constant guard against sin. ***Actively be putting sin out of your life, through the grace and love of God, by the blood of Jesus Christ!***

It is impossible to live in sin and make a righteous judgment! It is an impossibility!

(go to the next track)

This comes right back to where we started in the beginning in Matt. 7. This is important; this is a fundamental thing in order to make judgments, in order to make decisions especially involving others. Now, when you are going to

- do something for another person,
- counsel them
- to give them instructions
- whatever it may be

Then you also need to follow exactly what Jesus said here. It is the whole thing of the attitude. Just realize this, many people have many different problems and if they come for counseling, if they come for help or if they ask you your opinion, in many cases they are trying to overcome it, so you don't want to condemn them.

Matthew 7:1: "Do not condemn *others*, so that you yourself will not be condemned; for with what judgment you judge, you shall be judged; and with what measure you mete out, it shall be measured again to you" (vs 1-2). That's why we always need to remember if you want mercy, be merciful.

Verse 3: "Now, why do you look at the sliver that *is* in your brother's eye, but you do not perceive the beam in your *own* eye? Or how will you say to your brother, "Allow *me* to remove the sliver from your eye"; and behold, the beam *is* in your *own* eye? *You* hypocrite, first cast out the beam from your *own* eye, and then you shall see clearly to remove the sliver from your brother's eye" (vs 3-5).

So that's getting to know yourself and getting the sin out of your life. Very important!

- know your strengths
- know your weaknesses
- get sin out of your life

Then you will grow in the ability to make righteous judgment.

3) In Every Case, Hear ALL the Facts

Or *get* all the facts! This is one of the most vital requirements in coming to a decision or judgment. ***Without all the facts it's impossible to make a righteous judgment or decision!*** In some cases, it takes a lot of hard work to get all the facts and be thorough and complete.

I'll tell you this, in everything that we try to do, the literature, the books and things that we make, we try to get all the facts. We try to cover all the bases, so that what we put out will be thorough and complete, just like any decision you have to make

Sometimes, if you are talking to people, it is going to take some deep and serious questioning on your part or on the part of the one making the decision, to get all the facts and then to check them out to make sure they are all true. Every person is right in his own eyes and he or she is going to come bringing their own opinion with them. You have to get through all that and come to the things that you

need to come to. What you have to do in getting all the facts:

- question
- think about it
- ask about it
- pierce through to the heart of the matter
- find out what the difficulty really is

Now, in getting all the facts, understand this, ***never consider any question too embarrassing or too personal.*** Because if you avoid asking the hard questions, you might never get the information to make a proper judgment or decision. You can do that in almost anything that you do, any decision that you make. So, keep that in mind.

4) Always be Open-Minded and Hear All Aspects of the Situation

Open-minded does not mean that you abandon the Truth of God. That does not mean you set aside the Truth of God. You are going to reserve that later to make a decision based upon the Word of God. But you have to be open-minded. This is tied closely into getting all the facts, and it's just as essential.

You must always listen to all aspects of the situation with an open mind. Save any judging for the time when you need to make a judgment on it. Don't make a judgment as you are going along, just be open-minded, file it in the back of your mind and write it down so you can come back to it later. That is the only way you are going to make a fair and just decision or judgment.

The key that is important to remember: ***people always put themselves in the best light possible!*** You have to understand that, and you've got to go through that. You have to not let that be a factor. Sometimes you are dealing with someone who has a very difficult time in explaining it. Encourage them! Ask questions! Listen! And when there is more than one party involved then you have to listen to both sides.

No one is 100% absolutely right, and no one is 100% absolutely wrong when you are just dealing with circumstances and situations involving people. Now, there may be times when that could be so, but you don't make any decision, you don't judge anything until you hear all aspects of the situation with an open mind.

Never make a one-sided decision, and do not assume that the one who comes first is necessarily right in the matter! Maybe, they're wrong in the matter and they got there first, just so they could make the impression and try and have the judgment work their way. That is why you need to also be careful with it.

We need to keep all of these factors in mind and I quote some of the Proverbs in the accompanying booklet

5) Never Render a Judgment Without Hearing the Entire Matter

What you see is #s 3, 4 & 5 all fit together. This means, don't jump the gun, but take time to hear the whole story.

Proverbs 18:13: "He who answers a matter before he hears it, it is folly and shame to him."

Proverbs 14:29: "*He who is slow to wrath is of great understanding, but he who is hasty of spirit exalts folly.*"

So, answer a matter before you have fully heard it is the impulse that wells up inside your mind urging you to make a decision right now. Then what happens? *Not only do you do that, then you rush to judgment, you are closed-minded!* All of these other factors come into play with it.

What you have to do is *wait and hear every matter* in its entirety. Another way of doing it is have the person write it down. If there is a conflict between many different individuals, have them all write it down and give it to you. You go through and weigh all the information that is given there. In some cases, they may not have all the information there, so you may need to come back and ask some more questions. ***Never render a judgment without hearing the entire matter!***

6) Never Look Only on Circumstances and Outward Appearance

You have to question the circumstances or the outward circumstances. You have seen this, in some of the mystery shows, someone plants a gun, in a person's house, or apartment or car, whatever, with fingerprints on it, so he is guilty. Or, in the case of a detective story, someone comes in and there was a killing, he inadvertently reaches down and picks up the weapon—whether it be a dagger, knife or gun—and leaves his fingerprints on it. The detectives come along and they say that this person did it because his fingerprints are there. It may or may not be true.

Because of these false judgments that people make and not doing the things that are here, there are an awful lot of people right now in prison who should not be in prison. That means the prosecutor lied, the witnesses lied, didn't get all the facts and in some cases they found that the prosecutors even held back facts that would show the innocence of the person involved.

A lot of rape cases: they are going back and they are doing DNA sampling and about 18% of

those who have been convicted of rape or child molestation have been proved to be innocent; it was someone else. I heard of a case where a man who spent 18 years in prison, because of that. He lost, if he is going to live to be 70-years-old, roughly 28-29% of his entire life. Think of that!

Paul also wrote in 2-Corinthians 10:7: "Are you looking at things according to their appearance?...."

Now, the outward appearances and circumstances are important in coming to a decision. But we always need to look beyond: deeper, behind. I use the example, if someone loses his temper. It could be a long-standing frustration. To counsel a person in how to overcome a bad temper could not be entirely adequate since the problem is a deep-seated frustration that needs to be addressed. Find out what the problem is.

Maybe the way they are being treated makes them angry because they know it is wrong. You have to go beyond the circumstances and outward appearance, and you cannot only avoid giving superficial advice, but you will be able to get to the heart of the problem and judge a righteous judgment. That is what we need to do. This is very important in dealing with your children.

I don't watch these judge shows so I can't render a judgment on the judge shows, but when the news is presented about a crime and the way that the reporters present it and the way that they give the facts and so forth they have got all of these things intermixed in with it and guess what happens? *Bad judgment!*

7) Discern the Attitudes and Motives of Those Involved

That is if this is possible! This is important to understand, because it is true, the heart is deceitful above all things. When people come for advice, it may well be possible that some don't even understand their own attitudes. You have to check that out.

This quality of discernment can come from the Holy Spirit. You have got to know! It is especially critical to sense and understand the real attitude of those that come with sins and faults of others in the congregation.

The first question needs to be, if that happens: Did you go to that person yourself? If he didn't, then 'you better go back and follow Matt. 18.' Then it gets into a matter of when and when not to make judgments.

In many instances such a person could be a self-righteous talebearer trying to stir up trouble. This is why Matt. 18 is there, so that it doesn't

happen. And this is why I don't hear things that people tell me concerning other people. I ask them, 'Well, have you talked to the individual about it? Well, no!.' 'Why don't you do that.' Then you know what happens? *They may decide it's really not their business in the first place!* Motive and attitude are important!

8) Never Be a "Respecter of Persons"

Cannot be! It doesn't matter who the person is. It doesn't matter if they are:

- well known or unknown
- liked or disliked
- loved or unloved
- a friend or an enemy

Never be a respecter of persons!

Whether you like or dislike a person, that should have absolutely no bearing in the judgment. Because if you show favoritism to the minority in an improper judgment, what is going to happen, you are going to create another long-term problem. Or if you follow the majority to do evil, then you are going to get yourself in trouble.

Exodus 23:2: "You shall not follow a multitude to do evil. Neither shall you testify in a cause in order to side with many so as to pervert judgment. Neither shall you be partial to a poor man in his cause That is just because he is poor and down trodden" (vs 2-3).

And then God also gives these two things here, that we have, Leviticus 19:15: "You shall do no unrighteousness in judgment. **You shall not respect the person of the poor, nor honor the person of the mighty.**"

Romans 2:11: "There is no respect of persons with God."

When we come to the situation concerning the church and the Church of God, remember the Church is not the Church *of any man*; it's the Church of **God**. So, we cannot—especially any elders or ministers or those in authority—cannot show any partiality at all especially when considering those for ordination of those for elders, deacons and so forth. ***You have to go by what the fruits show!*** Not by partiality. It makes you wonder, how many men were ordained ***because they were:***

- sons of so and so
- they knew so and so for a long time
- they were their drinking buddy
- they were their card playing buddy
- built a house for the minister

and he is rewarded with an eldership. That's being *a respecter of persons*.

Ultimately, ***if we reject God by showing partiality and playing politics, then we will be rejected by God!*** True principle, that happens.

9) Never Accept a Gift

Never allow yourself to get into a position where a gift is going to come and blind the eyes. Or it is going to be so good that when trouble comes, you don't handle it in the way that you ought to. This becomes a very vital and important thing because God says:

Exodus 23:8: "And you shall take no bribe, for the bribe blinds the wise and perverts the words of the righteous." This can come in forms in many different ways:

- loans
- gifts
- food
- clothing
- meals
- work or services

Many times I have heard of ministers who have had the brethren wait on them in their own households, hand and foot. They have to come over to the minister's house to do his lawn, to do his laundry, to clean it up and all of those things. And I have seen circumstances like that and that just should not ever be, under any circumstances. Let him take care of his own house. Let him take care of his own business. If he needs help in the house, then hire someone. But don't have brethren come in and do it for nothing.

Then problems and difficulties come along as a result of that, both for the minister and for the one who is doing it. All those things lead to problems and difficulties. Just like it says, "[It] blinds the wise and perverts the words of the righteous." We need to keep away from that.

In making any judgment:

10) Always Be Totally Fair and Impartial

In other words, whatever judgment that needs to be made, it needs to be fair and impartial. That doesn't mean that it might not be harsh. If it is fair and the situation is a very dire situation. You have to always be fair and impartial in it. This shows also:

- getting all the facts
- not letting yourself get involved
- knowing the attitude and intention of those involved
- not taking any gifts or bribes or anything like that

11) Educate Yourself in God's Laws, Statutes and Judgments

Since we are going to be kings and priests, let's see what the instruction was given to the king. When they were to choose a king, God told them specifically:

Deuteronomy 17:14: When you come to the land, which the LORD your God gives you, and shall possess it and shall live in it and shall say, 'I will set a king over me, like all the nations that *are* around me,' **You shall surely set a king over you, whom the LORD your God shall choose.** You shall set a king over you from among your brethren. You may not set a stranger over you who is not your brother" (vs 14-15).

Now here are the things he told the king not to do, v 16: Only he shall not multiply horses to himself, nor cause the people to return to Egypt, so as to multiply horses because the LORD has said to you, 'You shall not return that way again.' Nor shall he multiply wives to himself, so that his heart does not turn away. Nor shall he greatly multiply silver and gold to himself" (vs 16-17).

All of these things are very important not only for the king but also for any minister. When that happens you get high and mighty, you get up over people and you think that you are royalty, and you think you deserve this. Look, royalty does not happen until the resurrection. So, save that until then. Let God give it.

Verse 18 is a very key and important thing which should be for all of us in learning righteous judgment: "And it shall be, when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, **he shall write for himself a copy of this Law in a book** from that which is in the custody of the priests the Levites."

He was to go in to wherever the priest, the Levite had it and he was to make a copy of that so he would know it.

Verse 19: "And it shall be with him, and he shall read it all the days of his life, so that he may learn to fear the LORD his God, to keep all the words of this law and these statutes, to do them **so that his heart may not be lifted up above his brethren**, and that he does not turn aside from the commandment, to the right or the left, to the end that he may prolong *his* days in his kingdom, he and his children, in the midst of Israel" (vs 19-20).

Educate yourself with the Word of God. The Apostle Paul told Timothy that he was to be **'a workman, rightly dividing the Word of Truth.'** That takes time and effort, and you have to be yielded to God. Let's look at another admonishment given to Joshua, when he led the children of Israel into the 'promised land.' This is the attitude that we need to

take in learning, growing and overcoming, ***learning God's way!***

Joshua 1:5: "No man shall be able to stand before you all the days of your life. As I was with Moses, *so* I will be with you. I will not fail you nor forsake you."

Always remember that ***if*** you do what is right and you love God with all your heart, mind, soul and being and do what is right:

- God will never fail you
- God will never leave you
- God will not forsake us (Heb. 13)
- He will never leave us
- He will never, never leave us

That is ***if*** we do what we need to do.

Verse 6: "Be strong and of good courage, for you shall divide for an inheritance to this people the land, which I swore to their fathers to give it to them. Only be strong and very courageous so that you may observe to do according to all the Law, which My servant Moses commanded you. Do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, so that you may prosper wherever you go. This Book of the Law shall not depart out of your mouth, but you shall meditate therein day and night, so that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it, for then you shall make your way prosperous, and then you shall have good success" (vs 6-8).

Very important words for us to understand! We don't just have the Law of Moses, ***we have the entire Bible!*** This gives us a whole lot more understanding, education, examples and things from the Word of God that we can use.

Verse 9: "Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage. Do not be afraid, neither be dismayed, for **the LORD your God is with you in all places where you go.**"

- educate yourself
- develop
- learn
- grow
- understand

Then when you have to make a judgment or a decision that involves God's laws you can do so. If you just have to make a decision that doesn't pertain to the Word of God then you will have the basis of sound judgment to make that decision.

12) In Difficult Cases, Seek Counsel

That is a two-edged sword. Sometimes you get some of these committees, and they think because they have a committee everything will be all

right because the committee decides it and votes for it. That is not what it is talking about here. That is the opposite of wise counsel.

Proverbs 11:14: “Where *there is* no wisdom, the people fall; but in the multitude of wise counselors *there is* safety.”

Proverbs 15:22: “Without counsel purposes are frustrated, but in the multitude of counselors they are established.”

When you counsel with someone, it needs to be *confidential*. It is not one of those things where then you can just blither off something to someone and just lay everything bare. *No!* Get someone you know! Paul condemned the Church at Corinth because they put people who were least esteemed in Church to make the decision, so we don’t need to do that.

13) Think of the Long Term Effects

Consider the end, before you make a decision. What will it be in the long run? That goes right along with the opposite: *never do what is expedient*. A wise man once said: ‘On important matters, sleep on it.’ That is good advice. Especially when you have a decision to make that involves something that is really difficult; take your time and think of the long term effects.

Proverbs 29:18: “Where *there is* no vision, the people perish...”—if you don’t look at the long term effects, and think what is going to happen.

They didn’t even think of this concerning abortion when they brought in Roe *vs* Wade. They never thought they would be murderers of over 44-million, just here in America, and nearly 1-billion worldwide. It is an insane practice!

14) Always Make Your Decisions and Judgments Specific and Clear

Ambiguity and uncertainty causes confusion. So whenever a judgment is made, make sure it is specific and clear so that everything is completely understood. Example: God has given us the Ten Commandments, they are not the ten suggestions. He wants us to clearly know and understand His will. That is self-evident, we don’t have to elaborate on that.

15) The Element of Timing in a Judgment

The timing for implementing a judgment is very important and can impact its overall effect. Waiting too long in making a judgment, for example, can be very hard on the individuals involved. This is especially true when dealing with difficult problems. People have been known to suffer from various health problems, emotional breakdowns or attitudes

of total discouragement because it took so long to render a judgment. Make sure that it is timely.

Proverbs 13:12: “Hope deferred makes the heart sick...”

Verse 23: “...but there is *that* which is destroyed for lack of judgment”—slowness in coming to a judgment. Think about that in so many things concerning the government, they are ‘a day late and a dollar short.’ It is more like ‘years late and billions short.’

Ecclesiastes 8:5: “Whoever keeps the commandment shall feel no evil thing; and a wise man’s heart discerns both time and judgment. Because to every purpose there is time and judgment, therefore, the misery of man *is* great” (vs 5-6).

- make it timely
- carry it out in a proper way
- consider all of the factors we have gone through here

16) The All-Important Element of Mercy in Judgment

Too many times people get unmerited mercy. Sometimes, they get mercy because of who they are rather than rendering a proper judgment first. Remember this, judgment comes *before* mercy. ***Mercy is not a replacement for judgment!*** Judgment comes first, then mercy.

We find that example when Jesus was talking to Peter about how often should I forgive a brother when he repents. ***You forgive him when he repents!*** That is the judgment of that. But if they have done something wrong, then judgment must come first.

For example: a person can be convicted of doing something and be guilty, but because of repentance, because of a contrite heart, because of other circumstances, the judgment may be—a judge in cases like these may say—‘All right, I will give you probation for one year instead of sentencing you to thirty days in jail.’ But before the judgment was given, he was declared guilty *first*.

- look at the attitude
 - look at the other things
- then*
- administer the mercy

You never come along and because someone is who you know, or someone claims victimization and so forth that you just mercifully let them off the hook entirely. So never, *never*, ***never*** substitute mercy for judgment.

Take the case of David. Remember what

happened: God gave His judgment even though he repented. And God said, ‘Because you did this thing, My judgment is I forgive your sin, the child is going to die, but the sword will never depart from your house, because you have not despised Me.’ ***That’s God’s judgment!*** Evil would rise up against him even in his own house. And God said, ‘I will do this thing before all Israel and before the son because you did this thing secretly.’ ***That is God’s judgment!***

17) You Must be Filled With God’s Spirit and Have the Mind of Christ

In order to make righteous judgments, we sort of go back to the beginning with #17. Then you need to realize that being filled with the Holy Spirit of God is the most important ingredient and factor in having *the spirit of righteous judgment*. ***So, the real ability to judge comes from God and through His Spirit!*** We receive the love and the grace of God and the wisdom of God.

Proverbs 8—God’s Spirit is personified as wisdom, which clearly shows how God’s Spirit leads to judgment.

Proverbs 8:14: “Counsel and sound wisdom *are* mine; I *am* understanding; I have strength. By me kings reign and princes decree justice. Princes rule by me, and nobles, and all the judges of the earth. I love those who love me; and those who seek me early shall find me. Riches and honor *are* with me; *yea*, enduring riches and righteousness. My fruit *is* better than gold, *yea*, than fine gold; and what I give *is* better than choice silver. I lead in the way of righteousness, in the midst of the paths of justice [judgment]” (vs 14-20).

Even when the 70 elders of Israel were chosen to serve with Moses, God told Moses, ‘I am going to take some of your spirit and put it on them’ so that they would be able to make the righteous judgments.

2-Timothy 1:6: “For this reason, I admonish you to stir up the gift of God that is in you by the laying on of my hands. For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power, and of love, and of sound-mindedness” (vs 6-7).

So that we can make righteous judgment, make decisions in our lives; then all of the other ones here that I have. Be filled with the Spirit.’ The apostles were filled with the Spirit.

God wants us today to be able to say like Micah 3:8: “But truly I am full of power by the Spirit of the LORD, and of judgment, and of might...”

When we have God’s Holy Spirit and use it as God directs us, He will give us the quality of righteous judgment. This is why Paul wrote that

those who are spiritual, ‘judge all things and having the mind of Christ.’

If you are letting the mind of Christ be in you, the love of God be in you, then you’ll be able to judge righteous judgment!

In these three sermons, during a very vital and important Feast of Tabernacles, where we learn the meaning of the Feast of Tabernacles, of being kings and priests and judges in the Kingdom of God, this helps us to understand what we need to do; to prepare us and have these things written in our heart and mind so we can make *righteous* judgments.

We need to understand that ***the spirit of righteous judgment is a quality, a character quality, of God and Jesus Christ!***

So today, living in a world where everything is gray and blurred and so many things are in confusion, we need:

- to have the mind of God
- be filled with the Spirit of God
- have the truth of righteousness of God

so we can make decisions and judgments in our life! Then we can see things even in the world, and see how a righteous judgment needs to be made.

Proverbs 29:4: “The king **establishes the land** by justice...” That is how *we are going to establish the Kingdom of God!*

Proverbs 21:15: “*It is* joy to the righteous to do justice [judgment] ...”

John 7:24: Jesus said, “...**Judge righteous judgment.**”

There are the things that are necessary to judge righteous judgment!

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version* by Fred R. Coulter

Scriptural References:

- 1) Proverbs 28:5
- 2) Proverbs 29:4
- 3) Proverbs 26:12
- 4) Proverbs 18:17
- 5) Proverbs 24:23
- 6) Proverbs 18:5
- 7) Proverbs 17:15
- 8) Exodus 23:18
- 9) Proverbs 17:23
- 10) Proverbs 18:13
- 11) Proverbs 29:20
- 12) Proverbs 28:16

- 13) Proverbs 21:3
- 14) Proverbs 20:8
- 15) Proverbs 21:15
- 16) 2 Chronicles 19:6
- 17) 1 Corinthians 11:31
- 18) Matthew 7:1-5
- 19) Proverbs 18:13
- 20) Proverbs 14:29
- 21) 2 Corinthians 10:7
- 22) Exodus 23:2-3
- 23) Leviticus 19:5
- 24) Romans 2:11
- 25) Exodus 23:8
- 26) Deuteronomy 17:14-20
- 27) Joshua 1:5-9
- 28) Proverbs 11:14
- 29) Proverbs 15:22
- 30) Proverbs 29:18
- 31) Proverbs 13:12, 23
- 32) Ecclesiastes 8:5-6
- 33) Proverbs 8:14-20
- 34) 2 Timothy 1:6-7
- 35) Micah 3:8
- 36) Proverbs 29:15
- 37) Proverbs 21:15
- 38) John 7:24

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- John 9:39
- 1 Kings 11
- Isaiah 59
- Acts 5
- Matthew 18
- Hebrews 13

Also referenced: Booklet:

Judge Righteous Judgment

FRC:bo

Transcribed: 12-18-15

What is the Mystery of Godliness?

Fred R. Coulter

What is the *mystery* of Godliness *for you*? We've talked many times about the mystery of Godliness in relationship to Christ. But there is a mystery of Godliness that is *for you!* It's a mystery and a secret because *the world cannot see it!*

1-Timothy 3:16: "And undeniably, **great is the mystery of Godliness...**"

We know the Scripture that says that we understand the Word of God 'line upon line, line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little.' And we understand the Word of God that way, but by the very same method we understand the Word of God, those in the world who do not believe, do not understand the Word of God, 'line upon line precept, precept upon precept and here a little and there a little.' So, part of *the mystery of Godliness* is what God is doing for us.

In the world you have the *mystery of iniquity* or *lawlessness*, and it's a secret or a mystery that comes from Satan *to lead people away from God*. So, you have the two mysteries. The *mystery of Godliness* and the *mystery of iniquity* or *lawlessness*.

Here *mystery of Godliness* continues and says: "...God was manifested in *the flesh*, was justified in *the Spirit*..." (v 16). Why did He have to be justified in the Spirit? He never sinned. But He was justified in the Spirit in as much as that His sacrifice gave spiritual justification for those that God would call.

"...was seen by angels... [as well as the apostles] ...was proclaimed among *the Gentiles*, was believed on in *the world*, was received up in glory" (v 16).

What is the mystery of Godliness for you? for me? Let's see what Peter said, and let's understand that compared to when He wrote this some 1900 years ago, and as it applies to us today, it's even magnified that much more.

1-Peter 1:10: "Concerning which salvation the prophets who prophesied of the grace *that would come* to you have diligently searched out and intently inquired."

They didn't know Paul wrote that these things were ***hidden from generations past***. Here's what they did, and you can read this in the book of Daniel.

Verse 11: "Searching into what *way* and what manner of time the Spirit of Christ *which was* in them was indicating, testifying beforehand of the sufferings of Christ, and these glories that would follow; to whom it was revealed that, not for themselves, but to us they were ministering these things..." (vs 11-12).

Think of it this way: Everything that is in the Bible is all of the Word of God and everything that God has done, ***was done for you***. The *mystery of Godliness for you* and *as a witness and warning to the world*. Everyone who has the Bible, everyone who has the Word of God, has the witness sent to them. If they don't read it that's not God's fault, because He's not going to make you read it. What a tremendous thing!

"...which now have been announced to you by those who have preached the Gospel to you by *the Holy Spirit*, sent from heaven—into which things the angels desire to look" (v 12).

Why did the angels desire to look into that? Think about it for a minute! What is God doing with us? *He's taking us from a mind that is deceitful and desperately wicked above all things, and He's changing it to be Holy! He is converting us to be like Him!* He hasn't told the angels how He's doing it. It's a *mystery of Godliness*, because God is doing it in the mind and heart.

Verse 13: "For this reason, **be prepared in your minds...**"—because it's all going to be in our mind. Yes, it'll be reflected in our behavior, that is true. But it's in our mind.

"...be self-controlled, *and* be fully hoping in the grace that will be brought to you at *the revelation of Jesus Christ*" (v 13).

This is telling us the final grace of God is *the resurrection!* What you're going to see, everything that God has done for us is through *His* grace. It is His gift, and we have our part, because God did not create us to be robots.

Verse 14: "As obedient children, do not conform yourselves to the former lusts, *as you did* in *your* ignorance. But according as He Who has called you *is* Holy, you yourselves also be Holy in all *your* conduct; for it is written, 'You be Holy because I am Holy'" (vs 14-16).

So we're going to see the goal of the mystery of Godliness for each one of us is that *we become Holy*. Isn't that amazing? So, it's quite a fantastic thing that God is doing.

Verse 17: "And if you call upon the Father, Who judges according to each man's work without respect of persons, pass the time of your *life's* journey in *the fear of God*; knowing that you were not redeemed by corruptible things, by silver or gold, from your futile way of living, inherited *by tradition* from *your* forefathers; but **by the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without**

spot” (vs 17-19).

Let’s see how this happens. Let’s see how Paul defines *the mystery of Godliness for us*. It’s something that God is doing, and it all hinges on God’s Spirit and the Word of God, and, as Peter said, ‘as obedient children to God.’

Listen! Understand this always and never forget it: ***We are always to obey the Father and Jesus Christ and not give that obedience to any man!*** Part of the mystery of Godliness is that *He has called you to have a personal relationship with Him*. No man is between God and you!

- yes, we need teachers
- yes, we need to come together
- yes, we need to love each other

But our first love and loyalty and everything goes to God the Father because He’s the One Who’s doing it, and that’s part of the *mystery of Godliness for us*.

Col. 1 ties right in with the sacrifice of Christ that Peter mentioned (1-Peter 1):

Colossians 1:20: “And, having made peace through the blood of His cross, by Him to reconcile all things to Himself; by Him, whether the things on the earth, or the things in heaven. For you *were* once alienated and enemies in *your* minds by wicked works...” (vs 20-21).

He’s taking an enemy and He’s going to convert them. The process of that is called *the mystery of the secret of Godliness*, which God is doing in each one who has His Spirit. It’s going to get real exciting; here’s what He’s going to do.

Verse 22: “In the body of His flesh through death, to present you Holy and unblamable and unimpeachable before Him.”

That’s God’s goal! He’s going to take this evil, carnal mind and the selfishness and vanity of human beings—He’s not doing it for the whole world; we’re going to see those that He calls and we’ll see how He does it—and *changing that to be Holy*. Isn’t that something? It’s a *work* that God is doing in you, and it is a *work* that God was creating in you. ***‘We are His workmanship.’***

Verse 23: “***If*** indeed you continue in the faith...”

Verse 26: *Even* the mystery that has been hidden from ages and from generations, **but has now been revealed to His saints.**” Not to the world, but to *His* saints.

Think about what God has done for you, because He’s done it, and we’ll see how He does it. We’ll see how profound and important that this is, and

how absolutely magnificent that it is: ***the mystery of Godliness for each one of us!***

Verse 27: “To whom **God did will...**” It’s the will of God that you know. but as we’re going to see you have to

- search for it
- study for it
- live by it

“...to make known what *are* the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory” (v 27).

We’ve already covered about having the mind of Christ, Christ *in* you. Now there’s something that’s profound and important with receiving the Spirit of God. Baptism is not just an acceptable initiation into a church. ***Baptism is a result of what God has done***, and results in a *spiritual operation that is called the circumcision of the heart* so that God’s Spirit can be in you. Let’s see how God did this.

John 6:44: “No one can come to Me unless the Father, Who sent Me, draws him...” God the Father has to be involved individually and personally in each one of our lives. *He determines* who He’s going to call. Paul said, ‘You see you’re calling not many wise, not many rich, not many noble and so forth.’ That’s why we are what we are, and God has called us for that very purpose. He has to draw us! How does He draw us? It’s part of *the mystery of Godliness*, which is this:

One day you’re going down the road, and all of a sudden BING! God does something; you don’t even know that God is doing it.

- Why did you get interested in the Truth?
- What made you want to know what was in the Bible?
- Why do you have understanding the other people do not understand, though they read the same Bible?
 - ✓ *because of the mystery of Godliness*
 - ✓ *because God did that for you*

“...and I will raise him up at the last day” (v 44). When is the last day for us? *Pentecost!* The 50th day pictures the resurrection, and the 50th day is the last day of the count. This doesn’t mean the Feast of the Last Great Day, that’s a second resurrection. He’s talking about the first resurrection.

Verse 45: “It is written in the prophets, ‘And they shall all be taught by God.’.... [think about that] ...Therefore, everyone who has heard from the Father, and has learned, comes to Me.”

You’re taught of God! How are you taught of God? ***That’s part of the mystery of Godliness!*** It

happens to each one of **us**, but it doesn't happen to the world.

How was Jesus taught? This will help us and give us a little insight. We will see how God teaches us and how important the Word of God is, and how God uses that to teach us.

John 7:14: "But then, about the middle of the Feast, Jesus went up into the temple and was teaching. And the Jews were amazed, saying, 'How does this Man know letters, having never been schooled?'" (vs 14-15).

You know for sure that beginning from the time of John the Baptist and when Jesus first came to the temple in Acts 2, and was doing all of the teaching and everything that He was doing, don't you think that every rabbi and every scholar went around and said, who taught Him? And you know for sure that the rabbi, if there was a rabbi who had taught Jesus, that they would take care of that rabbi immediately.

Remember when Jesus came to the temple at age 12 and was asking questions and giving answers? They were amazed! What did Jesus say? *I must be about My Father's business!* How did Jesus learn?

Verse 16: "Jesus answered them and said, 'My doctrine is not Mine, but **His Who sent Me.**'" I want you to remember that because we're going to come back to this again.

Verse 17: "**If anyone desires to do His will,** he shall know of the doctrine, whether it is from God, or *whether* I speak from My own self." *Whatever you do has to be in conformity with the will of God!* This is how you test every prophet.

Verse 18: "**The one who speaks of himself is seeking his own glory;** but He Who seeks the glory of Him Who sent Him is true, and there is no unrighteousness in Him."

Let's see the prophecy of how Jesus was taught, Isaiah 50:4: "The Lord GOD has given Me the tongue of the learned... [Isn't that what they asked? How does He know?] ...to know to help the weary with a word. **He awakens Me morning by morning...**" I believe beginning very, very, **very** early in Jesus' life after He was born. Maybe even every morning beginning the day He was born.

"...He awakens my ear to hear as one being taught" (v 4). I believe the Father manifested Himself *secretly* to Jesus, taught Him, instructed Him. You don't think that Jesus would have been left to the deceitful teachings of men, and then have to sort them out later on? **NO!**

Verse 5: "The Lord GOD has opened My ear, and I was not rebellious, nor turned away backwards.... [referring to Christ because]: ...I gave

My back to the smiters, and My cheeks to them that plucked off the hair; I did not hide My face from shame and spitting, for the Lord GOD will help Me; therefore, I have not been disgraced. On account of this I have set My face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed" (vs 5-7).

That's what is says in Heb. 12, that He despised the shame, and it was for the joy that lay ahead of Him that He went through it. ***That's how Jesus was taught!***

This is not stubbornness; they might call it hardheadedness. I've been accused of that quite a few times, but that's okay. In the face of evil what did He do? *He made His face as flint!* In other words, not yielding to it one minute. That's a good example for us, because God is doing something great for us.

We're going to see a lot of this in the book of John. I was talking to them up in Salt Lake City, and they said when they get together for the Sabbath they have taken some time on the Sabbath Day and they have been rotating around—they have six in their group—and they read so many verses out of the book of John, and they said they were absolutely amazed as to what they learned by reading it through.

What we're going to learn today is how important the Word of God is. How does the Father teach us? He ***is*** teaching us! Not in the same way that He taught Jesus face-to-face, but *He is teaching us!* It is through the Word of God; that's why the Word of God is so important and that's why we have to rightly divide the Word of God.

Notice what John the Baptist testified of Jesus, John 3:31: "He Who comes from above is above all. The one who is of the earth is earthly, and speaks of the earth. He Who comes from heaven is above all; and what He has seen and heard, this *is* what He testifies; but no one receives His testimony" (vs 31-32).

Jesus saw the Father—didn't He? We're going to see that the Father told Him what to say. The Father *commanded* Him what to speak. The Father *commanded* Him what to do. As being God manifested in the flesh, He was not going to do anything of His own. There's a great lesson in that; a great and profound lesson. You're not going to receive eternal life by climbing up through another door. *It's going to be God's way or none!*

Verse 33: "The one who has received His testimony has set his seal that God is true." That's what we do.

- God is true
- His Word is Truth
- His commandments are true
- all of His precepts are true from the

beginning

- the Word of God has been established in the heavens forever
- it is the Word of God that is used to teach us

Verse 34: “For He Whom God has sent speaks the words of God...” That’s referring to Christ, but it’s also referring to whomever comes preaching.

Jesus said that if another comes in His name you would receive him. You know there’s a big deal: The Purpose-Driven Church. And that’s how to go out and get a lot of people in that church. They’re going to get a lot of people in that church, *but it won’t be God’s Church. God’s Church is to be led of the Spirit, not driven by self!*

Verse 35: “The Father loves the Son and has given all things into His hand. The one who believes in the Son has everlasting life; but the one who does not obey the Son shall not see life, for the wrath of God remains on him” (vs 35-36).

Let’s see, again, what was it that God gave us, and what we have here today.

John 5:19: “Therefore, Jesus answered and said to them, ‘Truly, truly I say to you, the Son has no power to do anything of Himself, but only what He sees the Father do... [He *saw* the Father, He *heard* the Father, and the Father *commanded* Him] ...For whatever He does, these things the Son also does in the same manner. For the Father loves the Son, and shows Him everything that He Himself is doing. And He will show Him greater works than these, so that you may be filled with wonder’” (vs 19-20). That’s something!

Verse 36: “But I have a greater witness than John’s; for the works that the Father gave Me to complete, the *very* works that I am doing, themselves bear witness of Me, that the Father has sent Me.” Even Jesus, as God manifested in the flesh, didn’t do anything on His own!

Verse 37: “And the Father Himself, Who sent Me, has borne witness of Me. You have neither heard His voice nor seen His form at any time. And **you do not have His word dwelling in you...**” (vs 37-38).

Part of the mystery of Godliness is the Word of God dwelling in you! And we’ll see how that’s accomplished. That’s what’s important. That’s how you’re going to be changed from evil to perfect. And that’s the *mystery of Godliness*.

“...for you do not believe Him Whom He has sent. You search the Scriptures, for in them you think that you have eternal life; and they are the ones that testify of Me” (vs 38-39).

And you can say that of the Catholics and Protestants and the Jews and everything. They have

the Scriptures, but *they don’t understand them because they’re not taught of God!* You can identify them because they have *their traditions* or *their own teachings* or *cleverly devised deceptions* to make it appear true.

Verse 40: “But you are unwilling to come to Me, that you may have life. I do not receive glory from men; but I have known you, that you do not have the love of God in yourselves. I have come in My Father’s name, and you do not receive Me; *but* if another comes in his own name, you will receive him. How are you able to believe, you who receive glory from one another, and do not seek the glory that *comes* from the only God? Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father. There is *one* who accuses you, *even* Moses, in whom you have hope” (vs 40-45).

Isn’t that interesting? Present tense “...accuses you...” Why? *The Word of God is living!* The Word of God in its teachings for us is always present tense, whether it’s in the Old Testament or the New Testament. That’s why whenever you see a quote where it says, ‘it is written,’ it never says it has been written, it *is* written, because it has a present application. So, He says that Moses accuses you.

Verse 46: “But **if you believed Moses, you would have believed Me; for he wrote about Me.**” That’s another *mystery of Godliness* the world doesn’t understand. *We believe Moses!*

I gave a couple of sermons with the veil lifted so we can understand it. But the world doesn’t believe Moses. Try it on for size with any Catholic or Protestant.

Verse 47: “And if you do not believe his writings, how shall you believe My words?” The words of Christ are very profound and very important. Let’s understand about the Word of God, because it’s all going to focus in on the Word of God and the Spirit of God *to carry out the mystery of Godliness for each one of us!*

John 6:63: “It is the Spirit that gives life; the flesh profits nothing....” The older we get the more we understand that. When you’re 16 you don’t comprehend that because you’re just beginning to enjoy the flesh. When you’re 70 and 80 you understand it. So, if you can learn the lesson now before you reached that age, then you’re well off.

“...The words that I speak to you, they are Spirit and they are Life” (v 63).

We’re reading this in the English alphabet—right? What is it that gives you understanding of this? Yet, it’s the same alphabet that is used to print lies, pornography, fictitious books, whatever! But what is it that gives you the understanding? *You read it, then all of a sudden it’s almost like a light goes on!* It’s

because of the interaction of God Spirit in your mind to give you the understanding of it. "...they are Spirit and they are Life."

Hebrews 4:12: "For the Word of God is **living and powerful**... [there's nothing like it] ...dividing asunder of both soul and spirit, *and* of both *the* joints and *the* marrow, and **is able to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart**"—which no other book in the world can expose. Isn't that amazing?

Let's also understand something more about the Word of God and why it's important in what we need to understand about it. This is going to help you appreciate the Bible and the Word of God even more.

John 12:37: "Although He had done so many miracles in their presence, **they did not believe** in Him." They expected the Messiah to come and politically *join them*. But He didn't do it. They expected Him to come and overthrow the Romans, but He didn't do it. They didn't believe in Him. And here's another thing that happens:

Verse 38: "So that the word of Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled who said, 'Lord, who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?' For this *very* reason they could not believe because again Isaiah said, 'He has blinded their eyes and hardened their hearts so that they would not see with *their* eyes and understand with *their* hearts, and be converted, and I would heal them'" (vs 38-40).

Now that's pretty powerful! That's why none comes to the Father except through Christ and none comes to Christ except through the Father.

- your calling is very special
- your calling is very personal

It hinges on the Spirit of God and the Word of God!

That's why we have the second resurrection. God will take care of all of that then, but not now, because ***God is concentrating on preparing those for the first resurrection!*** If we really yield ourselves to God the Father and Jesus Christ, and yield ourselves to the Spirit of God and the Word of God, ***then He can perfect in us, through the mystery of Godliness***, which is what He is doing. Why should we put ourselves in the same carnal position as the world, resisting the Word of God or wanting to improve upon the Word of God? *I'll tell you why you shouldn't in just a minute!*

Verse 41: "Isaiah said these things when he saw His glory and spoke concerning Him. But even so, many among the rulers believed in Him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess *Him*, so that they would not be put out of the synagogue... [political to the end] ...for they loved the glory of men

more than the glory of God. Then Jesus called out and said..." (vs 41-44).

Here's what's important to understand. *I want you to realize the intervention of God the Father and Jesus Christ in your life, as part of the mystery of Godliness that God is carrying out in you and creating in you:*

- through all the trials
- through all the difficulties
- through all the ups and downs
- through everything that you are going through

God is fulfilling the mystery of Godliness in you!

Verse 44: "Then Jesus called out and said, 'The one who believes in Me does not believe in Me, but in Him Who sent Me. And the one who sees Me sees Him Who sent Me. I have come *as* a light into the world so that everyone who believes in Me may not remain in darkness. But if anyone hears My words and does not believe..." (vs 44-47). That's why it's important. You've got to believe God. You've got to believe the Word of God.

"...I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world, but to save the world. The one who rejects Me and does not receive My words... [Who did He get them from? *From the Father!*] ...has one who judges him; the word which I have spoken..." (vs 47-48). When it comes up the Word, that means everything that Jesus has spoken and caused to be recorded.

"...that shall judge him in the last day. For I have not spoken from Myself; but the Father, Who sent Me, gave Me commandment Himself, what I should say and what I should speak" (vs 48-49).

That's why the words of God in the Bible are profound and important, because they come from the Sovereign Ruler of the universe, God the Father and through Jesus Christ, through Moses, through the prophets and through the apostles. We'll see in a little bit how important that is. For the New Testament, God only used eight men to write it. And if God cannot control eight men and cause them to write the Truth, then He can't be God.

Verse 50: "And I know that His commandment is eternal life. Therefore, whatever I speak, I speak exactly as the Father has told Me."

Now let's look at another part of *the secret of Godliness* for us; John 14:15: "If you love Me, keep the commandments—namely, My commandments."

Here's another great and profound Truth to understand: ***Love establishes law!*** Remember what Jesus said about 'loving the Lord your God with all

your heart, all your mind, all you soul, all your being, and your neighbor as yourself: ***on these two hang all the Law and the Prophets!***

God is love and His love established His Law! You can't go at this backwards and have law establish love. You might be able to do certain things, but ***unless you have love behind the Law, the Law kills!***

(go to the next track)

Let's understand our relationship with God. Let's understand that ***all the words of Jesus came from the Father!*** That's important and fantastic to understand.

John 15:5: "I am the vine, *and you are* the branches. The one who is dwelling in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; because apart from Me you can do nothing."

That's very interesting. When people first begin to apostatize, they can't recognize it. Because they're wanting to do *their* will. It's kind of like this. They were walking toward the Light as Jesus said; 'the one who is of the Truth comes to the Light and the one who's not of the Truth loves darkness.'

But if someone is in the light and coming to the light and then they turn around and start walking the other way, their perception is as they are looking the light is shining behind them so they think they're still in the light. And then they walked further and further away and unless they repent and turn around soon they will be in darkness.

It's the same way here, we're to remain in Christ. And it's interesting that the husbandmen shows that you're working with the ground as a husband does with his wife. He's working with the plants so that they will grow and that they will produce. They also know that in a healthy and a happy environment, plants and trees respond and produce more.

The analogy is for us. If we are in Christ and the Father is doing the work—that's part of the mystery of Godliness—no one can tell the work that God the Father is doing in you, only God the Father and Jesus Christ. That's why we have to remain in Christ.

Verse 6: "If anyone does not dwell in Me, he is cast out as a branch, and is dried up; and men gather them and cast *them* into a fire, and they are burned."

It's either going to be a trial and they're going to wake up, or it's going to be eternal death. Fire of trial!

Verse 7: "***If you dwell in Me...*** [we'll see how that is] ***...and My words dwell in you...***" That's important. The main part of the New Covenant is this:

'I will write My laws into their hearts, and into the minds I will inscribe them, and their sins and the iniquities I will remember no more.'

That is part of the Mystery of Godliness for us. The only One Who knows how they're written there is God. But we have our part in having them written in there, and God has His part.

"...you shall ask whatever you desire, and it shall come to pass for you. In this is My Father glorified, that you bear much fruit; so shall you be My disciples" (vs 7-8).

Notice this love relationship that God wants us to understand. Remember the principle: ***law is established by love***, you do not establish love by law.

Verse 9: As the Father has loved Me, I also have loved you; live in My love. If you keep My commandments, you shall live in My love" (vs 9-10).

Because love is established at first, you ***want*** to keep the commandments of God. That's the desire. And part of the mystery of Godliness is that ***God gives you the desire!***

Verse 10: "If you keep My commandments, you shall live in My love; just as I have kept My Father's commandments and live in His love. These things I have spoken to you, in order that My joy may dwell in you, and *that* your joy may be full. This is My commandment: that you love one another, as I have loved you" (vs 10-12).

That's what God wants. Too many of us are judging each other.

- judge doctrine
- judge Truth from error
- do not judge their heart

That's God's business! You never know when they may turn and repent.

Verse 13: "No one has greater love than this: that one lay down his life for his friends. You are My friends, if you do whatever I command you" (vs 13-14). That's part of the mystery of Godliness too! ***We are the friends of God!*** Isn't that amazing?

Verse 15: "No longer do I call you servants, because the servant does not know what his master is doing. But I have called you friends because I have made known to you *all the* things that I have heard from My Father."

Everything that Jesus spoke came from the Father! How important is the Word of God? ***Fantastic!*** We're going to couple the Word of God together with the Spirit of God? We're going to see how the mystery of Godliness works for us. The world doesn't know it, ***but God knows.***

Verse 16: “You yourselves did not choose Me, but I have personally chosen you, and ordained you...” ***The Father and Christ have selected you!***

I would that every minister, elder or teacher would understand that those of us who are elders and teachers have a stewardship. We have been entrusted by God to teach His Word. If Jesus didn't teach Himself, how much less that anyone who was the teacher presume to teach himself, or teach of himself.

“...that you should go *forth* and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain; so that whatever you shall ask the Father in My name, He may give you. These things I command you, that you love one another. If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before *it hated* you. If you were of the world, the world would love its own....” (vs 16-19).

Don't worry about what people say about you; it doesn't make any difference.

- What does God think about you?
- How is your relationship with God the Father and Jesus Christ?
- *That's what's important!*

If that is good and you love God and you love the brethren, then your relationship with the brethren will be just fine. And if they hate us for it, ‘c'est a vie’ (pronounced ‘sa-la-vie’)!

John 14:16: “And I will ask the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that it may be with you throughout the age.”

Now here's why the world can't receive it, because it perceives it not—that's why it's a mystery—nor knows it. I'll tell you one thing, it wasn't the Holy Spirit running things over at the Vatican when the pope was elected.

Verse 17: “*Even* the Spirit of the Truth, which the world cannot receive because it perceives it not, nor knows it; but you know it because it dwells with you, and shall be within you.”

When God first begins dealing with us and drawing us, He sends His Spirit to be with you. If you respond it continues with you, and if you respond some more, it continues with you, until you come to the point of repentance and baptism. If you don't respond, it leaves.

Verse 18: “I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you. Yet, a little while and the world shall see Me no longer; but you shall see Me. Because I live, you shall live also. In that day, you shall know that I am in My Father, and you *are* in Me, and I am in you. The one who has My commandments and is keeping them, that is the one who loves Me; and the one who loves Me shall be loved by My Father, and I

will love him and will manifest Myself to him.’ Judas (not Iscariot) said to him, ‘Lord, what has happened that You are about to manifest Yourself to us, and not to the world?’” (vs 18-22). How is the mystery of Godliness carried out with you? *The world doesn't know it!*

Verse 23: “Jesus answered and said to him, ‘**If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We... [the two of Them] ...will come to him and make Our abode with him.**’” *That's the secret of Godliness!*

- you have the Spirit of Christ
- you have the begetting from the Father
 - ✓ the Spirit of Christ to have the mind of Christ; *Christ in you*
 - ✓ the begetting of the Father to be the begotten son or daughter of God

That's all spiritual! They're dwelling with us! That's the fellowship talked of in 1-John 1; this is ***the*** fellowship! Our fellowship is with God the Father and Jesus Christ, which is the *mystery of Godliness*.

This is why prayer becomes important and not a chore. This is why study becomes your way of connecting with God through His Spirit because the words here are Spirit and Life.

- they then are implanted into your mind
- they live in your mind and your heart
- the words of God direct you and what you are to do

Bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Jesus Christ is part of the mystery of Godliness that God is working in you!

I tell you, brethren, it's fantastic! Don't ever, ***ever*** feel down and discouraged about any single thing that happens in your life—***period!***

- the Father loves you
- Christ loves you
- They have called you
- They have given you Their Spirit.

That is a great mystery of Godliness!

Here's the dividing line between the mystery of Godliness and the mystery of iniquity or lawlessness; v 24: “The one who does not love Me does not keep My words; ... [or changes them to suit what they want] ...and the word that you hear is not Mine, but the Father's, Who sent Me.”

When you read the Bible when you read the New Testament these are the words of the Father. You want to know what the Father will tell you or would tell you, read it here! That's why the Word of God is so profound. Remember that Jesus was taught of the Father! Remember that we have been spoken of, that

we are to learn of God and the Father is the One Who's teaching us, and He does it by His Spirit and by His Word because these are His words. Isn't that something? That's really terrific!

Verse 30: "I will not speak with you much longer because the ruler of this world is coming; but he does not have a single thing in Me. Yet, *he comes* so that the world may know that I love the Father, and that I do exactly as the Father has commanded Me...." (vs 30-31).

That's what we are to do with *the mystery of Godliness* in us.

Now let's understand a little bit more concerning the Word of God. Today Satan wants people to believe that the Word of God was written not by God, but by men. Men who only told the stories over and over again for several hundred years before they wrote it down. Well that would mean that Jesus called the apostles in vain.

These were men chosen of God, just like Paul said, the things that I write to you they are the commandments of the Lord.

- God intended it to be written
- God intended us to have it
- God intended it to be so that we can have it written in our heart and in our mind
- How would you ever know the Word of God unless it was written and published?
- How would you ever be able to get it into your mind unless you could read it?
- How would you ever be able to understand it
 - ✓ unless they're spiritually discerned?
 - ✓ unless you had the Spirit of God to understand it?

That's all part of the mystery of God, and that comes directly from God the Father!

2-Timothy 3:15: "And that from a child you have known the Holy Writings...[Old Testament] ...which are able to make you wise unto salvation through faith, which *is* in Christ Jesus." Doesn't that sound a lot like what Jesus said? '*Had you believed Moses you would have believed Me.*'

Verse 16: "All Scripture *is* God-breathed..." Some translations have it this way: 'All Scripture inspired of God is profitable'—which is saying, there are some Scriptures *not* inspired of God, and yes, there is even a minister in South Africa saying that!

Every Scripture is of God; God breathed! Even the genealogies! How would we know that Christ came from Abraham through David unless we had the genealogies? What proof would you have that He is the Christ?

Verse 16: "All Scripture *is* God breathed..." so that no man can claim it for himself. It's important and is profitable for doctrine. *Doctrine is important!*

The first key of apostasy and ecumenism is 'let's talk about what we agreed on, not what we disagree on.' Doctrine divides! I think that's what Heb. 4 said, 'like a sword dividing asunder.' Doctrine or teaching is important, but it's got to be the doctrines in teachings of the Word of God, not our ideas about them.

"...for conviction..." (v 16).

- you have faith
 - you have belief
 - you have a hope
- therefore, you have conviction*
- in what you do
 - in what you think
 - in what you believe

All that is part of the Spirit of God. Just like we read of Christ; 'I made My face like a flint'. But that doesn't mean you don't have mercy, love, kindness and forgiveness. It means that you never, *never, never* compromise the Word of God.

"...for correction..." [we all need correction]
"...for instruction..." in righteousness; so that the man of God may be complete, fully equipped for every good work" (vs 16-17).

Here's a charge from God, 2-Timothy 4:1: "**I charge you**, therefore, in the sight of God, even the Lord Jesus Christ, Who is ready to judge *the* living and *the* dead at His appearing and His kingdom: **Preach the Word!**...." (vs 1-2).

Why preach the Word? *Because it came from the Father and that's the highest Authority in the universe!* We're not to preach our own ideas about the Word, we are to "**Preach the Word!**...." That's why I have my cowbell; when I give my opinion I ring it so you know that that's not a teaching dogmatically from the Word of God.

"...Be urgent in season and out of season..." (v 2). If they weren't keeping the Holy Days they wouldn't know what season it was on. That's why on the Holy Days we preach about the meaning of the Holy Days, because that's "...in season..." The first sign of apostasy in the Churches is when you go to a Holy Day and they don't even mention the name of the Holy Day, ***lookout! Apostasy is on its way!***

"...convict, rebuke, encourage, with all patience and doctrine. For there shall come a time when they will not tolerate sound doctrine... [it goes in cycles] ...but according to their own lusts they shall accumulate to themselves *a great number of*

teachers...” (vs 2-3).

- How many teachers are there in the Church of God today?
- How many even women teachers and preachers in the Church of God today?

Contrary to what God said He does not allow women to teach or assume authority over a man. Then everybody says, ‘Oh, that’s wonderful.’ Notice what happens when that happens.

Verse 4: “And they shall turn away their own ears from the Truth; and they shall be turned aside unto myths.”

Let’s see what else about the Word of God. Since it came from the Father, that’s what we need to understand. ***In order for the Mystery of Godliness to work in your life, it has to be of the Father and it has to be of the Son.***

2-Peter 1:16: “For we did not follow cleverly concocted myths *as our authority*...”

It’s an absolute lie to say that the Word of God is a myth to convey a truth! Now that’s like saying turn off the lights so we can see. That’s like saying pouring on the gasoline to put out the fire. You can never teach Truth with a lie, because no lie comes from the Truth. How can you get Truth out of a lie unless you expose it for a lie, and then you know the Truth. But you have to have the Truth of the Word of God to do that.

“...when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of His magnificent glory” (v 16).

Peter James and John saw Jesus transfigured. James was martyred and now you have Peter and John. So, when Peter says ‘we’ that is Peter and John. They’re given the authority for establishing and canonizing the Scripture.

Verse 17: “Because He received glory and honor from God *the* Father when *the* voice came to Him from the Majestic Glory, ‘This is My Son, the Beloved, in Whom I am well pleased.’ And this *is* the voice from heaven that we heard when we were with Him on the Holy mountain.... [here’s their authority]: ...**We also possess the confirmed prophetic Word...** (vs 17-19)—which means the words of Christ. This is the New Testament, and *those words came from God the Father!*

“...to which you do well to pay attention, as to a light shining in a dark place...” (v 19)—because it gives us light, and Christ is the Light of the world. The laws and commandments are a ‘lamp unto our feet.’

“...until the day dawns...[Christ returning] ...and *the* morning star arises in your hearts... [that is telling us that the resurrection and our reward to shine as stars of heaven (Dan. 12:4)] ...knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture originated as anyone’s own *private* interpretation; because prophecy was not brought at any time by human will, but the Holy men of God spoke as they were moved by *the* Holy Spirit” (vs 19-21).

The Spirit is called the Spirit of the Truth! God is the God of Truth. Do you think that God the Father and Jesus Christ—Who is ‘the Way the Truth and the Life’—are capable of inspiring eight men to write what They want them to write? And, yes, the other 32 in the Old Testament. That’s 4 times 8—and there were 40 altogether which is 5 times 8. Don’t you think God, Who created the universe can inspire them?

He uses their minds and their personalities, and He inspires him to write what He wants written, and those words conveyed the meaning. No one today has that ability. When the New Testament was canonized, Paul said to Timothy “Preach the Word!....” Don’t go reinvent it?

That’s why we don’t have an epistle from Timothy, Titus and Polycarp or Politiques. John canonized it and closed it so that we would have the words of the Father and the words of Christ to teach, to preach and to live by, so that ***God can accomplish the mystery of Godliness in us to educate us for eternal life!***

That’s what it’s all about. You’re being taught on how to have the character so that you can be converted from evil to perfection, so you can be converted from wickedness to Holiness. And you need the power of God’s Spirit, the power of His Word to do so, and He’s giving it all.

This is why the Bible is like absolutely no other book, because ***God*** is the Author. Men were the scribes and the mind of God and being eternal is able to compact and to compress into the words that He inspired; so many things so that when you read and study the Bible and then you come back and read and study it a little later, even the same place that you’ve studied before, and, lo an behold, there is something new you never understood. Why? *It’s been there all the time!*

But it’s taken God’s Spirit and His training and the mystery of Godliness working with you so you now can understand it. There is not one single Scripture that I haven’t used in the past. Yet, this is a great, profound and fantastic teaching, that has been there all along. Sometimes we have to ask ourselves:

Why did it take so long? Takes the Holy Spirit of God, which comes in two aspects of it.

1. the mind of Christ, Christ in you
2. the begetting of the Father so that we are the children of God

Ephesians 1:13: “In Whom you also trusted after hearing the Word of the Truth, the Gospel of your salvation; in Whom also, after believing, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise.”

Now on this special DVD: In the Womb, it shows how that when the mother's egg is begotten by the father's seed, the egg seals, and no other sperm can enter. Same way with us. ***When we receive the begetting of God the Father and the Holy Spirit, our minds are sealed!*** And just like that newly conceived life has got to grow, we've got to grow. Only we're not fed on physical things, we're fed on *spiritual* things; the Word of God directly from the Father.

Verse 14: “Which is *the* earnest of our inheritance until *the* redemption of the purchased possession, to *the* praise of His glory. For this cause, I also, after hearing of the faith in the Lord Jesus that is among you, and the love toward all the saints, do not cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers” (vs 14-16). Verse 17 is key; this is what God wants.

- God doesn't want us playing religion.
- God doesn't want us playing obedience to a man.
- God doesn't want us playing politics.
- God doesn't want us to go out of here with a self-driven purpose to increase numbers in the Church
- He wants you to be transformed
- He wants you to be converted
- He wants to teach you His Word

So that you, at the resurrection, will be a live birth!

Verse 17: “That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory... [directly, for the Father Himself loves you] ...may give you *the* spirit of wisdom and revelation in *the* knowledge of Him. And **may the eyes of your mind be enlightened...**” (vs 17-18).

Just like we started out there in 1-Peter 1: *prepare your mind!* that “...the eyes of your mind...”—those are the *spiritual* eyes. That's the *spiritual* discernment. And that's why when you study the Word of God and you go along and all of a sudden, BOOM! it just sort of leaps off the page. That's part of the answer of this prayer, which Paul prayed for all of us that is recorded in the Word of God. Isn't that amazing?

“...in order that you may comprehend what is

the hope of His calling, and what *are* the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the inner working of His mighty power” (vs 18-19).

The mystery of Godliness working in you!

That's amazing! That is something! That's what God is doing. Let's see what John wrote:

1-John 3:1: “Behold! What *glorious* love the Father has given to us, that we should be called the children of God!....” God wants His Family. And it is the Father. It's going to be His Family.

“...For this very reason, the world does not know us...” (v 1)—because *it's the mystery of Godliness*. Tomorrow if you're downtown shopping or at the mall or whatever, no one's going to know anything about what God is doing to you or for you. But God does! Because He's working a work in you!

Verse 2: “Beloved, now we are the children of God, and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be; but we know that when He is manifested, we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him exactly as He is. And everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, even as He is pure” (vs 2-3). This love of God gives you the incentive

- to repent
- to change
- to grow
- to overcome
- to hunger and thirst after the Word of God.
- to use Spirit of God
- to be able to learn from your life experiences and trials
- to be able to learn to have the mind of Christ
- to be able to think with the words of God

They're written in your heart and in your mind!

Here is the final grace of God and mystery of Godliness, Philippians 3:20: “But for us, the commonwealth of *God* exists in *the* heavens...”

Christ is going to bring the reward, He's going to bring the government of God, and He is qualifying us now, through this very process of the mystery of Godliness, to rule and reign with Christ. He's called us into a great calling, to a great mission. God the Father Himself and Jesus Christ are directly involved in our lives.

I tell you what, you have that frame of mind when you pray. You thank God, and you praise Him, and thank Him for every good thing that He has done. Realize God's great mercy, kindness, forgiveness, and His great calling. That he wants to mold you and use

you and create in you a very new spirit son or daughter so that at the resurrection this very thing can happen here.

- Hebrews 12
- 1-John 1
- Daniel 12:4

“...from where also we are waiting for *the* Savior, *the* Lord Jesus Christ” (v 20). Notice what’s going to happen, which is *the final end of the mystery of Godliness!*

FRC:po/bo
Transcribed: 12-25-15

Verse 21: “Who will transform our vile bodies...”

When you are ready to die, it is weak, vile and corruptible. ***But God is going to make it glorious. And God is going to resurrect us!***

“...that they may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the inner working of His own power, *whereby He is able* to subdue all things to Himself” (v 21).

That’s the mystery of Godliness! We come from the point of view of being total sinners and wickedness *to becoming like our Father in heaven.*

Matthew 5:48: **“Therefore, you shall be perfect, even as your Father Who is in heaven is perfect.”**

That is the Mystery of Godliness for each one of us!

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version* by Fred R. Coulter

Scriptural References:

- 1) 1 Timothy 3:16
- 2) 1 Peter 1:10-19
- 3) Colossians 1:20-23, 26-27
- 4) John 6:44-45
- 5) John 7:14-18
- 6) Isaiah 50:4-7
- 7) John 3:31-36
- 8) John 5:19-20, 36-47
- 9) John 6:63
- 10) Hebrews 4:12
- 11) John 12:37-50
- 12) John 14:15
- 13) John 15:5-19
- 14) John 14:16-24, 30-31
- 15) 2 Timothy 3:15-17
- 16) 2 Timothy 4:1-4
- 17) 2 Peter 1:16
- 18) Ephesians 1:13-19
- 19) 1 John 3:1-3
- 20) Philippians 3:20-21
- 21) Matthew 5:48

Scripture referenced, not quoted:

Love and the New Covenant

Fred R. Coulter

One thing we need to understand—the spiritual maturity to which we need to come—***we need not be afraid of anything, anyone, or any doctrine.*** I feel that if you really strive to stay close to Christ, which I’m sure all of us are trying to do, and you ask for the mind of Christ, and study His Word, that you will be able to know the Truth and understand it. You will be able to differentiate Truth from error, because Christ promised we would.

It says, 1-John 4:6: “By this *means* we know the Spirit of the Truth and the spirit of the deception.” Therefore, you can have discussions of any length—and even quite heated at times like it was in Acts 15 if necessary—and still love each other, and still have the Spirit of God, because God doesn’t want us to be just doormats. I mean, how on earth are we going to assist Christ in ruling in the Millennium if we’re just doormats? *Never happen!* One of the things that we need to understand, and understand more deeply in the differentiation between law-keeping to the letter of the law.

Can you have a relationship with people or with one another, based solely on law, and be correct, but have it a nonfunctioning agreement? This is what has happened in so many Churches of God, which stress—and rightly so, but too much so—***keeping the commandments.*** No one is saying we should not keep the commandments, which is really kind of the lesson of Job. Job did everything perfect in the letter, but he was missing one important ingredient: really loving God enough to see his own position in relationship to God. That’s why he had to repent so drastically at the end.

I want to play this song, and it’s from *Fiddler on the Roof*.

Do You Love Me?

Tevye: Golde do love me?

Golde: Do I what?

Tevye: Do you love me?

Golde: Do I love you?

Tevye: Well?

Golde: With our daughters getting married and there’s trouble in the town, you’re upset, you’re worn out, go inside, go lie down. Maybe it’s indigestion.

Tevye: Ah no, Golde I’m asking you a question. Do you love me?

Golde: You’re a fool.

Tevye: I know. But do you love me?

Golde: Do I love you?

Tevye: Well?

Golde: For twenty-five years I’ve washed your clothes, cooked your meals, cleaned your house, given you children, milked your cow. After twenty-five years, why talk about love right now?

Tevye: Golde, the first time I met you was on our wedding day. I was scared.

Golde: I was shy.

Tevye: I was nervous.

Golde: So was I.

Tevye: But my Father and my mother said we’d learn to love each other. And now I’m asking, Golde, Do you love me?

Golde: I’m your wife.

Tevye: I know—But do you love me?

Golde: Do I love him?

Tevye: Well.

Golde: For twenty-five years I’ve lived with him, fought with him, starved with him. Twenty-five years my bed is his. If that’s not love, what is?

Tevye: Then you love me?

Golde: I suppose I do.

Tevye: And I suppose I love you, too.

Tevye and Golde: It doesn’t change a thing, but even so, after twenty-five years, it’s nice to know.

If you listen to the song very carefully, he asked, ‘Do you love me?’ She said, ‘Well I suppose I do.’

Many people in the Church of God are that way toward God. They think that they can love God, and express the love to God, by just keeping the commandments. That’s exactly the reverse of what God wants us to have.

Let’s see something interesting and ask: Why should we love God? And that was really the question that he was asking his wife: Why don’t you love me? *Well I washed your clothes, and I mended your socks, and I’ve cooked your meals.* All legal binding agreements in the law for a marriage—right? *Yes!* ‘But do you love me?’

We need to clarify something else I think is most important and most profound: You’ve heard said that God is putting us through all of this misery we’re going through so we will learn not to sin. That’s true, but I’ll tell you one thing that’s important: We’re not going to go through all eternity beating our spiritual flesh, as it were, saying, ‘I’m not going to sin, I’m not going to sin, I’m not going to sin.’ No, because *the only way you can live for eternity is by love.* You think on that a minute! God

is not going to have us there unless we love Him. And that's just the way it's going to be.

Let's come to Mark 12:28, and this will show you that the love of God is more than just a commandment. It's more than just repeating the words and a ritual. "And one of the scribes who had come up *to Him*, after hearing them reasoning together *and* perceiving that He answered them well, asked Him, 'Which is *the first* commandment of all?'" The Greek there is 'protos'—*primary*, the most basic fundamental commandant of all

Verse 29: "Then Jesus answered him, 'The first of all the commandments *is*, 'Hear, O Israel: *the* Lord our God is one Lord. And you shall love *the* Lord your God...' (vs 29-30). Notice how this is to be. There is not one word of commandment-keeping here. And we will see how that all flows together in 1-John in just a minute.

Verse 30: "And you shall love *the* Lord your God with **all your heart**... [So you won't have to ask: Do you love me?] ...and with **all your soul**... [If your soul is your physical body, then that means you have to take care of it and eat the right things, and so forth.] ...and with **all your mind**... [That's something else, because people truly, deeply in love can think of nothing else! All your mind, and not only that, it's not a part-time job.] ...and with **all your strength**. This *is the* first commandment. And *the* second *is* like this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these" (vs 30-31). And Jesus gave a third commandment: that you 'love one another in the same way that I have loved to you.'

He also said, Matthew 22:40: "On these two commandments hang **all** the Law and the Prophets." They hang *from*. Love is not supported *by*; they come *from*. So, Law is derived *from* love. When we understand that God is love, and there is only one Lawgiver—Who is God—then Law comes *from* love because God is love, which is very important. We'll change our whole perspective in how we obey God, how we look to the things and how we're going to respond to God.

Now notice what he said, Mark 12:32: "Then the scribe said to Him, 'Right, Master.... [that is, *well spoken Master*] ...You have spoken according to Truth that God is one, and there is not another besides Him; and to love Him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love *one's* neighbor as oneself, **is more than all burnt offerings and sacrifices**'" (vs 32-33). In a marriage you can put up with an awful lot of clothes not washed *if* you truly love each other.

Now notice Jesus' answer. And this is what

is missing most of the time, v 34: "And Jesus, seeing that he answered with understanding, said to him, 'You are not far from the Kingdom of God.'" He's getting close to the object of it, and when you put all of this in context with the punctiliousness of the keeping of the commandments in the letter by Judaism, you will understand the profundity of the statement. 'You are not far! You are finally getting close!' Then look at all the other questions that they asked Jesus, and so forth.

Now let's understand something that is so *profound*; let's see the **requirement of love** that God put on Himself for us. This is a very basic fundamental Scripture. Let's hope we can learn some more of the love of God from this, John 3:16: "For God so loved the world..." This means God's profound love for the world, not just us, but *the world*. In God's own time He's going to show that, and prove that. After all it's the same thing, just like in marriage. What on earth good is a marriage if it's just run by law, if there's no love? It will soon break down in hate. And what good is it to serve a God who is not a God of love? I mean, you think about that!

Verse 16: "God so loved the world, that He gave His **only begotten** Son... [And it's interesting in the Greek: 'He gave His only Son *the begotten, the only begotten*'—so it's even more emphatic.] ...so that everyone who believes in Him..." As I mentioned in the series on John that 'in' means *into*. Your faith comes *from within* you, **out of you toward God**, and *into* His very being of faith and love.

"...may not perish, but may have everlasting life. For God sent not His Son into the world that He might judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him" (vs 16-17). That is God's desire. He's given the choice up to us.

Let's understand how this impacts into our lives. Let's see some very important things. This is the whole basis of the New Covenant, 1-John 4:7: "Beloved, we should love one another because love is from God; and everyone who loves has been begotten by God, and knows God. The one who does not love does not know God because **God is love**.... [it's something we can possess, but that is what God is.] ...**In this way**... [in the Greek again, as we will learn, it is 'en toutoo,'—*in this way* or, *this manner* or *this means*] ...the love of God was manifested toward us..." (vs 7-9).

He's talking about the apostles in relationship to showing the love of God toward the disciples and the believers. That this kind of '**God is love**' was manifest in us that we are preaching to you *vs* the first part of this, which are the antichrists and the ones of the devil.

He goes on saying here: "...that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, so that we might live through Him.... [now we come back to the present tense again] ...In this *act*, is **the love**..." (vs 9-10). In other words, that there's no other way of saying the profundity of the love of God—**the love**—in this very act of sending His Son.

When you look at it, the hardest thing for us as people to do—I've had to go through this, and I know you have—is *to show love to someone that you don't want to show love to*. With the world filled with sin the way it is, would you come and die for them? I mean, think of that the next time you watch all the evil on TV, and you'll realize, as I do, we have a long way to go in growing in love—right?

That doesn't mean, for the acts they have done they don't deserve to be punished, because they do. We know God's plan; that God is going to take care of it in the long run. But nevertheless, Christ was sent **before** these people were even created, and His sacrifice applies to them even to this day. You know that in this world we're going to be dealing with a lot of people. It's not going to be a matter of arguing over whether you go to church on Sabbath or Sunday; it's going to be a matter of how they can restore their lives to God. And living in such a hateful world, how's it going to be if there's no real true love? You can have all kinds of mealy-mouth love; you can have all kinds of things where you profess love, but to really have it, that's what we're trying to learn here.

Verse 9: "In this *way* the love of God was manifested toward us: that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, so that we might live through Him. In this *act* is **the love**—**not that we loved God**... [And that's the whole lesson of Job. No one is going to go to God and say, 'God I love You; You've got to give me salvation.' Because in that you're telling God what to do.] ...not that we loved God..." (vs 9-10).

What is the greatest thing that brings us to repentance? *To understand the love of God!* In spite of all the stupidity; in spite of all the sins; in spite of all the difficulties that I have gone through—that you've gone through—whenever you've gone through a trial or difficulty or whatever it is, you realize that **God loves you**. That's the whole basis of the New Covenant, brethren.

"...rather, that He loved us and... [not only that He] ...sent His Son *to be the propitiation*... [Propitiation is one step above expiating. Expiating is removing your sin once. Propitiation is removing your sins on a constant basis—which we need. And that's why we have grace.] ...for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also are **duty-bound** to love one another" (vs 10-11). We've never had it put this

way before—have we? *But that is true!*

Verse 12: "No one has seen God at any time.... [There were a lot of people going around saying that they had seen God.] ...*Yet*, if we love one another, God dwells in us, and His own love is perfected in us." You think about that for a minute, brethren. The very fact that you have the Spirit of God in you, **God is dwelling in you!** Now, that's a tremendous amount of love in itself just to think on that one thing alone. Of all the people in the world—and we surely have got to come in somewhere right at the bottom rung or near to it, or maybe on the bottom side of the bottom rung—**God loved us!** Not because we're great, that we love God and God responded because of our great deed. **No!** And **God dwells in us!**

1-John 3:1 "Behold! What *glorious* love the Father has given to us, that we should be called the children of God! For this very reason, the world does not know us because it did not know Him. Beloved, now we are the children of God, and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be; but we know that when He is manifested, we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him exactly as He is. And everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, even as He is pure" (vs 1-3).

Based on love, let's see how our conduct has to be, v 4: "Everyone who practices sin is also practicing lawlessness, for sin is lawlessness.... ['anomos'—*against law*] And you know that He appeared in order that He might take away our sins; and in Him is no sin. Everyone who dwells in Him **does not practice sin**..." (vs 4-6). That's what it means in the Greek: you're not *practicing* sin. It doesn't mean you don't sin, but you don't *practice* it.

"...anyone who *practices* sin has not seen Him, nor has known Him. Little children, do not allow anyone to deceive you; the one who practices righteousness is righteous, even as He is righteous. The one who practices sin is of the devil because the devil has been sinning from *the* beginning. For this purpose the Son of God appeared that He might destroy the works of the devil. Everyone who **has been begotten by God does not practice sin because His seed of begettal**..." (vs 6-9). The Greek for *seed* is 'sperma'—from the Father. That's how He is dwelling in us; is dwelling within him.

"...does not practicing sin, because His seed *of begettal* is dwelling within him, and he is not able to *practice* sin because he has been begotten by God" (v 9). Brethren, this means that anyone who has the Spirit of God, if they're living in sin, God is going to bring them to a conviction so they can repent, because they can't be practicing sin.

I recently had someone come to my door, and was so happy that I was still living where I was when I was pastoring in Monterey. This individual went to the congregation in Monterey that I was pastoring at that time; and with all the trouble and difficulty in the Church, dropped out, and has been going to a Methodist church every Sunday and *knew* that it wasn't right.

She came and knocked on the door and said, 'I've got to get back on the track.' ***You cannot be practicing living in sin!*** This is a fantastic example, brethren. Think of how many are out there, that have the Spirit of God, that are wandering like lost sheep, and all they want to know is: Do you love me? And all God wants to know is: Do you love Me?

To ask in relationship to what I just said about someone not living in sin, what about weakness? If you have a weakness, which causes you to sin—and I guarantee everybody one thing: you will never be perfect in the flesh, and everyone has a weakness somewhere along the line. Let that be a motivating factor to let you love God more and more, because you don't have the strength within you to overcome the weakness. It is a weakness, and only through the strength and love of God can you ever overcome it.

Verse 10: "By this *standard* are manifest the children of God and the children of the devil. Everyone who does not practice righteousness is not of God, and neither is the one who does not love his brother. For this is the message that you heard from *the beginning*—that we should love one another" (vs 10-11). I'll tell you—from the pulpit and between brethren—there's been too much *lack of love*: bashing, knocking and condemning.

Verse 12: "Not as Cain, *who* was of the wicked *one*, and murdered his own brother. And what was the reason that he murdered him? Because his own works were wicked, but his brother's works were righteous. My brethren, do not be amazed if the world hates you. We know that we have passed from death into life because we love the brethren. ***The one who does not love his brother is dwelling in death.*** Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life dwelling within him. By this *very act* we have known the love of God because He laid down His life for us: and we ourselves are to lay down *our* lives for the brethren" (vs 12-16).

We think that it's easy to love God Whom we haven't seen. But God says you better love your brother that you do see. We'll see how this ties in with the love of God.

1-John 4:14: "And we have seen *for* ourselves... [the apostles; probably at this particular

time John and Andrew and some of the other apostles at Ephesus when this was written] ...and bear witness that the Father sent the Son *as the* Savior of the world. Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwells in him, and he in God. And we have known and have believed the love that God has toward us. God is love, and the one who dwells in love is dwelling in God, and God in him" (vs 14-16). Now you see how this ties in with the command to love God with all your heart, mind, soul and being.

Verse 17: "By this *spiritual indwelling*, the love of God is perfected within us, so that we may have confidence in the day of judgment because even as He is, so also are we in this world. ***There is no fear in the love of God...***" (vs 17-18).

Now, you need to think about that! That doesn't mean that we throw caution to the wind and we run out down the road at 200 mph or anything like that, and say we have no fear. But ***there is no fear in coming to God, if you love Him!*** There is no fear in love. If you have a husband and wife who love each other, opposite of what we've heard on this song here, then there's no fear. He wouldn't have to have the fear: Do you love me? And she wouldn't have to have the fear to answer back and say, Well, I do all these things. This is the kind of fear it's talking about.

"...rather, perfect love casts out fear..." (v 18). It's an ongoing thing. You are ***casting it out.*** This includes:

- your sins
- your weaknesses
- fearing that you won't make it into the Kingdom of God

How many times has that been held over people's head? *God wants you there!* That's why God has called you. You should have no fear that you're not going to make it. *God wants you there!*

"...because ***fear has torment...***" (v 18). I tell you, the times I've had fear, and worry, and frustration—what happens? *Torment! Sleepless nights!* We've all gone through it. Anyone who hasn't, it'll come because it's a test of love. And I'll tell you one thing that is sure, absolutely for sure: as human beings ***we do not have love perfected in us unless we suffer. God did not have love perfected in Him through Christ, until Christ suffered!*** Think on that!

God is always perfect in love, but what God did to redeem us was such a loving act that even God had His love perfected to a greater degree through the suffering of Jesus Christ, because of what Jesus went through and what He bore in His body.

“...And the one who fears has not been made perfect in the love of God. We love Him **because He loved us first**” (vs 18-19). We need to always remember that, and especially for a minister. What did Christ ask Peter?

- Peter, do you love Me? *Yea Lord, I love you!*
- Feed My sheep.

He said the second time:

- Peter do you love Me? *Yes Lord! He was a little irritated that time: You know I love You!*
- Feed My sheep.

And the third time He said:

- Peter, do you love Me? *Yes, Lord, You know I love You!*

And we know the play on words between ‘phileo’ and ‘agape.’

- Feed My lambs!

This needs to be an act that a minister does, not because he wants to prove that he’s a minister, but because he loves God:

Verse 20: “If anyone says, ‘I love God,’ and hates his brother, he is a liar.... [God puts it right back to us—doesn’t He?] ...For if he does not love his brother whom he has seen, how is he able to love God Whom he has not seen? And this *is* the commandment *that* we have from Him: that the one who loves God should also love his brother” (vs 20-21).

Let’s see that in the Sermon on the Mount is exactly where Jesus started—wasn’t it? He said, Matthew 5:23: “For this reason, if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go *your way*; **first** be reconciled... [which is an act of love] ...and then come and offer your gift” (vs 23-24).

1-John 5:1: “Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been begotten by God; and everyone who loves Him Who begat also loves him who has been begotten by Him. By this *standard* we know that we love the children of God: **when we love God...** [present tense] **...and keep His commandments**” (vs 1-2). How much more will you keep the commandments of God if you love Him? How much better will you keep the commandments of God without having to say, ‘Oh I got to keep it better.’ By having the whole attitude of loving God.

Verse 3: “For this is the love of God: that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome.”

Now let’s go to the Gospel of John, chapter 14. When I did the *Passover Ceremony* booklet, it really dawned on me how absolutely profound the New Covenant is, *based on love*. Love is greater

than law. Law will give you the minimum requirement as to what you should do. If a husband says, I want my breakfast at six every morning and he has to tell his wife every day. ‘I want my breakfast at six every morning.’ If she loved him she would have it ready, he would never have to ask. She would know, and wouldn’t that make things better? Or likewise, with the husband. You don’t come along and suspect because certain things aren’t done that she doesn’t love you or care for you. Anyone who says that they’ve been married and never had a fight, well then come and tell me about it, I’d like to know. Even ministers and their wives have fights, everybody, once in a while, I’ll guarantee it. They’re not human if they don’t.

Here’s the whole basis of the New Covenant John 14:15: “**If** you love Me...” Notice there again—**love first**. You’re going to keep the commandments because of love, and that profound love, of loving God with all your heart, mind, soul and being; as you say, every fiber of your being.

“...keep My commandments—namely My commandments” (v 15). This would be an interesting thing, and I don’t have it on computer, nor do I have the Greek on computer, but I hope to one of these days as one of my projects: go through the New Testament and pick out every commandment that Christ gave. Some people like to specialize in going back over the 630 in the Old Testament. That’s fine, nothing wrong with that. But let’s try all the ones in the New Testament and see how we measure up.

Then He says He would send the Holy Spirit (v 16). Let’s come on down to v 21: “The one who has My commandments and is keeping them, that is the one who loves Me; and the one who loves Me shall be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will manifest Myself to him”

Brethren, we are sitting here with the most profound thing, and I pray for greater understanding of this: *God the Father*, the greatest Being in the universe, **loves us**. I mean, think on that! If you feel down, if you feel out, if you feel neglected; if you feel put upon; if you feel unwanted—which all of us have—**remember, the greatest Being in the universe loves you!** And loves you so much that He sent His only begotten Son Jesus Christ, **Who was God**.

John 1:1: “In *the* beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God... [v 14]: ...And the Word became flesh...” so that God could understand the temptation and the sin that we go through. Jesus Christ came in the likeness of sinful flesh, and carried the *law of sin and death* within His very members, so that we could have our sins forgiven. That’s what He bore in His body to

the tree, to the cross. *Not having sin but tempted in every way like we are*, He would show His *profound love for God* and *His profound love for us*. And that is so profound what He did: for God to empty and divest Himself as being God to become a human being, which he was a human being, and having the *law of sin and death* in Him, and to be *tempted in every way as we are*, was an absolutely qualifying for Christ as our Savior—had to be.

Now coming back to here in John 14:22: “Judas (not Iscariot) said to him, ‘Lord, what has happened that You are about to manifest Yourself to us, and not to the world?’”—which is quite a question.

- What makes you different than other people in the world?
- What is it that separates us from people in the world?
 - ✓ not because we’re better
 - ✓ not because we’re richer
 - ✓ not because we’re greater

But there’s been a manifestation to us by the Holy Spirit of God to lead us to Him, and lead us to love Him and keep His commandments. So, He says, ‘Here’s how I’m going to manifest Myself to those that I call and not the world.’

Verse 23: “Jesus answered and said to him, ‘If anyone loves Me, **he will keep My word**... [You can do a great and profound study on that: *In the beginning was the Word*; not only just the commandments, but the words of Christ.] ...and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him. The one who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word that you hear is not Mine, but the Father’s, Who sent Me” (vs 23-24).

That, brethren, is really a deep and profound thing how we need to really love God. I’ve been through every doctoral argument that there is, and some people like to say that they manifest love by throwing out doctrine. You can’t do that, because doctrines are the teachings of God. You can’t love God and throw out doctrine. But I tell you what, even though you get it all right and get it all straightened out, *if* you don’t love God what good is it? Are there people who know of the Sabbath Day and keep it in their own way but don’t have Christ? *Yes!* Are there people who don’t murder and don’t have Christ, that don’t have the love of God? *Yes!* You can go right on down the line any one of the commandments. That’s not to do away with them.

Let’s see how that this love, coupled with grace—and grace is the first manifestation of the love of God—that something very important happens. By faith, by grace and by love, what we

actually do when we love God, we keep the laws of God in a proper and correct way. That’s something to really think and ponder on— isn’t it? We do! And what are we doing with this love, because you can have law without love and *you accomplish nothing eternally*. But if you have eternal love and you keep the commandments of God with faith and grace, then here’s what you do:

Romans 3:31: “Are we, then, abolishing law through faith? **MAY IT NEVER BE!** Rather, we are establishing law.” It’s very interesting that in the Greek it means: *you make the law to stand*. And I think that’s profound. **We make it to stand!**

Let’s see how this is true with loving God and magnifying the law. Isaiah 42:21: “The LORD is well pleased for His righteousness’ sake...” Think how absolutely perfectly Christ kept the laws.

(go to the next track)

Verse 21: “The LORD is well pleased for His righteousness’ sake... [Think how absolutely perfectly that Christ kept the laws. Why did He keep the laws that way?] ...**He will magnify the Law and make it glorious.**” How will He make it glorious? *By basing it on love!*

Let’s go to John 5:19. “Therefore, Jesus answered and said to them, ‘Truly, truly I say to you, the Son has no power to do anything of Himself...’ That’s interesting from the point of view the Greek is ‘ek’—that means *coming out from within Himself*. In other words, He’s not going to initiate anything on His own.

“...but only what He sees the Father do. For whatever He does, these things the Son also does in the same manner. For the Father loves the Son, and shows Him everything that He Himself is doing. And He will show Him greater works than these, so that you may be filled with wonder” (vs 19-20).

Let’s come to the very heart and core of the whole process of the New Testament, the New Covenant, John 15:8: “In this is My Father glorified, that you bear much fruit...”

I want you to pay particular attention to Matthew 7:21: “Not everyone that says to Me ‘Lord, Lord’ shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; but the one who’s doing the will of My Father, Who is in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy through Your name? And *did we* not cast out demons through Your name?’” (vs 21-22).

What kind of fruit? A lot of people look to income and say, ‘Boy! God is blessing us, we must be spiritual.’ But what kind of fruit? That poor little group over there. I know when I talk to different ministers they ask, ‘How many do you have?’ And I

say, 'Everyone that truly believes. How many do you have?' ***Because it's not the number!*** Though sinners march hand-in-hand, they're all going to fall. It's not the number! What kind of fruit is it that we're going to bear?

John 15:8: "...so shall you be My disciples.... [Then He answers the question. Notice, too many times we don't connect the verses so they're one after another—isn't that true? Notice how He says to bear fruit]: ...As the Father has loved Me, I also have loved you; live in My love...." (vs 8-9). IF you continue in 'My love' then you're going to *bear the fruit 'I want.'* What is the fruit?

'...love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness...against such things there is no law' (Gal. 5:22-23) Why? *Because those are a spiritual law to themselves based on love!*

- We make the law to stand!
- We make the Sabbath stand!
- *Because we love God!*
- We make the Holy Days to stand!
- *Because we love God!*

We don't do away with them. We don't have the gall to march up to God and say, 'God I love you so much but I hate Your Law.' That's incongruous—isn't it? ***That's stupid!*** It doesn't work

How it is to be, v 9: "As the Father has loved Me, I also have loved you; **live in My love.** If you keep My commandments, you shall live in My love; just as I have kept My Father's commandments and live in His love.... [*it is a living love*] ...These things I have spoken to you, in order that My joy may dwell in you, and *that* your joy may be full" (vs 9-11).

And everyone asks: Why am I so miserable in this Christian life? I've had my share of misery in it. *So that we will learn to love!* Do you not appreciate love when you have suffered? *Yes!* That's what it's all about. May we quit beating up on each other and learn to love each other so we have the joy.

I'll tell you what, you come down to the last where you think there is no one in the world, when you think that no one understands you: your wife doesn't understand you, your husband doesn't understand you, your kids don't understand you, nobody in the world understands you and you're a dirty rotten slob. The only thing you can do is go to God and bawl and say, 'God, I don't know anything.' That's when you appreciate love. That's what He's talking about here. That's when you can have joy and it will be filled in you through Christ and His Spirit.

Verse 12: "This is My commandment: that you love one another, as I have loved you. No one has greater love than this..." (vs 12-13). It all comes to giving of Christ's life. The only one that God the Father ever begat in the flesh—the one and only. Did He risk all eternity? *Yes! It was only one!* That's how much love God had for us, and He had for Christ. The only way Christ could do it was because He loved God. How? *With all His heart, with all His mind, with all His soul, with all of His being, with all of His Spirit, with all of His strength—everything that was in Him*—and that's the model that we are to follow. That's what He says, 'As I have loved the Father, as the Father has loved Me.'

Verse 13: "No one has greater love than this: that one lay down his life for his friends. **You are My friends.**" When you get that very alone feeling, you still have one good friend, and that is Christ. And He loves you, and He knows all of your faults and mistakes. He knows all of your weaknesses, and difficulties, and temper, and anger. And you go to God blubbing and say, 'Oh God, forgive me.' Whatever your problem may be, *God knows!* He still loves you, and He is still your friend.

Verse 14: "You are My friends, if you do whatever I command you.... [I'm going to do that. Please, someone help me to do that—the commands in the New Testament.] ...if you do whatever I command you.... [We're going to find that not only are those based on the Ten Commandments, but they are based on love and they are so profound.] ...No longer do I call you servants, because the servant does not know what his master is doing. But I have called you friends because I have made known to you all *the* things that I have heard from My Father. **You yourselves did not choose Me...**" (vs 14-16). The reason that is there is that so no man could boast.

Can you imagine how Job would be if he entered into the Kingdom of Heaven after having... You know at one point he got so angry he said, 'After I've done all these things, I just wish that there were a betwixt man [an umpire] between me and God, and he will know my righteousness.' Can you imagine what it would be like if he got into the Kingdom of God on that?

There is law-keeping without love, there is law-keeping without understanding human nature. That's why he had to be brought to repentance. How did God bring Job to repentance? *He came and smashed him on the head and said, 'Job you're a dirty rotten no good sinner.'* **NO!** God said, 'Job:

- Where were you when **I** laid the spans of the heavens?
- Where were you when **I** called forth the deep?

- ***I'll*** declare to you, Job, that ***if*** you can clothe yourself in majesty you can save yourself.

And Job said, 'Ah, ***I've heard of You by the hearing of the ear but now my eye sees You.***' And that, brethren, is God's love to bring him to repentance, and that's why Christ has called us *in love* to that repentance and to this kind of relationship as a friend. When we, as the bride of Christ—I mean, just think of this down further—Christ is never going to have to come to his bride and say, 'Do you love Me?' ***Never!***

Now let's see if we can go on further with this, and if there's anything that we can do to keep this in mind, brethren. There are certain things in the Bible that God has given to just purely inspire us, because inspiration is the vehicle to overcoming sin. That's how you overcome sin: *loving God* and *knowing God loves you* is the vehicle to overcome sin!

John 16:26: "In that day, you shall ask in My name; and I do not tell you that I will beseech the Father for you." Neither will Mary because she's not there. You don't need Mary up there. Mary will hold a prominent position in the Kingdom of God. Believe me, she will be *magnificent! The only woman in all of history to have been selected by God the Father to be impregnated with the seed directly from Him* for His only begotten Son. Some other women have made the claim when they've gotten caught: 'It wasn't so.' She was the only one to have conceived ***from the seed of God the Father*** in her womb. No other woman can make that claim.

And for us, v 27: "For **the Father Himself loves you...**" God's love is on a constant, continuous, ongoing basis for each one of us. But He's given us all free choice, so therefore, He doesn't interfere in our lives because He wants to know, 'Do you love Me?' That's the question now. He's not going to ask it later, He's asking it *now*.

"For the Father Himself loves you, because you have loved Me, and have believed that I came forth from God" (v 27).

Verse 33: "These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you shall have tribulation.... [that's why you go through all the things you do] ...But be courageous! I have overcome the world." And *with His Spirit and His help*, you can, too!

John 17 is the most inspiring part of the whole New Testament, brethren. Let's think upon these things, and let's think upon the song, as we read this: *Do you love me?*

John 17:1: "Jesus spoke these words, and lifted up His eyes to heaven and said, 'Father, the

hour has come; glorify Your own Son, so that Your Son may also glorify You.'" Just think for a minute that the love that God has for us that we are going to have the glory.

Romans 8 is also inspiring. Why are the Epistles of Paul so inspiring? *Because he suffered terribly so that he could write this for us!* When he was called He told Ananias: 'You go to him and you tell him that he is to testify of Me before the nations, before the children of Israel and the things that He would suffer.' Look what he wrote!

Romans 8:14: "For as many as are led by *the* Spirit of God, these are *the* sons of God." If there are any ministers listening, this is how you ought to treat the brethren, *as the sons of God*. They are not chattel, they are not dollars, they are not merchandise, they are not numbers, ***they are the sons of God!***

Verse 15: "Now you have not received a spirit of bondage again unto fear... [Remember when we said *perfect love casts out fear*, that's what John wrote.] ...but you have received *the* Spirit of sonship, whereby we call out, 'Abba, Father.' The Spirit itself bears witness conjointly with our own spirit, **testifying that we are the children of God.** Now, if *we are* children *we are* also heirs—truly, **heirs of God** and **joint heirs with Christ...**" (vs 15-17).

God is the Author of ownership of property, brethren. If we're joint-heirs we're going to inherit the property of the kingdom. I mean, you think on that! Isn't that something? That's why it's so foolish to try—think on that for a minute: how foolish for a Church of God to drown itself in wealth when we're going to inherit the Kingdom. Think of it! And remember what He told the rich man. He said, 'You had your consolation in this life.' Don't go out and take a poverty vow, going to the other extreme. Remember, we're going to inherit the Kingdom of God:

"...joint heirs with Christ—if indeed **we suffer** together with Him... [that's the tribulation we were guaranteed] ...so that we may also be glorified together with Him" (v 17). Do you know how fantastic it's going to be to have a *spirit* body, to have a *spirit* mind, to have the *glory* of God? It will be so good for those of us who have the problem of trying to lose weight. We won't have to worry about getting overweight (just a little aside). ***We're going to be glorified together!***

Verse 18: "For I reckon that the sufferings of the present time *are* not worthy *to be compared* with the glory that shall be revealed in us." That's why we have to be resurrected on Pentecost and meet Him in the air on the Sea of Glass, so that we

will be all glorified together. We will all be there at the marriage of the Lamb, and we will receive the blessing of God in full *spirit fullness*. That, I tell you, is something! That is something!

Verse 19: “For the earnest expectation of the creation itself is awaiting the manifestation of the sons of God; Because the creation was subjected to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of Him who subjected *it* in hope, In order that the creation itself might be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God.” (vs 19-21). How will that be? ***By the love of God!***

When you get down to your very lowest—and I’ve been there, and you been there—you go to Rom. 8:28. ***This is a promise, this is a guarantee!***

Verse 28: “And we know that **all things** work together for good to those who love God... [we come full circle back to *loving God*] ...to those who are called according to *His* purpose. Because those whom He did foreknow, He also predestinated *to be* conformed to the image of His own Son, that He might be *the* firstborn among many brethren” (vs 28-29).

This is what He was praying about, John 17:2: “Since You have given Him authority over all flesh, in order that He may give eternal life to all whom You have given Him.” Think on that! On your calling! God the Father called you! ‘None can come to Me unless the Father draw him.’ I’m still trying to fathom that, brethren, that the Great Creator, the most superior, magnificent Being of the universe, ordained to reach down into my life, into your life, and call us and give us of His Spirit. I mean, think on that! That is profound! Does that not pale into insignificance then, all of the stupid little things we put ourselves through trying to be Christian? *Yes!*

Verse 3: “For this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, Whom You did send. I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work that You gave Me to do. And now, Father, glorify Me with Your own self, with the glory that I had with You before the world existed. I have manifested Your name to the men whom You have given Me out of the world. They were Yours, and You have given them to Me, and they have kept Your Word.” (vs 3-6).

Verse 7: “Now they have known that all things that You have given Me are from You. For I have given them the words that You gave to Me; and they have received *them* and truly have known that I came from You; and they have believed that You did send Me. I am praying for them; I am not praying for the world, but for those whom You have given Me,

for they are Yours. All Mine are Yours, and all Yours *are* Mine; and I have been glorified in them. And I am no longer in the world, but these are in the world, and I am coming to You. Holy Father, keep them in Your name, those whom You have given Me, so that they may be one, even as *We are one*” (vs 7-11). Even Christ looked to this being in the Family of God together.

Verse 12: “When I was with them in the world, I kept them in Your name. I protected those whom You have given Me, and not one of them has perished except the son of perdition, in order that the Scriptures might be fulfilled. But now I am coming to You; and these things I am speaking *while yet* in the world, that they may have My joy fulfilled in them” (vs 12-13). Brethren, how can you have the joy that God fulfilled in you unless you understand what we’re going through right now? *You can’t!* Because there’s nothing to be joyful about.

Verse 14: “I have given them Your words, and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. I do not pray that You would take them out of the world... [as much as we may desire that from time-to-time when things really get bad, but He’s not going to.] ...**but that You would keep them from the evil one**” (vs 14-15). And I just wonder how many times, brethren, God has rescued us in keeping this prayer that Jesus asked, to keep us from the evil one.

Verse 16: “Sanctify them in Your truth; Your Word is the truth. Even as You did send Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, so that they also may be sanctified in *Your* Truth. I do not pray for these only, but also for those who shall believe in Me through their word; **That they all may be one**, even as You, Father, *are* in Me, and I in You...” (vs 16-21).

Brethren, that can’t be accomplished unless there is love. The only way we are going to live through all eternity is ***on love, by loving God***. We’re going to keep all of His commandments, don’t worry. This is what so many people are afraid of. I don’t even think they comprehend that they are afraid of love because they think that if you really preached love that somehow you’re going to lose keeping the commandments God. *No way, never happened! Never happen!* Christ’s whole goal is that we may be one.

“...as You, Father, *are* in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, in order that the world may believe that You did send Me. And I have given them the glory that You gave *to* Me, in order that they may be one, in the same way *that* We are one: I in them, and You in Me, **that they may be perfected into one**...” (vs 21-23). That’s what God

is doing now. Perfection is done how? *‘Perfect love casts out fear!’*

“...and that the world may know that You did send Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me. Father, I desire that those whom You have given Me may also be with Me where I am, so that they may behold My glory, which You have given Me; because You did love Me before *the* foundation of *the* world. Righteous Father, the world has not known You; but I have known You, and these have known that You did send Me. And I have made known Your name to them, and will make *it* known; so that the love with which You have loved Me may be in them, and I in them” (vs. 23-26).

‘Do you love Me?’ is what God wants to know right now. Our answer should be, ***‘with all our heart, with all our mind, with all our soul, with all our being, with all of our strength.’***

All Scripture from *The Holy Bible in its Original Order, A Faithful Version* by Fred. R. Coulter

Scriptural References:

- 1) 1 John 4:6
- 2) Mark 12:28-31
- 3) Matthew 22:40
- 4) Mark 12:32-34
- 5) John 3:16-17
- 6) 1 John 4:7-10, 9-12
- 7) 1 John 3:1-16
- 8) 1 John 4:14-21
- 9) Matthew 5:23-24
- 10) 1 John 5:1-3
- 11) John 14:15, 21
- 12) John 1:1, 14
- 13) John 14:22-24
- 14) Romans 3:31
- 15) Isaiah 42:21
- 16) John 5:19-20
- 17) John 15:8
- 18) Matthew 7:21-22
- 19) John 15:8-16
- 20) John 16:26-27, 33
- 21) John 17:1
- 22) Romans 8:14-21, 28-29
- 23) John 17:2-26

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- Acts 15
- John 14:16
- Galatians 5:22-23

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Booklet: *Passover Ceremony*

The Table of the Lord vs The Table of Demons

Fred R. Coulter

How many years ago was it that we said that when it comes to the end-time there's going to be a one-world religion? Quite a while ago, I don't recall.

Gen. 11—We're seeing this happen today in almost no uncertain terms. I call your attention to the book *The Two Babylon's* by Alexander Hislop. If you have not read it and I'm surprised that there are a lot of people attending a Church of God somewhere for quite a while and they don't even know the book exists.

That was the first book I read, The Two Babylon's. There's the other one Babylon Mystery Religion by Ralph Woodrow, which is a little easier reading. What we are seeing today, and especially if you tie that in with Rev. 18, the old Babylonian system is coming upon us again.

Genesis 11:1^[transcriber's correction]: "And the whole earth was of one language and one speech." Let's also understand that it was mostly of one government, and that was under Nimrod

Verse 2: "And it came to pass, as they traveled from the east, they found a plain in the land of Shinar. And they settled there. And they said to one another, 'Come, let us make bricks and burn them thoroughly.'...." (vs 2-3).

They were glazing the bricks Babylon. To this day it is known for its purple glazed bricks. When you glaze bricks you make them watertight. We went through the series on the Trinity and it was pointed out on the back of the book, there was a little Tower of Babel with water flooding up against it.

They were literally building this tower to make it waterproof, because they knew why God brought the Flood. If God would bring His vengeance again they could all run into the tower and be saved. So, God did a nice little nifty trick: instead of sending a flood, which He promised He wouldn't do... Remember, that was a covenant that he made with Noah and his sons and every living creature that He would never flood the world again though the heart of man was evil from his youth up.

"...And they had brick for stone, and they had asphalt for mortar" (v 3). Now the slime was not what we would look at as a 'Plaster of Paris' this was more like asbestos bitumen that would ooze out of the ground because of the oil under the ground there in Mesopotamia.

Verse 4: "And they said, 'Come, let us build us a city and a tower, *with* its top reaching into the heavens. And **let us establish a name** for ourselves, lest we be scattered upon the face of the whole

earth.'" They knew that there would come a time when all the families got big enough that God was going to give every family, which would then have its inheritance, its land and its boundary (Acts 17), according to the number of the children of Israel, that God would do it

So, the first rebellion was they didn't want to do what God wanted them to do. They didn't want to worship God, and they didn't want to follow God. So, they built this Tower of Babel.

Verse 5: "And the LORD came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men had built. And the LORD said, 'Behold, the people *are* one...' " (vs 5-6).

That's what we're headed for today. That's what 'great' Babylon is all about. 'Babylon the Great is fallen, is fallen.' We are going to see that from this latest Parliament of Religions back in Chicago, that 'religion' is going to be the final thing that is going to help cement all of this together.

What is the biggest thing that is confronting all the civil governments? *Morality!* That's why there's violence and there's crime and there are gangs and wars. But what are you going to do with a nation like Somalia. I mean, think of Somalia for a minute! That's a terrible snake pit to be in over there. We [the U.S.] go in there under the guise of trying to help them out because they're starving and all they want to do is continue killing each other because have hatred and bitterness for each other. I think at the bottom of it is there's probably a lot of oil down underneath the land and that's why the UN is there. It is not because they love the Somalis.

But now we have the United Nations, which is bringing the world together. We have a banking system, which includes almost every nation of the world. You can electronically transfer—by number—money anywhere in the world. And pretty soon they are going to usher in *their* millennium when they take our money away.

There's a book out entitled *Millennium: Peace, Promises, and the Day They Take Our Money Away* by Texe Marrs, which I haven't gotten. There are so many books coming out now, that it's almost unreal to try and keep up with it. But it's there, and the reason it is there, and the reason that there are so many people sounding the warning is because **God is going to make sure that no one has any excuse!** They're going to *know* and they're going to *know* that they know.

So, here's the Tower of Babel and God said: "...and they all have one language. And this *is only*

the beginning of what they will do—now nothing, which they have imagined to do, will be restrained from them. Come, let Us go down and there confuse their language, so that they cannot understand one another's speech.' So, the LORD scattered them abroad from that place upon the face of all the earth. And they quit building the city. Therefore, the name of it is called Babel... [confusion of tongues/languages] ...because the LORD confused the language of all the earth there. And from there the LORD scattered them abroad upon the face of all the earth" (vs 6-9).

With that punishment they did not change *their ways* at all. With the change of the languages *their god's* names changed, because of the change of the language, but *their gods* did not change. As we covered recently on the trinity just draw the circles—Nimrod, Horus and Semiramis is the trinity. The mystery is that no one wants you to know that that's really the trinity, and that behind it is Satan the devil.

There is not a Scripture we are not going to cover that we haven't covered in the past. We need to ask: If you are deceived, do you know you are deceived? *No!* You don't know you're deceived, because if you knew you were deceived, you wouldn't be deceived. If you believe a lie, you will believe a lie the same way you believe the truth. It's *belief*. But if you discover the lie is a lie, you are no longer deceived—are you?

Revelation 12:9 "And the great dragon was cast out, the ancient serpent who is called the Devil and Satan, who is deceiving the whole world..." Brethren, that's what's happening now. That's why all this

- oppression in the society
- the cultural war that's going on
- the crime that's going on

Satan is causing:

- all the crime
- all the confusion
- all the wars

so he can bring the solution of *his* greater Babylon.

Look at every time something happens. Every time there's some kind of violence that takes place, what is brought up? *A government solution!* So that the government can control you!

Civil government alone will fail! All you have to do is look at the Soviet Union. Total abject, abysmal, evil, rotten failure! Now granted, the Russian Orthodox Church is nothing to shout about. Neither are the other churches, but it is a little step better than atheism. So, now we think: Hooray! We've gotten rid of the Soviet Union the world is going to be a wonderful place!

"...Satan, who is deceiving the whole world; he was cast down to the earth, and his angels were cast down with him" (v 9).

Now let's cover a few other things concerning Satan. Let's see what he's doing 'religiously.' I don't think there is one Scripture that we have not understood or covered in the past that we're covering today, but I hope that it will give us a little greater understanding of the depth of it. This is how we understand the Scriptures: when we go back over them hopefully we can glean a little more understanding out of it.

Ephesians 2:1: "Now, you were dead in trespasses and sins, in which you walked in times past according to the course of this world..." We're going to see that if you want to become like the world you have to speak like the world, you have to act like the world, and this presents a lot of problems.

"...according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now working within the children of disobedience" (v 2). Immediately when we think of those people, we think of all of the crooks, the murderers, the dope dealers and drug dealers, homosexuals and whoremongers. Yes, those are dirty rotten people. We never think of a nice little religious 'fold the hands, sanctimonious smile-faced' religious figure—do we? We never think in terms of the goodness of the *religions of men*, but we will see.

Verse 3: "Among whom also we all once had our conduct in the lusts of our flesh, doing the things willed by the flesh and by the mind... [the lust, the desires] ...and were by nature *the children of wrath*, even as the rest of *the world*."

So, Satan is out there and he is delivering, he is bringing this world together. It is called the spirit of this world and it comes from Satan the devil. They are going to agree, because Satan will have permission from God that they will agree.

1-Corinthians 2:12 "Now, we have not received the spirit of the world..." What is the spirit of the world? *It comes from Satan!* How does it manifest itself? *Not only in attitude, but in religion, the whole thing!* Let's look at what we could call in this case the source of what *appears to be good* to people.

Let's see what James says about the wisdom of this world and where it comes from. Remember that we are not to understand God with the wisdom of this world. James talks about the tongue, about how no man is able to tame it, and then he says:

James 3:12: "My brethren, can a fig tree produce olives... [No!] ...or a vine *produce* figs? In the same way, no fountain *can* produce salt water

and fresh *water*.” This is exactly what happens when you begin mixing the religions of this world and the Truth of God. We’ll see it clearly.

Verse 13: “Who *is* wise and understanding among you? Let him demonstrate his works through good conduct in *the* meekness of wisdom. But if you have bitter envy and selfish ambition in your heart, do not boast and lie against the Truth. This wisdom does not come down from above, but is earthly, sensual *and* demonic” (vs 13-15).

Now this whole great religious Parliament of the World’s Religions that took place in Chicago was designed to bring peace, to get rid of the envy. Well, they couldn’t get rid of the envy altogether. What is the missing ingredient that is going to make them come together? And remember we said—when it was totally unpopular to say—that all the religions of the world, including the Muslims, will agree to this one-world agenda and the one-world religion.

Let’s answer the question this way: For the governments of this world, what is going to be necessary to make it all work as a world government? *The beast!* Who is his partner? *The false prophet!* So, in order to make these religions come together to make it look like peace they’re going to have to have a one-world religious leader. Now we’ve always said that that’s probably going to be the pope. I still stand by that; probably will be. Maybe not this one.

This is why, with the current adoption of the strangest Babylonian Trinitarian doctrine that I have ever heard of, being accepted by one of the leading Churches of God, that they *are partaking of the table of the doctrines of demons!* Might as well be right up front and label it for what it is, because that’s what it is! Here is what this kind of thing produces, *the wisdom that’s from below*:

Romans 1:19: “Because that which may be known of God is manifest among them...” God showed enough of Himself to them by the creation which he made, to know that God *was* God. But what did they do? *They listen to the god of this world*, who then formed all of these religions!

“...for God has manifested *it* to them; for the invisible things of Him are perceived from *the* creation of *the* world, being understood by the things that were made—both His eternal power and Godhead—so that they are without excuse; because when they knew God...” (vs 19-21)—and they did! There was a time they knew God. You go back to Gen. 11. Did they not know God? *Absolutely!* I mean, just a few generations after the Flood.

...they glorified *Him* not as God, neither were thankful; but they became vain in their own reasonings, and their foolish hearts were darkened.

While professing themselves to be *the* wise ones, they became fools” (vs 21-22).

You read all of the rest of it. Look at the society that it breeds: nothing but death, destruction and misery; homosexuality, idolatry and all the things that are listed here that it’s almost beyond description. Now man has to show his good side, it has to come.

Let me read you, this is straight from Chicago so this is straight from Chicago’s mouth. Right here, nice big picture of Buddha. Every Buddha temple they got a nice little Buddha there; yes, indeed.

(*Chicago Tribune*, Aug. 29, 1993): From Angelicans to Zoroastrians the world’s religions come to Chicago.

100 years ago they had the first Parliament of the World’s Religions...

This is called in another article, ‘the global church.’ And if you take away the first ‘L’ you have ‘go baal.’ The ‘go-baal’ church of the world. They show a picture here of the Jains. Have you ever hear of the Jains religion? *That’s from India!*

Common Cause: 100 years after the first meeting in Chicago...

Oh by the way, guess which foundations helped finance this: The Rockefeller Foundation and the Ford Foundation.

...the world’s religions reconvene here to promote unity amidst diversity...

A slight man dressed in Oriental robes with a white turban wrapped around his head, Virchand Gandhi arrived in Chicago as a unique “chosen one.” He came to attend the 1893 World’s Parliament of Religions, a trip that came about only after considerable debate among leaders of his faith, Jainism, a religion in India that shares roots with Hinduism. Here was their dilemma: They had been invited to Chicago to what they knew would be a breakthrough event the beginning of religious pluralism in the Western Hemisphere....

Isn’t that interesting. When you go back and you read *The Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion* by Victor Marsden, about 100 years ago.

...It would be the first chance for most Eastern religions to introduce themselves into the United States, and it would be the first public forum anywhere for leaders of different faiths from around the world. However the Orthodox Jain monks could not come to Chicago because their religion forbade them to travel outside India.

Gandhi, a young lawyer and a practicing Jain in India became the solution. Taking a year off from his profession he underwent thorough training with Jain monks in Bombay to qualify him as Damien's intellectual and theological representative to the parliament, and was shipped off to the United States. Today Virchand Gandhi is commemorated as the first Jain to land in America.

So, his story is an epitome of the greatest contrast between 1893 World's Parliament of Religions that was attended by some 400 delegates in the 1993 Parliament of World's Religions that began yesterday, and is expected to draw some 3500 participants to Chicago....

They ended up with 6000!

"This will be the greatest gathering of religious leaders ever in terms of diversity, breadth and depth of representation," said Daniel Gomez-Ibanez, executive director of the Parliament's organizing council, shortly before the start of the meetings.

The religious groups who registered for this week's gathering cover a wide spectrum—from Baha'i, Buddhist, Christian, Confucian, Hindu and Jain to Jewish, Muslim, Native American and Neo-Pagan, along with Shintos, Sikhs, Taoists and Theosophists, Rastafarians, Unitarians and Zoroastrians....

As well as witches and Animus, all together!

Now want to remember how many years back it was that the pope had a prayer meeting with all the religious leaders of the world. Where was that held? *That was held at Assisi's* where St. Francis of Assisi was one of the first ones to try and bring the world's religions together at that time. So here's another step!

Besides the 38 tribes of Native Americans from the U.S., indigenous religious groups in attendance include tribal religions from Africa, Mayans from Guatemala and Maoris from New Zealand.

Like the extraordinary 1893 gathering whose centennial it, this year's event includes prominent religious figures from around the world, among them the Dalai Lama and Mother Teresa.

who unfortunately couldn't come because she was sick in the hospital

But unlike many of those who arrived at the Parliament a century ago as strangers in a strange land, a good number of this year's participants would feel right at home

in the significant communities of their faiths that have been established in and around Chicago. In September 1893, as he walked among Roman Catholic, Confucian and Taoist priests, Buddhist monks, Protestant ministers and Hindu swamis, all variously garbed in scarlet vestments, vermilion cloaks, ochre robes and dark suits, Gandhi was the lone Jain in America.

For this parliament, several delegates are representing Jainism, and they should feel right at home in the \$3 million Jain Center and Temple that was dedicated just this summer in west suburban Bartlett to serve a Jain community in the Chicago area that's estimated at 2,500. At the center are records that include an account of Virchand Gandhi's historic visit to Chicago a century ago.

With some 70,000 adherents in the U.S., Jainism typifies the changes and growth, particularly among non-Christian religions, that have taken place in this country since the last world religion parliament in Chicago.

What is the best way to Babylonianize the Christian religion? and a Christian nation? *You encourage immigration, and then you stand on the freedom of religion!* That's what's happened! It typifies the change in growth particularly among non-Christian religions that are taking place in this country since the last World-Religion Parliament in Chicago.

Buddhist claim 4 million followers in the U.S., with an estimated 155,000 of them in the Chicago area, and Hindus say they have 1 million U.S. adherents, including 100,000 in the Chicago area.

Most of Fremont, California, belongs to the Hindus.

Both traditions trace their origins in Chicago to 1893, and specifically to two small groups who came to the Parliament that year—the Buddhist scholars headed by Venerable Anagarika Dharmmapala of Ceylon and Venerable Shogen Shaku of Japan, and the Hindu delegation led by Swami Vivekananda.

Remember, I read from the book about the Vivekananda who shocked America by saying that Hinduism was no different than Christianity. Look at all of the good things the Hindus have.

Today the 14 Hindu leaders from around the world expected to attend this year's parliament will find more than a dozen Hindu places of worship across the Chicago area. And the Dalai Lama, revered by followers as the living Buddha and also scheduled to attend, will find 28 distinct

Buddhist organizations in Chicago-area Buddhist communities that range from a few hundred Sri Lankans and Tibetans to more than 20,000 Japanese and Vietnamese, 30,000 Koreans, 30,000 Thais and some 1,500 American converts.

Muslims, represented only by one delegate, a convert from Anglicanism, in 1893, trace their presence in Chicago to 1889. In attending this year's parliament, Abdullah Omar Naseef, secretary general of the World Muslim League, will find 250,000 Muslims who worship at mosques throughout the city and suburbs.

These religions have quietly established themselves alongside the old American mainstays. Thus, while Roman Catholics quadrupled their already large 1893 U.S. population to 55 million and quintupled their Chicago Archdiocese numbers to 2.3 million, Zoroastrians have also grown, to an estimated 10,000 in the U.S. Of these some 500 are in the Chicago area, served by a Zoroastrian center in Hinsdale

They just put a Zoroastrian center in San Jose.

Two groups—the Anglicans and Native Americans—that were already well established in the U.S. but were markedly absent from the event a century ago are participating in this year's Parliament.

Then it shows the different functions that they have. Can you imagine Hindus, Buddhists, Muslims, Catholics, Protestants, Animists all praying together? Common Cause!

Let me read from some of these others

Spiritual Leaders Gather to Counter Religious Violence : Conference: Parliament of World's Religions may lay groundwork for a U.N.-type organization.
(Los Angeles Times) August 28, 1993, Davis Briggs, AP writer

In Bosnia, chasms of blood flow amid the rivalries that separate Orthodox Christians and Muslims.

Now they're getting down to it. What do they want everyone to do? What is the whole psychology behind all of this? Remember Satan's tactics:

- create confusion
- create violence
- then
- create the solution

What is the solution? *All religions put down your antagonisms toward each other!* 'We all worship the same God.'

Look to the East and see the banners of Islam and Judaism waved by the bitterest opponents of peace in biblical lands, and Hindus and Sikhs at each other's throats in India. Look to the West, and Protestants and Catholics kill in Northern Ireland.

I got a phone call from some people in Northern Ireland, and sent them out a care package yesterday.

This was not the new world order religious leaders envisioned a century ago at the first World's Parliament of Religion in Chicago, nor in the decades of soul-searching after the Holocaust.

But even as the cycle of religion and violence persists, leaders of the world's faiths are gathering again in Chicago to pursue their common dream—peace on Earth.

Peace on earth! Now were getting the religionist involved in it. You wait and see, they're going to find common ground in Christmas. Even the Jews with their Hanukkah have Christmasized that event.

1-Thessalonians 5:1 Now then, concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, there is no need that I write to you; for you yourselves understand perfectly that the Day of *the* Lord will come exactly as a thief *comes* by night" (vs 1-2).

They didn't understand them like we supposedly understand, but I have to ask: How much have we really understood it? Very little, but hopefully some of these things will help us understand it even more.

Verse 3: For when they say, '**Peace and security,**' then sudden destruction will come upon them, as travail *comes* upon a woman who is with child; and they shall by no means escape."

Here's their vision peace on earth:

"It's so obvious that it hurts--that so many of the things that are wrong that are going on in the world are actually due to religious conflicts," said Rabbi Herbert Schaalan of the board of trustees of the 1993 Parliament of the World's Religions.

"I would like to think that in the face of the kind of problems our world encounters the religious leaders may have been induced both by their self understanding and their beliefs in God it is up to them to finally step forward.

The final control of people is through religion! That's what they're going to do!

During the nine-day parliament beginning today, prominent Muslims, Buddhists, Jews, Protestants, Roman Catholics,

Hindus, Jains, Zoroastrians and others hope to reach agreement on a universal declaration of human values, and perhaps even lay the groundwork for an organization akin to a United Nations of Religions.

What is the missing ingredient? *The false prophet to lead it!* They had to fight back there and it couldn't last the whole nine days.

"It's much more than a celebration. People are hoping it will become an icon in the midst of chaos and discord," said Daniel Gomez-Ibanez, a Hindu and executive director of the parliament.

What is an icon? *That is Greek for an idol!* They're going to make an idol! They're going to worship *their* religion! ***People love to play religion but they don't want to worship God!*** That's what they're doing here.

"They just don't want to talk they want to act."

The birth of the interfaith movement may be traced to the 1893 Parliament, held during the Columbian Exposition in Chicago celebrating the 400th anniversary of Christopher Columbus' expedition to the Americas. Buddhists, Hindus and Muslims met with Catholic cardinals and Protestant leaders for the first time in a public forum.

But after a replica of the Liberty Bell tolled 10 times--once for each of the major religions represented--to open the parliament, historians say, it was clear that the event was largely a Protestant Christian undertaking.

In 1893, but today it's different.

This time, the organizing committee is representative of the world's faiths, and hundreds of followers from each of the world's major religions are expected to be among the 5,000 to 6,000 participants.

"I'm very much in favor of a United Nations of Religions," said Asad Husain, president of the American Islamic College in Chicago and a trustee of the parliament. "We are going to give (the) lead . . . for a religious renaissance that will give real hope and happiness to the people of the world."

The Dalai Lama is considered the living incarnation of Buddha. There are some other ones that tell about the fight between Louis Farrakhan and the rabbis and they stormed out in a huff. What's going to happen when the false prophet comes on the scene and performs miracles. That's going to seal it!

Let's see about this new icon of world religions. I was floored when I read that. They're making an idol out of *their* religion!

1-Corinthians 12:2: "You know that you were Gentiles, *and* were carried away with dumb idols, as you yourselves were led..."

Just like this picture of this cross-legged Buddha. One of the things I didn't like about the Boy Scouts is that they tried to make you sit like this Buddha sits. My hips and legs won't let me sit that way with one foot on top of the other with the knees touching the ground. I spring back together in pain.

Verse 3: "Therefore, I am letting you know that no one speaking by *the* Spirit of God calls Jesus accursed..." That's what these religions are doing. And every Protestant every Catholic every so-called Christian that attended that with the witches and with the satanist and with all the religions of the world are coming under the aegis of Satan the devil. They had one of the so-called Christian evangelist—Jim Colson—who was with the Richard Nixon's dirty tricks, and he as a prison ministry. They gave him \$1 million to come and speak and to endorse this ecumenism of all religions. It started out ecumenism of Catholics and Protestants. Now it's *all* religions, so they are calling Jesus accursed.

"...and no one can say *that* Jesus *is* Lord, except by *the* Holy Spirit" (v 3). Do you think the Dalai Lama's going to get up there and say, 'I've repented; we have blessed Jesus and not Buddha'? *No way!*

There are some other verses/Scriptures we can bring in and point out, which we will do.

1-Corinthians 10:20: But that which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons, and not to God; and I do not wish you to have fellowship with demons.... [and not to God] ...**You cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of demons. You cannot partake of the table of the Lord, and the table of demons.** Now do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? Are we stronger than He?" (vs 20-22).

Should we go to the philosophers of this world and *their* religions and find out the nature of God? Think on that for a minute! The Apostle Paul didn't!

What the Apostle Paul do? Remember that *all religions are philosophy!* All religions of this world are one form or another of philosophy! So, the Apostle Paul came to Mars Hill:

Acts 17:16: "But while Paul was waiting for them in Athens, he saw *that* the city *was* wholly... [completely] ...given to idolatry, *and* his spirit was sorely moved within him. Because of this, he reasoned earnestly in the synagogue with the Jews and those who worshiped *there*, and daily in the

marketplace with those who met with *him*. Then some philosophers of the Epicureans and the Stoics encountered him....” (vs 16-18).

This is significant because he talks of the Stoic philosophy in Col. 2.

(go to the next track)

Aristotle and Socrates, Greek philosophers who studied in Babylon. So, Paul did go against the trinity and philosophy.

“...And some of *them* said, ‘What will this babbler have to say?’ And some *said*, ‘He seems to be a preacher of foreign gods,’ because he was preaching to them the Gospel of Jesus and the resurrection. And they took him and brought *him* to Mars Hill, saying, ‘May we know what this new teaching *is* that is spoken by you? For you are bringing certain strange things to our ears. So then, we desire to know what these things mean.’ (Now, all *the* Athenians and the strangers sojourning *among them* spent their leisure in nothing other than to tell and to hear something new.)” (vs 18-21). In other words, in philosophy.

Verse 22: “Then Paul stood in *the* center of Mars Hill *and* said, ‘Men, Athenians, I perceive *that* in all things you are very reverent to **deities**’—demons. You are too pious in your demonic ‘religion.’

Verse 23: “‘For *as* I was passing through and observing the objects of your veneration, I also found an altar on which was inscribed, “To an unknown God.”....’” They wanted to cover all their bases. They didn’t know God. They had their trinity, and their structure of ‘theos’ and ‘logos’ and the word ‘soul.’

In Greek philosophy, ‘logos’ represents the physical creation, the physical things that are here. So, when John said, ‘In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God,’ that’s Logos, and ‘Logos was God!’ That turned the whole world upside down, because they thought ‘logos’ was just the physical creation that was here.

Paul is saying, ‘I’m going to tell you about this unknown God’:

“...So then, He Whom you worship in ignorance *is* the One *that* I proclaim to you. He *is* the God Who made the world and all things that *are* in it. Being *the* Lord of heaven and earth, He does not dwell in temples made by hands; nor is He served by the hands of men, as *though* He needs anything... [a very powerful message] *..for* He gives to all life and breath and all things. And He made of one blood all the nations of men to dwell upon all the face of the earth, having determined beforehand *their* appointed times and the boundaries of their dwelling; in order that they might seek the Lord, if

perhaps they might feel after Him and might find Him; though truly, He is not far from each one of us, for in Him we live and move and have our being; as some of the poets among you also have said, “For we are His offspring”” (vs 23-28).

Did not God reveal to them? Did we not read that in Rom. 1? *Yes!* Brethren, what we’re reading here is really profound and powerful stuff for today! Where is Corinth? *Corinth is just down the road from Athens!*

Verse 29: “‘Therefore, since we are the offspring of God...’” How can we be the offspring of God if God is not a family.

“...we should not think that the Godhead *is* like that which *is made* of gold, or silver, or stone—a graven thing of art *devised by the* imagination of man; for *although* God has indeed overlooked the times of this ignorance, He now commands all men everywhere to repent” (vs 29-30).

I didn’t hear the call of repentance at this Parliament of World’s Religions. I didn’t read it!

Verse 31: “‘Because He has set a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness by a Man Whom He has appointed, having given proof to all *by* raising Him from *the* dead.’” That is a profound statement, of Jesus being raised from the dead.

I want to tell you that after seeing what’s happening with the acceptance of the trinity doctrine, there’s a whole lot more in Col. 2 that we have ever understood before.

Colossians 2:2: “That their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, unto *the* knowledge of the mystery of God, and of *the* Father, and of Christ; **in Whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge**” (vs 2-3).

- What is missing there if you believe in the trinity? *The Holy Spirit!*
- Would it not be there if there were one? *Have to be!*

If you say, “...in Whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge” and it’s in God the Father and Jesus Christ, that excludes the Holy Spirit as a person.

Verse 3: “Now, this I say so that no one may deceive you by persuasive speech.” That’s what’s happening! Enticing words!

When do you bring about a false doctrine? *When you have so confused people’s minds and have beaten them down, that they will accept it without a whimper!*

That’s what happened in the Worldwide

Church of God. They said that God will correct it.' *No, God did not correct it!* He has given **us** the tools to correct it. Paul didn't say that God is going to correct any deception that anyone is going to preach. He said, v 3: "Now, this I say so that no one may deceive you by persuasive speech"—enticing words\, which means deceiving words.

Who is responsible to correct the deception if it comes? *You are when you hear it!*

Verse 5: "For though I am indeed absent in the flesh, yet, I am with you in spirit, rejoicing and beholding your order, and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ. Therefore, as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, be walking in Him; being rooted and built up in Him... [established in the faith] ...and being confirmed in the faith, exactly as you were taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving. **Be on guard so that no one takes you captive through philosophy and vain deceit, according to the traditions of men, according to the elements of the world,** and not according to Christ" (vs 5-8).

What does the philosophy of the world lead to? *Demon worship!* That's why Paul said to those philosophers, 'I perceive that you are *overly religious* with all of these demons.' That's what 'superstitious' (KJV) means.

I want to emphasize something in 1-Cor. 1 that is very profound. I hope to bring it out with some meaning and understanding. Paul said:

- ***you cannot be partakers of the table of demons and the table of the Lord***

You cannot do it!

- ***you cannot be partakers of the philosophy of this world and the Truth of God***
- ***you cannot intermingle the wisdom 'sofia'—from which we get philosophy—of this world to understand God***

I must be revealed by His Spirit, and that's why God has called you!

1-Corinthians 1:17: "For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the Gospel—**not with the wisdom of words**... [the 'sofia'] ...lest the cross of Christ be made void. For to those who are perishing, the preaching of the cross..." (vs 17-18)—the whole message of it, not as what was blasphemously said, 'remember the cross.'

"...is foolishness; but to us who are being saved, it is the power of God. For it is written, '**I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and I will nullify the understanding of those who understand.**'" (vs 18-19).

Here's the wisdom of the wise, the wisdom of the ages, the wisdom of the 'religions' of this world. I have it right here in my hands with a nice golden statue of Buddha!

It is my understanding that Dr. Herman Hoeh has studied Buddhism; he studied it as he was helping build the Los Angeles Buddha Temple, on his hands and knees laying mosaics on the floor of the temple. Then when it was dedicated, they gave him the golden yellow robes of a Buddhist monk, because he was considered one of them. He went into the Buddhist temple and offered incense and fire for the dedication of the temple in L.A.

Brethren, I want you to remember that *a little leaven leavens the whole lump*. What was the little bit of leaven that started all of this apostasy within Worldwide? *When does the Sabbath begin!* At sunset? *or* dark? The answer *was* that it begins at dark.

- then came the leaven of the 15th Passover
- then the leaven that we're not made in the image of God
- that God doesn't have hands, a face or a body
- then came the leaven of the trinity

They had left the Scriptures!

- ***You cannot eat at the table of demons and the table of the Lord!***

Any minister of God in a Buddhist temple ought to denounce it as gross idolatry and not run in there and offer incense and fire. The world's religions are even affecting the Churches of God!

It's going to come, brethren, and it's going to be profound. If you do not exercise the Spirit of God, and stay close to God the Father and Jesus Christ... What did Jesus say? *There shall arise false Christs and false prophets that if it were possible they would deceive the very elect!* The very elect are those who have to be responsible for holding to the Truth.

To be called of God—the greatest Being in the whole universe—*He's your Father*; it's a tremendous thing. To be a minister of God is a calling of service and help. It is not one of power and manipulation and egotism, because God is going to catch everyone of those ministers in *their own traps* unless they repent! It's going to happen!

No one is going to mock God! No one is going to take the name of God and bring in the swill of the Babylonian mysteries within the Church of God and say, 'We have *new* understanding.' It's not new! It's the same old Satan, the same old deception!

2-Thessalonians 2:1: "Now, we beseech you, brethren, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him." Paul is invoking the return of Christ and the resurrection as the basis for what he's going to say.

Verse 2: “That you not be quickly shaken in mind, nor be troubled—neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by epistle, as if from us, *saying* that the day of Christ is present. **Do not let anyone deceive you by any means** because *that day will not come unless the apostasy shall come first...*” (vs 2-3)—the apostasy! Here is it right here in all the world’s ‘religions.’

I never thought that I would say that it happened to the WCG, but it did; unfortunately, from *within*!

“...and the man of sin shall be revealed—the son of perdition, the one who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God, or that is an object of worship...” (vs 3-4). If you believe in a trinity, you believe in a false God. I don’t care what version of the trinity. It is an idol!

“...so that he comes into the temple of God and sits down as God, proclaiming that he himself is God” (v 4). That’s what *the beast power* is going to do! The *false prophet* is going to be right there saying, ‘Blessed, amen, this is our leader’ and he’s going to bring in line all the ‘religions’ of the world.

➤ ***We cannot eat of the table of the Lord and the table of demons!***

Verse 7: “For the mystery of lawlessness is already working...” In Paul’s time, and now we’re seeing the fruition of it right here in the golden idol of Buddha.

Verse 8: “And then the lawless one will be revealed (whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth, and will destroy with the brightness of His coming).” There are only two people that that’s going to happen to: *the beast and the false prophet*.

Verse 9: “*Even* the one whose coming is according to *the* inner working of Satan, with all power and signs and lying wonders.” It’s going to be awesome! This is just getting started! Think of the enthusiasm that would have swept this Parliament of Religions had there been a miracle or two going on. It would have been unreal!

Verse 10: “And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in those who are perishing because they did not receive the love of the Truth, so that they might be saved.”

Now we need to get down to the real nitty-gritty, which is this:

- Can you say you love the Truth ***if*** you sit in a congregation that is supposed to be a congregation of God and the preach to you the doctrines of demons?
- Can you say that you love the Truth ***when***

you say, ‘I trust the leadership’?

- Can you say that you love the Truth ***when*** you say, ‘My minister wouldn’t deceive me’?
- Can you say that you love the Truth ***when*** you believe a lie?
- Can you say that you love the Truth ***if*** you don’t really love God?

Each one of us is going to answer those questions! Because if we do not “...receive the love of the Truth, so that they might be saved. And for this cause God will send upon them a powerful deception that will cause them to believe *the lie*” (vs 10-11).

I tell you one thing, those doctrines—especially the doctrine of the trinity—is a LIE! Now what’s going to happen? A lot of brethren are at the crossroads! There are a lot of people sitting there wondering what to do! You’d better take some action, because God is going to do this:

Verse 11: “And for this cause God will send upon them a powerful deception that will cause them to believe *the lie*, so that all may be judged who did not believe the Truth, but who took pleasure in unrighteousness” (vs 11-12).

If you accept the deception of false doctrine within the things that you believe, ***you are having pleasure in unrighteousness!***

Verse 13: “Now, we are duty-bound to give thanks to God always concerning you, brethren, who are beloved by *the* Lord, because God from the beginning has **called you unto salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the Truth** unto which He called you by our Gospel to *the* obtaining of *the* glory of our Lord Jesus Christ” (vs 13-14).

Brethren, those Scriptures just ring right through us with just piercing, trembling Truth! It really is. Let’s see how all of this is going to come about. We are getting closer and closer to everything that is prophesied in Rev. 13. I imagine that a hundred years ago people read this about the *mark of the beast* and said, ‘I wonder what the *mark of the beast* is?’ The Church of God Seventh-Day 200 years ago couldn’t figure it out, so they said it had to be Sunday-worship and holiday-keeping. Well, that wasn’t it, because you can still buy and sell on Monday-Friday even though you keep the Sabbath.

This is coming, and this is grassroots, the people of the world are going to love it:

Revelation 13:1: “And I stood on the sand of the sea; and I saw a beast rising up out of the sea...” [representing peoples, nations, tongues/languages] ...having seven heads and ten horns...” The same

old system just reconfigured. New Age baloney is 'Old Age' baloney! One-world order is old Tower of Babel order!

"...and on his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads *the* name of blasphemy" (v 1). Why should we believe in any of their doctrines.

➤ ***You cannot eat of the table of the Lord and the table of demons!***

Verse 2: "And the beast that I saw was like a leopard, and his feet like *the feet* of a bear, and his mouth like *the* mouth of a lion; and the dragon gave him his power, and his throne and great authority." Coming from Satan with *all deceivableness!*

Verse 3: "And I saw one of his heads as *if it were* slain to death, but his deadly wound was healed; and **the whole earth was amazed and followed the beast.**"

If you want to look like the world, if you want to sound like the world, you must join the world. What is going to happen to the world? *You're all going to be deceived!*

1-John 4:5: "They are of the world; because of this, they speak of the world, and **the world listens to them.**" When the world says that they're happy to see all these doctrinal changes and the acceptance of the trinity, they are moving away from the Truth.

Now, the statement is, 'When people gather together for festive occasions, though they be not on the Holy Days, those are perfectly all right.' Meaning: Christmas, Easter, Halloween and all of that. If you want to be loved by the world, you've got to:

- speak as the world
- act as the world
- sound like the world

The world will hear you and say you are wonderful. Did they say that of Jesus? *No!* He said, 'I'm not of the world...'

Verse 6: "We are of God; the one who knows God listens to us; the one who is not of God does not listen to us. **By this means we know the Spirit of the Truth and the spirit of the deception.**"

There is a spirit of error/deception, and that's what this whole spirit of false doctrine is all about. It's manipulated by Satan the devil, who is going to control this whole world, and the pressure is coming to bear. That's why we all feel oppressed everywhere, and it's going to get even worse.

- At what point do you turn from evil?
- At what point do you turn from the evil of this world and the things going on?

The world is so evil you're not going to change it, and I'm not going to change it. So, we need to prepare for the coming of Christ.

from an unknown source:

Fetal research bill just the latest horror.

I want to tell you the mind of Satan the devil that's inspiring this.

I've seen a discouraging pattern emerging in this country, because we've given up on God, we've thrown away His laws, we've cast everything behind us as a people.

If you are for human life; if you are against the premature ending of human life, be it in the womb or a serious ill patient, then you are branded as 'religious nut' and a member of a 'radical religious right.'

The latest horror has been the fetal tissue research bill, which just passed.

All of our wonderful senators and representatives. Brethren, you don't have a say-so on a vote in this anywhere! This whole system is run and controlled by an evil bureaucracy that write the laws and tell the lawmakers to pass it. They didn't know what was in this bill; some of them did.

However, there are a few things that people are not aware of:

First, there is not one documented case of any disease or illness being cured by fetal tissue research. Also, most people are not aware of just how this procedure is done.

Let me be one to bring some light to the subject. Literally, the child is pulled apart without any pain medication while still alive! Fetal tissue is much more valuable if it comes from a live baby, so every effort is made to ensure life until it's convenient to rip it apart.

That's why they want the third trimester abortion.

Dr. ----: "The skull is plowed in two to extract brain tissue; again, while the child is still alive.

All of those with Parkinson's disease say, 'We need this therapy. You better figure out how you got the disease. If you have it, may God be merciful to you and cure you. If not, don't go to this! I mean, what is this flesh anyway in the long run? Think of that! While the baby is still alive and has its brains pulled out!

If any other tissue is needed, or 'ordered' then it is gotten then, as well. It could be the liver, heart or whatever. The important thing is that it's a living human being.

When I first learned how this was done, I cried for the millions that it certainly spells

death for. It is my firm belief that God has removed His hand of protection from this nation.

AMEN! I'll say to that!

How can we expect God's blessing on this country when we murder our own babies still in the mother's womb?

We cannot! That's where this whole system leads! That's what Satan is all about!

Then we have the other beast, the *false prophet*! Revelation 13:11: "And I saw another beast rising out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, but spoke like a dragon." The lamb is a symbol of peace, a symbol of Christ. This beast is the false messiah.

Verse 12: "And he exercises all the authority of the first beast before him; and he causes the earth and those who dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. And he performs great wonders, so that he even causes fire to come down to the earth from heaven in the sight of men" (vs 12-13).

That's when all the 'religions' will come together and say, 'Hooray! We're finally going to work together. We have a leader sent from god.' Brethren, *we* will be the only ones, the true worshippers of God, who will resist this.

They can find you anywhere on earth. When they sent in the people to Waco, Texas, they had sensing devices and knew where every person was. This was planned murder, without a doubt!

When this comes along and it comes from the world to show how great and wondrous it is, we will be the only 'thorns in the flesh' to keep peace from this earth, Satan style! They'll come after us, and they will make sure that they get us.

Verse 14: "And he deceives those who dwell on the earth by means of the wonders that were given to him to perform in the sight of the beast, saying to those who dwell on the earth that they should make an image for the beast, which had the wound by the sword, yet, was alive. And he was given power to give life to the image of the beast, so that the image of the beast also could speak; and he causes everyone who will not worship the image of the beast to be killed. And he causes all, the small and the great, and the rich and the poor, and the free and the bond, to receive a mark in their right hands, or in their foreheads; so that no one may have the ability to buy and sell unless he has the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name" (vs 14-17).

That's where the division is going to come. You may play games with God with false doctrine

now. You may tippy-toe your responsibility and avoid the Truth for a while. But sooner or later it's going to come! When it comes, you're not going to expect it.

When it does come and you can't buy or sell, you think right now: How long you're going to last. This whole thing of the world and the world's religions in infecting the Church of God:

➤ **You cannot eat of the table of demons and the table of the Lord!**

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version* by Fred R. Coulter

Scriptural References:

- 1) Genesis 11:1-9
- 2) Revelation 12:9
- 3) Ephesians 2:1-3
- 4) 1 Corinthians 2:12
- 5) James 3:12-15
- 6) Romans 1:19-22
- 7) 1 Thessalonians 5:1-3
- 8) 1 Corinthians 12:2-3
- 9) 1 Corinthians 10:20-22
- 10) Acts 17:16-31
- 11) Colossians 2:2-8
- 12) 1 Corinthians 1:17-19
- 13) 2 Thessalonians 2:1-4, 7-14
- 14) Revelation 13:1-3
- 15) 1 John 4:5-6
- 16) Revelation 13:11-17

Also referenced: Books:

- *The Two Babylon's* by Alexander Hislop
- *Babylon Mystery Religion* by Ralph Woodrow
- *Millennium: Peace, Promises, and the Day They Take Our Money Away* by Texe Marrs
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Articles:

- *Chicago Tribune*, Aug. 29, 1993: [From Angelicans to Zoroastrians the World's Religions Come to Chicago](#)
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FRC:po/bo
Transcribed: 12/28/15

Godly Love Never Fails

(Understanding the Love of God)

Fred R. Coulter

{transcriber's note: At the giving of this sermon the Ambassador College campus in Pasadena, California, was in the beginning stages of closing. The sermon has been transcribed in the more current state of its nonexistence, except for the auditorium}

Ambassador College and the Ambassador Auditorium is closed. I would like to read to do you *the dedication prayer* by Herbert W. Armstrong, May 6, 1974. I would assume that this was taken off of a tape recording, because I know that Mr. Armstrong was not in habit of writing out his prayers:

Great God! Lifting up hands, I want to thank You, Almighty God, from the bottom of my heart, for I know all these people are doing it the same way. They feel the same way toward You. Really, this is not our gift to You, it is Your gift to us, and we're grateful that Your name is on it.

Now we come to the time that I want to dedicate this in the name of the Living Jesus Christ, to the honor and glory of the Great God. Almighty God, please grant that we may always use this building to Your honor and glory, that nothing that will happen here will be displeasing to You.

I ask You, Almighty God, to honor prayers that go up from this building. I ask You to bless those who come into it. I ask You to bless everyone who will speak in sermons or in Bible studies from this platform. I ask You, Almighty God, to bless it and protect it in every way, and to preserve it, because You are the Great Creator and You're the Creator Who preserves that which You create.

So, we ask You to preserve this immaculate and clean and beautiful, and to keep it clean to represent clean and honest and forthright character. May it be an inspiration to all who come in. And we ask every blessing, Father, to people that come, and we give You thanks as far as we humbly can for allowing us to have such a beautiful place at Your headquarters church, to honor You. Thank you in Jesus' name, amen.

I think that's a more appropriate opening to the sermon that I'm going to bring today than the opening that I had, from the point of view that that is a tremendous example for us to understand: that the best intentions, unless you follow God's way, are going to come to nothing!

The auditorium is now closed! I don't know what is going to happen to it, but when I go to Southern California, to the Los Angeles area, I stayed many times with a friend of mine who lived directly across the street on Orange Grove from the campus (of the former Ambassador College). I could look over there and see all of the buildings. I remember when it was beautiful and filled with students. On the Sabbath Day the students would walk down through the gardens and see the flowers. It was very, very inspiring.

Now you drive by there and it is all demolished except for the Auditorium. ***It is really a testimony to the good intentions of men that have gone astray because of sin!***

I give a lot of sermons beginning with Isa. 66, and there's a reason for it. There is something that we need to really learn out of this. There is something that we need to grasp in our own lives, because I want to begin what is perhaps one of the most important series of sermons, which is part of 1st, 2nd, and 3rd John, which is understanding the love of God.

Isaiah 66: 1: Thus says the LORD, 'The heaven *is* My throne, and the earth *is* My footstool. **Where, then, is the house that you build for Me?...**' You go through the Bible and every time someone builds a house for God, they get in trouble!

"...And where *is* the place of My rest?... [anything you're going to do for God, you have to realize]: ...For all these things My hand has made, and these things came to be,' says the LORD...." (vs 1-2).

When they built the auditorium, they get, supposedly, the best of everything. They even got gold overleaf, and at that time—believe it or not—gold was at \$42/ounce. They spent thousands and thousands of dollars to gold overleaf the walls, and to put gold ceramics up on the tile up underneath the roof so you would look at the pillars going up. I know that a lot of people would come along and look at that—almost break your neck looking up—and you could see the gold ceramic tile, *real gold* up there!

In building the auditorium, they tried to make it with the colors—as near as they could—as they found described in the Bible. Yet, from day one that Solomon finished the temple—you might take this as an instructive thing to read; read about Solomon... He started out with the best of intentions. Read his dedication prayer! That's quite a

prayer! Very similar to what I just read that Herbert Armstrong gave when the Auditorium was opened, only much longer.

God put His presence in Solomon's temple, and God filled the temple with His Holy Spirit, with a visible cloud while the priests were trumpeting long and loud and all the singers were singing. There's every indication that that happened on the Feast of Trumpets. God came to His temple!

Right after the temple was dedicated, and all of that was done and Solomon was done dedicating, God began to bless Solomon, and bless him with more and more. He became the wisest man in the entire world. He also became the richest man in the entire world. All the kingdom of Israel was the leading kingdom on earth, and they were bringing 666 talents of gold as tribute to Solomon every year.

Gold was so plentiful in Jerusalem that it was said that silver was counted as gravel in the streets, just stones to walk on. He had the best of everything! But what happened to Solomon and all of his best and good intentions? *He got carried away and didn't love God, didn't serve God!* He went out strange women and he got so obsessed with that that he ended up with 300 wives and 700 concubines, and made leagues and alliances with those marriages.

Then, as the master builder, he went across from the temple on what was infamously later called The Mount of Abomination and he built temples to every one of the gods of the women that he married. It polluted Jerusalem with the all of his wretchedness and pagan religions.

So, it may be true that Solomon was the first Mason, because he surely left God after he built the temple. So, we have something very similar to that repeated in Pasadena, and we didn't learn the lesson.

Verse 2: "For all these things My hand has made, and these things came to be," says the LORD...." God says in another place that all the gold is His, all the silver is His, anything that you make anything out of, and these things have been.

"...But to this one I will look..." (v 2). This is what God is interested in; what God wants because God can show *His love* to this kind of person. This kind of person can receive the love of God back to them.

We're going to see that love is so great, fantastic and comes from God! We don't have it, brethren, we just don't have it! God has got to give it! We have to work at it once we begin to understand it, but unless we experience the love of God in our heart, in our mind, soul and being, we're just like this auditorium that was shut down! That's why God says:

"...But to this one I will look, to him who is of a poor and contrite spirit and who trembles at My Word'" (v 2). Then He shows that if you don't have this attitude, everything you do is as if it's a great and giant sin!

People can be correct according to the Law, but if they don't have love, what good is it? Is not Judaism a testimony of *law without love*? *Yes, it is!* That's why God has preserved it, so we will know and understand.

I'll be the first to confess that in our past church experience we never learned of the love of God. We did not!

- We learned about commandments, that's true!
- We learned about the Sabbath, that's true!
- We learned about the Holy Days, that's also true!

But we also destroyed thousands of live and thousands of children: shattered emotions and broken hearts. We were all so keenly bent on authority! Wasn't that taught to our families and didn't we institute that in our families and create a lot of problems. I include myself there, too.

I'm the first tell you that the administration of law and authority *does not produce love!* You may understand some things that are right, but being right does not necessarily mean that you love. Love is supreme and so great. Love is from God and the perfection of love is the whole reason why we were created, made and put on this earth in the first place.

Because of all of God's creation, *we alone* were made to *receive and give* love, and to *receive the love of God that He gives to us* and in turn to give that to other people.

Let me mention that in James 1 it says that the 'wrath of man does not equal or produce the righteousness of God.' You can put anything in there you want: wrath, authority, anger, schemes, devices, way of man. They do not produce the *righteousness of God!* Likewise, it doesn't produce the *love of God!*

Love is something that you come to understand when you realize how deficient you are as a human being. I think that the older you get the more you realize how deficient you really are.

The Apostle John was the apostle that Jesus loved. In fact, on the Passover night John leaned back on Jesus' chest and ask Him who it was that was going to betray Him.

Can you imagine the shock of the disciples the next day when they found out that it was Judas Iscariot? John and his brother James were pretty zealous. When they first started out with Jesus, they

were rough fishermen, the sons of Zebedee. They left their father and followed Jesus. During the course of the things that they were doing and watching Jesus and so forth, James and John got real mad one day because some people weren't willing to accept Jesus coming into their village.

So, they came to Jesus and said, 'Do you want us to call fire down from heaven upon them because they didn't receive You?' Jesus turned and said, 'You don't know what manner of spirit you are in, for I did not come to destroy life, but to save lives.'

John had a long way to go to learn love. They were also called, in one other place, the 'sons of thunder'—which probably meant that they were loud-speaking, and whenever they speak there's a big booming voice going out. They were very impressive. As a matter of fact, so much so impressive that James and John, along with Peter, went up to the Mount of Transfiguration (Matt. 17).

They were close to Christ, and yet, the Apostle John did not write until late in his life. I'm sure that he did a lot of writing before that. Remember the sermon series *Gospel of John* and we went through it verse-by-verse. We learned about the love of God, the grace of God and the things that are there. How many years have we been in the Church before we did that? *A long time!*

Oh yes, we heard sermons on the Sabbath on childrearing and that you could beat them into perfection if you just beat the sin out of them—not knowing at that time, being falsely taught—that children are perfect until they learn sin from parents. ***That's not true! That's an absolute lie!*** We based a whole doctrine of childrearing and discipline based upon that. Did it fail? *Yes, it did!* It didn't work!

I'm here as a testimony to tell you that it doesn't work! You can't command love by law! We all have to learn that! I'm here to tell you today, brethren, that the reason why things are going wrong in the Churches of God is because most of them do not even have a clue as to what the love of God is.

Someone gave me a copy of *church news* and right out of the whole thing is that they're hell-bent on condemning that water down the laws of God. They haven't come to the point to get out of the elementary things concerning the Gospel.

The Gospel is not only a call to repentance, the Gospel is the true relationship between you and God the Father and Jesus Christ so that each one of us can come to know the love of God. That's what it's all about.

In our lives and in the world today, it says that the world is like this: 'Because iniquity shall multiply, the love of many shall grow cold.' Even

the natural, normal love that God built into human beings is so stifled and squashed, and just crunched together—because of sin and iniquity—that who knows how to love?

- Do we not have topsy-turvy marriages?
- Do we not have topsy-turvy everything in this society?
- So perverse and wretched that now the homosexuality and every perversion under the sun is the ruling thing of the day?

How do we, coming into the Church of God, ever learn about the love of God, if all we are doing is being beaten up by condemning and guilt-ridden sermons and fear to smash your face into the fact that you are a sinner? And you've got strive harder to keep the Law? *You've got to be perfect!* God is not going to accept you unless you're perfect in the letter of the Law! Well, that's just so much lie! That's all it is, ***a lie!***

God the Father has reached down to call *you!* God the Father Himself loves *you!* That's why He called *you!* Yes, we need to be obedient to the Law, that's true! But if you don't obey from the heart, what good is it? Every religion on earth is a testimony to some kind of law, rule or regulation to try and make you a better person.

I hope that we're really going to learn the love of God, and that we can all experience one of the most profound things that God the Father wants us to have: ***to really feel and know and understand the love of God!*** Then we can begin loving each other. Then we can begin loving our neighbor as our self. Not until then!

People can live and be married 40, 50, 60 years and still never know each other. They can still be like passing ships in the night and never love each other. Men have to exercise their authority, and women have to exercise their picayunishness. No one is ever willing to say, 'I love you, just because you're you.'

That's what it's all about, brethren! Then to come into the Church of God where the love of God is supposed to be taught and all you learn is authority and anti-love tactics. ***They do not work! They will not work!***

That's why God is doing what He's doing to the Church today. ***IF***, in all the exercise of what we are doing, ***we don't learn the love of God, we haven't learned a thing!***

Concerning the Apostle John, he was able to teach and write about the love of God more deeply and with more understanding than any of the apostles. In the Gospel of John he wrote the most simple, and yet, most profound revelation about

God's love. *For God so loved the world...* And we're going to see that even to the wicked and unkind, God is still steadfast in His love to them at the level that He has promised that He would sustain it. *...that whosoever is believing on Him may not perish but have eternal life!*

Then John wrote that "...God is love..." (1-John 4:8, 16). That's what God is, and God delights in love.

God is also Lawgiver, because love is going to produce law, but law is only the fundamental expression of love. The deep spiritual love that God wants us to have is not the love—'philo'—which means *brotherly kindness*; that you as people generate love from you. You can have that love toward people. There are some people that you love and some people you don't love, and some people you don't like. Christ came to change all of that within our heart and mind, and within our soul and being.

We're going to see that one of the hardest commands to follow...because I know there are people who say that hate is the only way to go. But we'll understand why God commands us to *love our enemies!* That's a hard one! That is a difficult one!

The main verb is 'agapo'—*a love greater than one's own life!* God the Father's and Jesus Christ's love to us. In the noun form that is called 'agape'—*Godly Divine love!*

In the church we were with before, the only thing that we learned about love was that love was 'outgoing concern.' What do you mean? Never defined, never taught, never gone into.

God's love for us is so profound, brethren, that the whole creation and His whole plan of salvation—even after Adam and Eve, our forefathers, sinned—was that God still loved us and is going to provide a way back. Think on that!

It is most profoundly expressed by the love of God the Father for Jesus Christ, and the love of Jesus Christ for the Father. That's why Jesus never did sin, though He had the capacity to sin by carrying 'the law of sin and death' within His flesh. The reason He didn't sin is because He loved the Father and the Father loved Him. He was full of the Spirit, full of grace and full of truth.

He didn't run around repeating the Ten Commandments in His mind. *He loved God!* I'll guarantee you one thing, the way you're going to overcome sin the most, the way any of us are going to overcome sin the most—because sin starts in the mind—is *if you love God, and if you receive the love of God back!* It isn't going to work any other way! Anything else out there is just 'playing' church. That's all it's doing.

We've gone through all this stuff, we've gone through heresies, we've gone through why we need to keep the Sabbath and... Look! If we don't understand that by now, then where have you been? That's why God is weeding all of this out.

This is the kind of love that God wants us to have. Through the power of the Spirit of God, true Christians are to *develop*, because this is something you grow into. You're to develop this profound and deep love of God, for God and for each other. We are to come to have God's very own love in us, this highest expression of spiritual love can only come from God, *because God is love!*

Love is a gift! Love cannot come any other way! We, as human beings, do not have the love of God, which comes from His Holy Spirit, naturally within us. We do not! We cannot, as one church said: 'We're lacking love in this church. Well, Jesus said that the world is going to know us as Christians *if we love each other!* Therefore, let's all love one another.'

While the words sound true, it's fatally flawed! Human beings cannot from within their own selves generate the love of God. It isn't going to work.

Let's see what kind of love it is that we are to strive for and obtain. 1-Cor. 13 gives us the true value, true definition and true interaction of love.

1-Corinthians 13:3: "And now, these three remain: **faith, hope and love**; but **the greatest of these is love.**"

Let's think on that because that is a most profound thing. God has called us to grow into that love, to learn of that love. Not only to know the Word of God, but to receive the Spirit of God in your heart and mind, that in you feel and you experience the love of God in the most profound way.

When you do, I guarantee it's going to change your life. When you do, I guarantee it's going to change your prayers. It just will!

We're going to talk about the greatest thing, the greatest attribute and the greatest expression God can give to us. Not only is God looking to the one who has a 'contrite spirit and humble heart' He's also saying in that is that 'the greatest thing that I can give you is My love. I could give you a temple. I've created the world for all of mankind.' But is that the greatest expression of God's love? *No!*

- He made us with a mind
- He created us with emotions
- He gave us feelings
- He wants us to know and feel His love

I want us to understand how this is going to come. It's not going to come because all of a sudden you say: 'I'm lacking in the love of God, got to have the love of God, have to show myself friendly and loving.' *No!* It has to come from within with God's Spirit. That's what repentance is all about, that:

- you *repent of your way* and **ask God for His way**
- you *repent of your thoughts* and **ask God for His thoughts**

When we get close to Passover, we understand the tremendous and profound love that God had for us in sending Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 3:16: "That He may grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power by His Spirit in the inner man." You have to have that Spirit of God *first*. You must be strengthened in it *first*.

- when you do it is *to grow*
- when you do it is *to develop*
- when you do it is *to produce fruit*

Yet, all of that is from God!

Verse 17: "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; *and* that **being rooted and grounded in love...**" Notice that it doesn't say, 'rooted and grounded in *law*.' Law is all understood.

"...rooted and grounded in love..." because that gives you the very basis for everything.

- Are you **"...rooted and grounded in love..."**?
- Are you growing toward that?
- Are you realizing that this alone can come from God?

"...you may be fully able to comprehend with all the saints..." (v 18). This is what God wants us to grow to.

"...what *is* the breadth and length and depth and height, and to know the love of Christ..." (vs 18-19). The word *know* is 'ginosko' which means to *experientially understand it* from having experienced it.

➤ **Have you experienced the love of God?**

Brethren, I want to tell you that when you do, it's wonderful! I can't say that I've experienced the ultimate of it. I will have to say that after being many, many years in the Church of God, and many of them as a minister, and I'm just coming to begin to understand it.

- Have we not missed something somewhere?
- Have I not missed something somewhere?
- Yes, indeed!

You can't go back and undo what you should have done way back when. There's nothing that can cover that ***except the sacrifice of Jesus Christ!*** That's how loving God is. Think on that that you may be able to comprehend!

Verse 19: "And to know the love of Christ, which surpasses *human* knowledge..." There is no knowledge, no book you can go to. How many people have studied the Bible and still never have come to the knowledge of the love of God. They're not willing to yield themselves to God. You look back and think of all the pride, arrogance, self-importance and everything that the ministry in the Church of God has done, and ***compare that with the love of God!***

Look back—and if you kept your old sermon notes for years and years—and count how many sermons you have heard on love. I want you to count how many Scriptures were actually read concerning the love of God. I want you to think about that, ponder that, and pray about it. The only way we're going to get the love of God is to go to God and say, 'God, I don't know.' Because it is true that *'the way of man is not in himself to direct his steps.'* It's just not!

If you want to know about the truth of the plan of God, I want you to think about all of the stupidity that has been exercised in the name of God, in the name of religion, and all the heresies and apostasy, and all of this sort of thing going on. It's even said that it's all right to work on the Sabbath because everybody sins a little bit every day. That is so far away from God, that is so twisting and perverting of the Scriptures, ***that it can only come from Satan the devil!*** That's not the Spirit of God. Let's understand what is so important for us:

1-Corinthians 2:9: "But according as it is written, '*The eye has not seen...*'" Ties in with Isa. 66.

- What are you going to do?
- What is the greatest thing that you can accomplish?
- How good can you see?
- How well can you hear?
- How smart are you?

"....'*The eye has not seen nor the ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him*'" (v 9).

You've got to love Him! Obedience is necessary, but you've got to love Him beyond that. It's so grand, glorious and marvelous that God would give us eternal life in the kind of existence that He has. Isn't that wonderful?

I know that as we get older—and we've got a lot of senior citizens with us—and have been in the

church many, many years and many have never truly experience the love of God. I tell you what, when you get old, down deep inside in your own heart and mind, in your own soul and down to the very marrow of your bones, the most important thing that you want to know in your life is:

➤ **Does God love me?**

Everything of youth is gone: the strength, the eyes, the teeth—we may have false teeth, glasses, hearing aids—the bones are decrepit and hurting. We have replacement joints or whatever, but out of it all, when you get down to the innermost recesses of your very being, and the older you are the more that this becomes true:

- **Does God love me?**
- **Do you love God?**

That's why so many senior citizens are taken advantage of and bilked by smooth con-artists. They think that this person is showing love to them and they really need love.

- Do you not think that God wants that love shown to these people?
- Do you not think that God wants them to really grasp and understand what kind of love that He has for them?
- Do you not think that God wants them to think that they can face the end of their lives in love and assurance to know that, yes, they are safe in God and in Christ?
- Isn't that the most profound thing we need to understand?
- *Yes!*

Look, God has to reveal it to us. We have to love Him! He will teach us the greatest and most profound things! But God:

Verse 10: "But God has revealed *them* to us by His Spirit, for **the Spirit searches all things—even the deep things of God.**" The deepest thing of God is *His love!*

Verse 11: "For who among men understands the things of man except *by* the spirit of man, which is in him? In the same way also, the things of God no one understands except *by* the Spirit of God. Now, we have not received the spirit of the world, but the Spirit that *is* of God, so **that we might know** the things graciously given to us by God" (vs 11-12). That's what He wants us to know.

This is the greatest! I think this is going to be most instructive at this time, when we see what is going on, especially in the world and in the Church. The bottom line is who cares what the world thinks! Are you ever going to please the world? *No!* But you can please God!

1-John 4:5: "They are of the world; because of this, they speak of the world... [that's what we hear coming in the Church of God] ...and the world listens to them."

I talked to a man that in their local church in one of the biggest Churches of God—I don't think it will be one of the biggest for very long—and what they're going to do is have an open house all during the month of March and their going to invite all the public in to try and increase numbers and get more money.

If it isn't of God what good is it going to do? My comment was that I guarantee you will hear very little about the Passover and how to prepare for it if they're going to have that all through the month of March.

Verse 5: "They are of the world; because of this, they speak of the world, and the world listens to them. **We are of God.**... [understand that] ...the one who knows God listens to us; the one who is not of God does not listen to us...." (vs 5-6). It doesn't make any difference if you bring them in; God has to call the individual.

- Can God call anyone He wants? *Yes!*
- Can God not call anyone He doesn't want to call? *Yes!*
- Who makes the decision? *God does!*

We can just be thankful that God has called us. We are not to say that we're better than the world, God has called us. No way!

"...By this *means* we know the Spirit of the Truth and the spirit of the deception. Beloved, **we should love one another because love is from God;** and everyone who loves has been begotten by God, and **knows** God" (vs 6-7).

The reason that that was inspired to be written in the present tense is...

(go to the next track)

It's interesting that much of the Bible is written in the present tense. It's not reflected that way too much in most of the modern translations, but in the original 1611 *King James* it was with the 'eth.' The reason that it is in the present tense is because what you are doing *now* is what is counting. What you did yesterday—even the good, bad and ugly—what you did that pleased God, what you didn't do that didn't please God, and the sins that you did do that were very distressing to God, that's all gone yesterday. You can't go back and undo it. God does not want us to have good intentions for the future, because 'what I did yesterday was so bad that I will be better tomorrow.' God says to *start now!* That's why it's in the present tense—that you are *loving*.

We're going to see that whenever there is great distress within the Church—which we are experiencing now and the Apostle John was experiencing when he wrote the Epistles of John—that you must have the love of God because that is how God expresses His love on the Sabbath to each of us, in addition to pouring out His Spirit to us while we are together and can learn of God's way. He gives us His love, that is true, but when you hug someone, or you shake hands with someone, or you look them in the eye and say, 'How are you?' and you have the Spirit of the Father in you: *the Father is loving that person!* Are you loving them back?

- This is something!
- This is so great!
- This is so profound!

I feel most inadequate in even trying to bring this sermon. I've had to fight heresy for so long and hard I finally said, 'That's it! If you don't understand the Sabbath, you don't even have a clue!'

Verse 8: "The one who does not love does not know God because **God is love**." You think of that with your past church experience.

- Are not the ministers charged with teaching the love of God? *Yes!*
- Have not too many ministers—not only in the Church of God, but in the world in every 'religion' with their own arrogance, authority and vanity—choked off anything to do with love?

That's why they're all called 'cults.' God is love!

Verse 9: "In this way the love of God was manifested toward us: that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, so that we might live through Him. In this *act* is the love..." (vs 9-10). We're going to focus on that toward Passover time.

If you think you've loved someone, if you think you've given up for someone, if you think you have wasted your life on something for someone, wait until you know what Christ did! If you still feel like marching up to God in your prayer and asking for a merit badge because of what *you have done*, then you come and tell me about it.

"...—not that we loved God; rather, that He loved us and sent His Son *to be the* propitiation for our sins" (v 10). It has to come from God!

- God *loved you* when you were still a sinner!
- God *called you* when you were miserable, wretched, rotten, foolish and stupid!

Verse 11: "Beloved, if God so loved us, we also are duty-bound to love one another. No one has seen God at any time. *Yet*, if we love one another,

God dwells in us, and His own love is perfected in us" (vs 11-12). That's a continuous, ongoing process!

I think that all of us look around and see the way things are, and we have such a small window of opportunity now in the end-time to truly understand the deep and profound *love of God*.

- may God inspire us to learn it
- may He grant us His Spirit to do so
- may we grasp the meaning of all these words that God has inspired to be

Verse 13: "By this *standard* we know that we are dwelling in Him, and He *is dwelling* in us: because of His own Spirit, *which* He has given to us. And we have seen *for* ourselves... [the apostles] ...and bear witness that the Father sent the Son *as the* Savior of the world" (vs 13-14). I imagine that was one of the things that the Apostle John never, never forgot, and always see in his mind.

All of us have experiences like that. That there is something so profound that happened in your life that you can close your eyes and you can see it over and over again.

John was the only one of the apostles to witness the death of Christ. All of the others ran away. Only the women stayed. I imagine that John could see Christ dying on that stake, and just like all the other apostles when they saw that happening, they thought: How is this the Son of God?

Later John understood. So, when John wrote "*as the* Savior of the world"—*the* Savior, not *a*; *the* Son, not *a*—*there isn't any other!* That's the way it is in the Greek.

Verse 15: "Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwells in him, and he in God." To truly say that the way God meant means it to be said.

Verse 16: And we have known and have believed the love that God has toward us. **God is love...** Everything that God does is based on love, even to put away the wicked out of their misery because you can't live in eternity without love.

All it will do is just end up a repeat like this world. How would you like to live in all eternity with the endless cycle of sin, fighting, warring, stupidity and corruption? How would you like to live in all eternity fighting a carnal nature? That's not love!

"...and the one who dwells in love is dwelling in God, and God in him" (v 16). Can we dwell in the love of God? Can we live in the love of God in mind, heart and innermost being? *That's the only thing that makes everything in this world worthwhile!* That's the only thing that really makes

the Church of God *the* Church of God.

- not the name
- not the title
- not the person
- not the preacher
- not the people who are there

We all together, **IF** we have the love of God, then that truly is a Church of God. That's why God is scattering; it's punishment! Correction! Why? *Because God loves us!* He wants us to learn that He loves us. He doesn't want us to repeat the same mistakes from the past. That's why God works out in everyone's life that you're going to come to a time that *emotionally, mentally and spiritually speaking when you're going to walk through the valley of your death!* When you understand the worthlessness of human nature, the abject sin that is so deep in your heart, mind and being, and then you see the Church of God falling apart all around you, *you've got a valley of death to walk through!*

All the brethren and ministers of God are now walking through the valley of death in their own lives, one way or the other! If they learn the love of God they're going to learn something, because God is love.

Verse 17: "By this *spiritual indwelling*, the love of God is perfected within us..." When John wrote this was a very old man. I imagine that in his life, if there was ever a life that the love of God was truly perfected in, it was John's life. That's why he's the only apostle to truly write about the love of God. He alone understood it. "...**perfected within us...**"

"...so that we may have confidence in the day of judgment because even as He is, so also are we in this world. There is no fear in **the love of God...**" (vs 17-18). That's what it is in Greek.

- Can you understand what a detestable thing it is to God to run His Church by *fear*?
- Can you understand what a detestable thing it is—and why God must correct the Church—when the only thing the Church has ever done is preach law?

Not to do away with it. But they're so incompetent, stupid, elementary and juvenile, they can't understand the love of God! Brethren, that is a shame! "There is no fear in **the love of God...**"

Why should you run a Church with fear? Every time something went wrong with the Church *the brethren were condemned!*

- you aren't tithing enough
 - you aren't praying enough
 - you aren't doing this enough
- all the while*

- politics was going on
- backstabbing was going on
- hatred and vehemence among the top echelon of the ministers was raging and they wouldn't even walk into the same room with one another

And they had the gall to blame the brethren! May God have mercy on the ministers, and the brethren!

"...rather, **perfect love casts out fear...**" (v 18). This is what we need to come to.

- Cannot a Church of God be run that way?
- Can we not?
- Can we not set our own goals, priorities and love of God?
- Can we not go to God and say:
 - ✓ God, grant me Your love!
 - ✓ Let it be perfected in me!
 - ✓ I'm not worthy of it, but Christ died for me so that it can be!

That it can cast out fear. Brethren, if we truly are the Laodicean Church—and what we are going through is repentance—believe me, no one is going to endure martyrdom the way God wants them to **unless you love God**. We're going to see that that's why Christ did what He did, **because He loved God! and loved us!**

"...**perfect love casts out fear** because fear has torment..." (v 18).

- Have you ever gone to church with fear and torment?
- Have you ever had minister visit you and you're all nervous, anxious, in fear and torment *wondering why he's coming to see you?*
- *Yes!*
- Does God want that?
- Should it be?
- *No!*
- Did we run our families and lives this way:
 - ✓ with fear and torment
 - ✓ with discipline and beating
 - ✓ with shouting and anger
- Did that accomplish the righteousness of God?
- Did it develop love from the heart?
- *No!*
- What did it create?
 - ✓ anger
 - ✓ hostility
 - ✓ hatred
 - ✓ fear
 - ✓ torment

"...And the one who fears has not been made perfect in the love of God" (v 18). That's the whole goal: *to be made perfect in love!*

Verse 19: “We love Him because He loved us first.” When we understand that Jesus came down to be a human being, He came in the midst of His enemies. You think you have had a challenge for love, we don’t have clue!

Here’s the test, v 20: “**If anyone says, ‘I love God,’ and hates his brother, he is a liar...**” Is it any wonder that the things that are taking place in any church that professes Jesus Christ, if they’re not doing this, *they are misrepresenting God!*

“...For if he does not love his brother whom he has seen, how is he able to love God Whom he has not seen?” (v 20). Let’s take this as a test. Anyone who says they’re loving God and hating his brother... Put in any name there you want: husband, wife, children, neighbors, even an enemy.

We’re to hate the sin that they do, but we’re going to see what a profound thing it is to *love your enemy*. That doesn’t mean to be stupid and get in the way and get wiped out, like standing in front of an oncoming truck that’s coming at you. Put any name you want there.

I will never forget the prayer of one man when he was baptized: *Lord, may there be love within the four walls of my house!* I think that’s a good prayer for every one of us.

- How are things within the four walls of your house?
- How are things within the four walls of my house?

I think some of the things that we’ve done in the past, I would have to say that within the four walls of my house it was not what it ought to be. The only repair is what God can do with His love! It can’t be any other way! Try that as the test.

Verse 21: “And this *is* the commandment *that* we have from Him: that the one who loves God should also love his brother.”

Does this not save a lot of problems within the Church. You step back with the love of God, and you look back on all the arrogance, vanity and the little petty Hitlarian authority that so many people had; isn’t that stupidity? Against God? *Yes!*

1 John 5:1: “Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been begotten by God; and everyone who loves Him Who begat also loves him who has been begotten by Him. By this *standard* we know that we love the children of God: **when we love God and keep His commandments**” (vs 1-2).

Notice that love is priority; love comes first. Commandment-keeping *is a result of love*. Love is not the result of commandment-keeping. Commandment-keeping *will result because you have*

love. It’s the first step of love, but it is not the totality or the perfection of love.

Verse 3: “For this is the love of God: that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome.” That’s the first expression of love. Yes, commandment-keeping is.

- Should we always have childish and elementary love?
- Is that the perfection of God?
- *No!*

We’ve gone over Matt. 22 a lot, but there’s so much there, it’s amazing what we can learn from it. Matthew 22:34: “But after the Pharisees heard that He had silenced the Sadducees, they came together *before* Him.” A Pharisee is a real stickler of the Law; yes, he is!

Verse 35: “And one of them, a doctor of the law, questioned *Him*, tempting Him, and saying, ‘Master, which commandment *is the* great commandment in the Law?’” (vs 35-36). This means the whole overriding purpose of the Law. This is a commandment over all the other commandments.

If you operated at all the commandments below this, *you’re not perfecting the love of God*.

Verse 37: “And Jesus said to him, ‘You shall love *the* Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.’” That’s how you begin. How does God want it?

“...all your heart...” All your emotion! All your feeling! All your capacity that God has put in what is known as the heart! It’s got to have feeling, it’s got to have meaning, it’s got to have emotion and expression to it.

“...and with all your soul...”—your full physical being. Why? *Because that is the temple of the Holy Spirit!* Did He not say that you are the temple of God, and the Spirit of God dwells in you, which brings us full circle back to where we started: Isa. 66:1-2?

“...and with all your mind.” That’s why God has given you a mind; *to love Him with every fiber of your being!* That’s what God wants from us.

Notice what this will do, v 39: “And *the* second *one is* like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’”

The truth is, you can’t love anyone unless you love God first. Yes, you can from a human point of view. You can with a ‘philo’ love. But the deep profound ‘agape’ love, which is Divine Godly love in spite of problems and difficulties...

There are certain requirement to be met, but God wants us to come to the point that our love for

Him has absolutely no conditions at all:

- God, I will love You *if* You bless me
- God, I will love You *if* You give me faith
- God, I will love You *if* You give me understanding of prophecy
- God, I will love You *if* You give me wisdom
- God, I will love You *if* You give me knowledge of languages

NO! God wants you to love Him without reservation, with all your heart. That's what God wants to give back to you. Is that not true? That's correct! God wants that to come back to you so that you will know how to express love. You can't do it until you've experienced the profound love of God and you give back to God that love with all your heart, mind and soul. Then you can "...love your neighbor as yourself."

Verse 40: "On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets." That's something! Everything that God has ever done flows from His love! Every law that God ever gave comes from His love!

So, the one who does love God hates His laws! *Not subject to the Law of God, neither indeed can be!* And *His commandments are not burdensome!*

Do you think that God ever gave us a command that we couldn't fulfill? *No!* He wouldn't give it if we didn't have the capacity to do it. It's the same way with the love of God. He wants to give us of His Spirit so that we will be perfected in that love, to grow in love, to let that be the whole, complete, absolute consuming thing in our lives.

Why? *Because that's the foundation of eternal life!* That's what God wants to give us. To share His existence of eternity with us forever and ever and ever! To know that we love Him and He loves us, and all of us together in the Kingdom and Family of God are loving each other. That is the whole purpose of it!

Let's take these things and ask God for that love. When you pray, ask God for understanding of His love. As God to grant you His Spirit to fill your heart and mind with His love. He will! It will be a great deep and profound experience. That is something that God wants you to have repeated over and over again.

God created us to receive His love! and To give His love!

One man said, 'Yes, we were created to be lovers.' ***Unless our love with God is fully established, then nothing in this world matters!***

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version* by Fred R. Coulter

Scriptural References:

- 1) Isaiah 66:1-2
- 2) 1 Corinthians 13:13
- 3) Ephesians 3:16-19
- 4) 1 Corinthians 2:9-12
- 5) 1 John 4:5-21
- 6) 1 John 6:1-3
- 7) Matthew 22:34-37, 39-40

Scripture referenced, not quoted: Matthew 17

Also revered: Sermon Series:

- *Epistles of John*
- *Gospel of John*

FRC:bo
Transcribed:1/11/16

So, You Think *You* Have Suffered? I

Fred R. Coulter

We're going to cover many of the things concerning the Apostle Paul's life, and I think we're going to be really amazed! We've gone through and we've covered some of the sufferings of Jesus Christ. But if we covered the sufferings of Jesus Christ and then say now brethren you ought to follow in His footsteps, a lot of people will tend to say, 'He's the Christ, He's supposed to.'

So we want to look at the Apostle Paul's life and just see what it is that he suffered. It's good for us to understand that we're not the only ones in the world who have suffered. There have been a lot of people that because of the things they've gone through, the indignities that they've suffered, they just have given up on God. Or they were following a man so much that they can't see God or find God and they give up on God, because a little bit of suffering that they went through: they lost their job, they had their feelings hurt, they were lied too, they were cheated, and all of this sort of thing that went on.

I think the most people are really hung up financially that they gave all the money to the Church. Now that they gave the money they are very disappointed that it didn't come out the way it was supposed to, so you've got that aspect of it. Then there are others who have suffered losses of loved ones, deaths in the family, persecution, and all of these things.

➤ So, you think *you* have suffered?

Another way to look at it is that *it's not how you start it's how you finish!* That's really an important thing. Jesus told His disciples some very important things, and they actually *literally* came true in what the Apostle Paul did, and what the Apostle Paul suffered.

John 16:1, Jesus said: "**I have spoken these things to you so that you will not be offended.**" There a lot of people who become offended over a lot of different little picky things, which are really to them great and monstrous things.

It's kind of like in Matt. 6 where it says, 'Oh, let me pick the moat out of your eye,' but you got this big beam hanging out of your eye and you're knocking everyone out with it trying to get this little moat out of your brother's eye, and you become offended. People sometimes are even looking to be offended. There are some people who are wanting to be offended so they can have cause to quit.

Jesus is warning us and telling us here, v 1: "I have spoken these things to you **so that you will not be offended.** They shall cast you out of the

synagogues; furthermore, the time is coming that everyone who kills you **will think that he is rendering service to God**" (vs 1-2).

Now, there are some people who have been kicked out of the Church: maybe for wrong causes, maybe completely trumped-up, maybe absolutely political. Maybe on the word or gossip of someone, because they said they thought you were doing something and a minister came over and said, 'I have heard...' And then you're out of the Church!

Or you don't go along with church authority, then you're out of the Church, or you're bamboozle because Church authority says if you leave this corporate organization, then you're going to go to hell fire and brimstone! That's not true! That's not right! That's not proper!

The way that a lot of people look at things, needs to be brought back to what the Gospel says, and what is really here so we can look at it and see. These are pretty tough words.

Verse 2: "They shall cast you out of the synagogues; furthermore, the time is coming that everyone who kills you will think that he is rendering service to God."

I don't know anyone who has been killed, personally. I know some people with wounded feelings. I know that there a lot of people—and I hope that this message and sermon will get to those people—who are really bitter down deep inside because they are offended at a man.

Jesus said, 'I don't want you to be offended.' And we're going to see what else Jesus also said, what the apostles went through, how the Church started, etc. Always keep in mind what He told His disciples. So that we keep our perspective:

- we understand that we're dealing with God
- we understand that we're dealing with the Father
- we understand that He loves us
- we understand that He loves us in all circumstances, regardless of the difficulties and problems that we are in

He doesn't want anyone lost!

Verse 26: "In that day, you shall ask in My name; and I do not tell you that I will beseech the Father for you, **for the Father Himself loves you...**" (vs 26-27). You need to always understand that! It

doesn't matter if the world doesn't love you, the world is going to hate you! Jesus said it would.

So don't worry about the world. If you find that there are people who don't love you, don't worry about it, **God loves you!** God can handle and heal any one of those problems that you have. **The Father Himself loves you**, the One Who is ruling the very universe, the Top One that there is, **loves you!**

"...because you have loved Me, and have believed that I came forth from God" (27).

That's a lot of hope and that's a tremendous verse to really grab onto. If you really have had difficulties and problems and troubles, just take that verse and go to God and pray to Him and claim this promise that is there, and let your offence be healed.

Verse 33: "These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. **In the world you shall have tribulation...**"

There are going to be problems and difficulties in the world. Jesus said, 'If the world's going to hate you, don't think that's any big thing because they hated Me before they hated you.'

"But be courageous!... [in spite of all your tribulation] ...I have overcome the world" (v 33).

The stakes that we have and what we are doing and the goal that we are shooting for, is far, *far*, *far* more than the transitory things of this physical life. Yes, when you hurt it's painful. Yes, when you've had your feelings hurt it's difficult. Yes, when people say and do things against you, which you may or may not deserve, it does hurt. That's just the way it goes, and that's the way that the world is.

- Are you going to give up on God because of what people do?
- Are you going to be offended because of what people do?

We all wished it could be like it was at the start. We'd all love to just constantly have the joy of the Holy Spirit as we see in Acts 2; tremendous and fantastic thing!

I look back when I was first converted everything was wonderful and fine and great, and I remember when I was baptized and had hands laid on me and they were praying for the Holy Spirit—I knew that I received the Holy Spirit without a doubt; there was no doubt in my mind whatsoever—and I knew just exactly what baptism was all about. I was real happy, eager, anxious and studying the Bible, reading the literature and all that sort of thing, and happy. I went down to the college that the Church was sponsoring at that time, and everyone is happy, friendly, cheerful, wonderful, nice and good. Everyone wishes that everything could be that way all the time.

Just like it was here when the Church first started after Peter preached this powerful sermon and they were baptized, and he said here, and it records for us:

Acts 2:41: "Then those who joyfully received his message were baptized; and about three thousand souls were added that day. And they steadfastly continued in the teachings of the apostles and in fellowship, and *in* the breaking of bread and *in* prayers. And fear came upon every soul, and many signs and miracles were done by the apostles" (vs 41-43). It was an absolutely fantastic, incredible time. There was so much to sit down and:

- talk about
- fellowship about
- talk to those who have been healed
- talk to those that have had tremendous miracles occur for them

I also remember that after the resurrection of Jesus Christ, all of those that came out of their tombs, which were ripped open when He died, came into the city and showed themselves to everyone that was there. Imagine all the people sitting around talking to them.

- How about talking to Lazarus?
- How about talking to Mary?
- How about talking to all of the Apostles?
- How about all of those that were sick with disease and were healed?

That's all contained in this one verse. Absolutely incredible!

Verse 44: "Now, all those who believed were together and had all things in common." This is not the start of communism, which a lot of people like to try and show. Well did you know that the Bible teaches communism? *No it doesn't!* They were there temporarily and they had all these things in common because they hadn't yet left Jerusalem to go back to their countries.

They didn't have cars to hop in and go right back to where they were. They didn't have airplanes to go on. They had jackasses, feet, mules, camels, and all this sort of thing.

So, when they were there and with the power of the Holy Spirit and the Church just starting, they all stayed there. I know you've been to the Feast of Tabernacles where you wouldn't want to see them go on and on. What happens, you run out of money. So, what did they do?

Verse 45: "And they sold *their* possessions and goods, and divided them to all, according as anyone had need." Just a simple thing that they were doing at the time for the expediency of it because they hadn't yet gone home.

Verse 46: “And every day, steadfastly continuing with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread...” This is not taking the ‘communion’ or anything like that.

Let’s read again, v 42: “And they steadfastly continued in the teachings of the apostles and in fellowship, and *in* the breaking of bread and *in* prayers.” And that’s not taking ‘communion,’ that’s just eating a meal. They were eating together, praying together in the joy of the Holy Spirit.

It’s a good thing God started them out that way because we’re going to see, lo and behold, what happens afterwards. What a time they had!

Verse 46: “And every day, steadfastly continuing with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread in *their* houses...”—because you couldn’t be eating all in one place all the time, so they went two different places.

“...they partook of *the* food with gladness and sincerity of heart, praising God and having favor with all the people; and the Lord added to the Church day by day those who were being saved” (vs 46-47).

Then we have the tremendous miracle in Acts 3, where Peter and John look upon the man who was lame from His mother’s womb. It says a little later he was 40 years old. He was laying there at the Gate Beautiful for years and years. Every priest, every Levite and every man going into the area for the men in the temple area, had to walk through the Gate Beautiful to see him. There he was begging for alms.

Acts 3:4: “But Peter and John, intently observing him, said, ‘Look on us.’ And he fixed his attention on them, expecting to receive something from them. But Peter said, ‘Silver and gold I do not have; but what I do have, this I give to you. In the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarean, rise up and walk.’” (vs-4-6).

Verse 9: “Now all the people saw him walking and praising God.” What a fantastic thing in this man’s life! You talk about a witness! You talk about someone that went around and was praising God and telling about all the good things that God had done for him!

Then Peter preached this powerful sermon. He told them, v 15, and you killed the Author of life Whom God has raised from *the* dead...”

And that they, v 19: “Therefore, repent and be converted...”

Verse 26: “Unto you first has God, having raised up His Son Jesus, sent Him to bless you in turning each of *you* from your wickedness.”

Now here starts their first trouble, Acts 4:1: “Now, as they were speaking to the people, the priests and *the* captain of the temple... [the guards; the captain and the guard] ...and the Sadducees came upon them, being dismayed...” (vs 1-2).

They were upset, mad, angry, jealous, all of those things, “...because they were teaching the people, and preaching through Jesus the resurrection from *the* dead. And they arrested them...” (vs 2-3). That’s not laying hands on for ordination, that’s laying hands on for arrest.

“...and put *them* in *the* hold until the morning... [which is a temporary little jail]...for it was already evening. But many of those who had heard the message believed, and the number of men was about five thousand. Now, it came to pass in the morning *that* their rulers and elders and scribes were assembled together in Jerusalem” (vs 3-5). We need to understand that this is a big Sanhedrin meeting right there at the temple.

Verse 6: “And Annas, the high priest, and Caiaphas and John and Alexander, and as many as were of *the* high priest’s lineage. And after placing them in the midst, they inquired...” (vs 6-7).

So, this is an inquisition. Imagine the high priest is there with all of his garb and his long beard and here are all of the elders, all the Levites and all the priests, and then here are these fishermen standing out there, and alongside him was the one they healed. Just kind of get that in the minds-eye.

The Inquisition didn’t start with the pope and Catholics, it started with the priests and the Jews, and we’re going to see that they really had their organizations going.

So they asked him [Peter]: “...‘By what power... [authority] ...or in what name did you do this?’ Then Peter, filled with *the* Holy Spirit, said to them, ‘Rulers of the people and elders of Israel, if we are examined this day as to a good work *done to the* infirm man, by what *power* he has been cured, be it known to you all, and to all the people of Israel, that in the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarean, Whom you crucified, *but* Whom God has raised from *the* dead, by Him this *man* stands before you whole’” (vs 7-10). What are they going to say to that? *Not too much!*

Verse 11: “This is the Stone that was set at naught by you, the builders, which has become the Head of *the* corner. And there is no salvation in any other, for neither is there another name under heaven which has been given among men, by which we must be saved” (vs 11-12)—*obligated* to be saved, ***you have to be saved through the name of Jesus Christ, there is no other way!***

Verse 13: “Now, when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlettered and uninstructed men, they were amazed; and they took note of them, that they had been with Jesus. Yet, seeing the man who had been healed standing with them, they said nothing to oppose *them*. But after commanding them to go outside the Sanhedrin, they conferred with one another” (vs 13-15). They said ‘Okay, now you step out here, we’re going to have a little conference.’

Verse 16: Saying, ‘What shall we do to these men? For a remarkable miracle has indeed come to pass through them *and is* manifest to all those living in Jerusalem, and we cannot deny *it*. But that it may spread no further among the people, let us warn them with a *severe* threat not to speak any more to anyone in this name”’ (vs 16-17).

A little bit of press-censoring there. A little bit of a lack of freedom of speech you would say. These are their descendants. I want to remind you that their descendants head the ACLU today! Understand, the same thing went on then nothing has changed.

Verse 18: “And after summoning them, they commanded them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus. But Peter and John answered *and* said to them, ‘Whether it is right before God to listen to you rather than to God, you judge”’ (vs 18-19).

There can never be any half-heartedness about Jesus Christ, in following Him and preaching His Word. There can’t be! Absolutely not! For *if* there is, then there’s no Christ.

Verse 20: “‘For we cannot but speak what we have seen and heard.’ And after further threatening them, they let them go, finding no means by which they might punish them, because of the people, for all were glorifying God on account of what had been done: because the man on whom this miraculous healing had been performed was over forty years *old*” (vs 20-22).

So, they went back to their own company told them what was done and they really all prayed and praised God.

Verse 33: “And with **great power** the apostles...” They went out and they just absolutely did fantastic things.

Then we have the problem of Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5, first part).

Acts 5:12: “And many signs and wonders were done among the people by the hands of the apostles; and they were all with one accord in Solomon’s porch; and **none of the others**... [the Sanhedrin, of the priests, of the Pharisees] ...dared to join them, but the people magnified them. And

believers were added all the more to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women” (vs 12-14).

So, this was a great event! This was a tremendous event happening right there in Jerusalem, right at the very temple where the priest had the authority, where they ran everything. Here is an absolute revolution going on against them; the way they looked at it.

To this very day they will tell you the reason that they lost our nation and the temple was because of the ‘false prophet and renegade’ Jesus, and because of those who were Christians who turned the Romans against them. They’re still bitter to this very day because of that. If you think that is not so, then you don’t know very much about Judaism.

Verse 15: “Insomuch *that the people were* bringing out the sick into the streets and putting *them* on beds and stretchers, so that at least the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them. And a multitude from the cities round about also came together to Jerusalem, bringing sick ones and those beset by unclean spirits; *and **they were all healed***” (vs 15-16).

It was a tremendous event. It was absolutely fantastic! They didn’t have televisions and newspapers and radios like we have today. But I am sure that the human tongue was as quick as the phone with all this going on. They did have carrier pigeons by the way. They could send off messages that way from town to town if they needed to.

Here is where the trouble really starts. This is the first real tough confrontation; v 17: “Then the high priest rose up, and all those with him, being of *the* sect of the Sadducees; *and* they were filled with anger. And they laid their hands on the apostles and put them in *the* public hold. But during the night an angel of *the* Lord *came and* opened the doors of the prison; and after bringing them out, he said, ‘Go and stand in the temple, *and* speak to the people all the words of this life.’ And after hearing *that*, they entered into the temple at dawn and taught. Now, when the high priest and those with him came, they called together the Sanhedrin and all the elderhood of the sons of Israel, and sent to the prison to have them brought. But when the officers came, they did not find them in the prison; and when they returned, they reported, saying... [they were gone] ...‘We indeed found the prison locked with all security, and the keepers standing outside in front of the doors; but after opening *them*, we did not find anyone inside.’” (vs 17-23).

Now that’s quite a miracle! *The big escape* and they didn’t know what happened!

Verse 24: “And when they heard these words, both the *high* priest and the captain of the temple, and

the chief priests also, were utterly perplexed as to what this could lead to. But a certain one came *and* reported to them, saying, ‘Behold, the men whom you put in the prison are standing in the temple and teaching the people.’ Then the captain went with the officers *and* brought them without violence, so that they might not be stoned; for they feared the people. And they brought them in *and* set *them* before the Sanhedrin. And the high priest asked them” (vs 24-27). So, it’s really quite a situation that is here.

Here we have all the scribes and Pharisees the high priest the senate of all Israel and the high priest stood up there and said, ‘Why don’t you pay any attention to our authority?’

Verse 28: Saying, ‘Did we not order you by a *direct* command not to teach in this name? And look, you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching, with *the* purpose of bringing this man’s blood upon us.’ But Peter and the apostles answered *and* said, ‘**We are obligated to obey God rather than men**” (vs 28-29)—under all circumstances.

We can project forward to show that that is true when you come to the book of Revelation concerning the *mark of the beast* and those who were slain, because they didn’t receive the *mark of the beast*.

Verse 30: “The God of our fathers raised up Jesus Whom you killed *by* hanging *Him* on a tree. Him has God exalted by His right hand *to be* a Prince and Savior, to give repentance and remission of sins to Israel. And **we are His witnesses of these things, as is also the Holy Spirit, which God has given to those who obey Him**” (vs 30-32).

Who has the Holy Spirit of God? ***Those who obey Him!*** That’s a key one to remember in case anyone says that ‘we don’t have to keep the commandments of God.’ What are you going to do with that one?

Verse 33: “Now, when they heard *this*, they were cut *to the heart* and took counsel to put them to death.”

You see the JDL is nothing new, the Jewish Defense League working back here in the 1st century, and if they don’t like you you’re dead meat! That’s just the way it goes.

Verse 34: “But a certain man stood up, a Pharisee in the Sanhedrin, Gamaliel by name, a teacher of the law *who was* honored by all the people, *and* commanded *that* the apostles be put out for a short while. And he said to them, ‘Men, Israelites, give careful thought to what you are about to do concerning these men. For before these days *there* rose up Theudas, proclaiming that he himself was somebody, to whom a number of men were joined,

about four hundred; *but* he was put to death, and all those who had been persuaded by him were dispersed and came to nothing. After this one, in the days of the registration, Judas the Galilean rose up and drew away many people after him; but he perished, and all who had been persuaded by him were scattered. And now I say to you, withdraw from these men, and let them alone; for if this counsel or this work be from men, it will be overthrown; but if it be from God, you do not have the power to overthrow it. **Take heed, lest you be found to be fighting even against God**” (vs 34-39).

That was very wise and inspired counsel. Notice what they did, v 40: “And they were persuaded by him; and they called in the apostles *and*, **after beating them...**” This is 40 stripes save one; beaten in the presence of the council.

“...commanded *them* not to speak in the name of Jesus; and they released them. Then they departed from *the* presence of the Sanhedrin, rejoicing *that* they were accounted worthy to suffer shame for His name” (vs 40-41).

I have never met anyone yet who has been beaten with stripes for the name of Jesus. So, they went out and they were right back at it again:

Verse 42: “And every day, in the temple and in the houses, they did not cease teaching and preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ.”

Acts 6:1: “Now, in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied”—and the Word of God increased. After they chose the seven, so-called deacons laid hands on them and prayed for them.

Verse 7: “And the Word of God spread, and the number of the disciples in Jerusalem was multiplied exceedingly...” This was not some little thing. This was a big and powerful movement that God had going on in Jerusalem.

“...and a great multitude of the priests were obedient to the faith” (v 7). That’s really quite a problem. We’re going to see little later this thing builds up and becomes more intense.

Verse 8: “And Stephen, full of faith and power, worked wonders and great signs among the people. Then certain arose among those of the synagogue who were called Libertines, and of the Cyrenians and Alexandrians, and of those from Cilicia and Asia; *and* they were disputing with Stephen. But they were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spoke. Then they **suborned** men, who said, ‘we have heard...’ (vs 8-11).

That means they got false witnesses, and got them up there to serve with notice to appear as

witnesses, like in a court case. That's what *suborned* means.

“...him speak blasphemous words against Moses and *against* God.’ And they stirred up the people and the elders and the scribes; and they came and seized him, and brought *him* into the Sanhedrin. Then they set up false witnesses, who said, ‘This man does not cease to speak blasphemous words against this Holy place and the law; for we heard him saying that this Jesus, the Nazarean, will destroy this place, and will change the customs... [the rites or sacrifices] ...that Moses delivered to us.’ And all those who sat in the Sanhedrin, looking intently at him, saw his face as *the* face of an angel” (vs 11-15).

So, they are hauled up before the courts—the Jewish court, the Sanhedrin—right and left. Read and study all of Acts 7. Stephen gives quite a powerful sermon there. They had a tremendous witness at that time. Then we come clear down to the end. We know what Stephen was preaching. Stephen was saying that in order to have contact with God:

- you do not have to go to this temple
- you do not have to offer the sacrifices
- you do not have to follow the tradition of the rabbis

—which they all call *the traditions of Moses*.

Acts 7:47—Stephen said: “But Solomon built Him a house. However, the Most High does not dwell in temples made by hands, as the Prophet says: ‘the heaven *is* My throne, and the earth *is* a footstool for My feet. What house will you build for Me, says *the* Lord, or what *is the* place of My rest? Have not My hands made all these things?’ (vs 47-50).

Now let's stop and think about this for a minute. If you're a high priest what is your base of operation? *The temple!* What is the base of your authority? *The Word of God!* They could see that they were about ready to really begin having their authority completely undermined by the preaching of the Gospel. That's what they were worried about. The religious Jewish establishment was challenged and flattened. And we're going to see what they did after Stephen was persecuted and martyred.

So Stephen said, v 51: “O stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears! You do always resist the Holy Spirit; as your fathers *did*, so also *do* you. Which of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? And they killed those who foretold the coming of the Righteous One, of Whom you have become the betrayers and murderers; Who received the law by *the* disposition of angels, but have not kept *it*.’ And when they heard these things, they were cut to their hearts, and they gnashed their teeth at him” (vs 51-54).

There's a lawsuit going on right now about this woman who has the guy in court because he bit off her little finger in a fight that they had. That shows you it still goes on today. Well here this is such a mad dog scene. I mean, think of it. I've been angry, and when I get really angry—and I know you do to—I throw something; that helps me. Some have some haven't, it depends. But I have never been driven anywhere near this madness. You can see how absolutely enraged that they were. I mean, you've got to be mad to go out and 'gnash' someone, especially a priest. Why? *Because blood is unclean!*

Verse 55: “But he, being filled with *the* Holy Spirit, looked intently into heaven *and* saw *the* glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. And he said, ‘Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing at the right *hand* of God’” (vs 55-56).

That made them even madder! All this is worse. Here we are even biting this guy with chewing and gnashing him down and Stephen says he sees the Son of man (Dan. 7) at the right hand of the throne of God. So, what happened?

Verse 57: “Then they cried out with a loud voice, *and* stopped their ears, and rushed upon him with one accord... [a mob scene] ...and cast *him* out of the city *and* stoned *him*....” (vs 57-58).

Now, if you get hit with one stone that's pretty bad. All you have to do to do is watch television today, the Jews and Arabs are up to the same thing. They get mad at each other and they throw stones. People have been known to be killed even today.

“...And the witnesses laid down their garments at the feet of a young man called Saul. And they stoned Stephen, who called upon *God*, saying, ‘Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.’ And he fell to his knees *and* cried with a loud voice, ‘Lord, do not lay this sin to their charge.’ And after he had said this, he died” (vs 58-60).

Perfect example of *don't resist evil*. I'm just sitting here thinking about it, and I have to ask myself: Could I be up to that? *I don't know!* I don't know if I could be. Apparently, God gave him the strength so he would be. All I can say is that I'd have to rely on God to give me the strength to do it. Because in situations like that, I don't know whether I would do it just like that, but he did.

From here on we're going to concentrate on what the Apostle Paul did/what Saul did. ‘Saul’ means *destroyer*.

Acts 8:1: “Now, Saul had consented to killing him. And that day a great persecution arose against the Church that *was* in Jerusalem...” It was so great, that

all of those thousands of people that came into the Church had to get out of town. They all left.

“...and all *the believers* were scattered throughout the countries of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles. And devout men buried Stephen and made great lamentation over him. But Saul was **ravaging...** [made havoc (KJV)] ...the Church...” (vs 1-3).

➤ **So, you think *you* have suffered?**

Have you had anyone come into your house and drag you out? The word *havoc* has the meaning of *destructively plowing through*, systematically doing it. We will see that he had authority to do that.

“...going from house to house, entering in and dragging *out* men and women, *and* delivering *them* up to prison. Therefore, those who were scattered passed through *everywhere*, preaching the Word of the Gospel” (vs 3-4).

Acts 11:19: “Now, those who had been scattered by the persecution that arose concerning Stephen went through Phoenicia and Cyprus and Antioch, speaking the word to no one except Jews only. But certain men among them who were Cypriots and Cyrenians came to Antioch *and* spoke to the Greeks, preaching the Gospel of the Lord Jesus” (vs 19-20).

What I want to do is focus in on some of the statements of the Apostle Paul concerning *what he did to the Church!* Why the calling of the Apostle Paul was a tremendous miracle on God’s part, and why even having in our hands the New Testament is a tremendous miracle from God. When we read through here, we don’t get the impact of it that we ought to, because the only way we can is to focus our mind on these Scriptures, and to somehow in our mind’s eye picture it as if it were your home.

Picture it as if it were something that happened to you. Picture one night you’re sitting there having your dinner and someone knocks on the door, forces their way into your home, having an arrest warrant for you from the high priest; puts handcuffs on you, and carts you off and put you in prison. So, just kind of get that in mind.

Acts 22:3: “...being a zealot for God, even as you all are this day; *and* I persecuted this way unto death, binding and delivering up to prisons both men and women” (vs 3-4). You talk about going out and taking care of the opposition!

Verse 5: “As also the high priest and all the elderhood bear witness to me... [that is the whole Senate and Council of Israel] ...from whom I received letters to the brethren... [the other Jews] ...*and* went

to Damascus to bring bound to Jerusalem those who were there also, in order that they might be punished.”

That something—isn’t it? You talk about the fear of the ‘Mossad’ that some people have today—with the Israeli spies, the JDL or the liberal oriented press today—how if you are against them they will slay you, they will lie about you, they will come at you. And if you don’t believe that is so, you just go back and look at the Bill Gates nomination hearings and they had about three people out of 6000 analysts that came there to lie against him.

That happens! It does happen today. They are not at the point of killing people overtly, yet, or hauling them off overtly like it is here. But I want you to see what the Apostle Paul did. He went out there to take them against their will to Jerusalem to bring them to stand before the high priest in trial.

When you’re just reading through the book of Acts and you read that Scripture and you say, ‘Oh yeah, that’s right,’ and then you read along and go through Acts 25 and 26. If you just pick out those Scriptures and put them together, then you really get a whole different story of what Paul did to the Church. It says he *wreaked havoc!* He did! He plowed through and *destroyed* the Church!

Acts 26:9: “For this *very* reason, I truly thought in myself that I ought to do **many things** contrary to the name of Jesus the Nazarean.” When it says that he was zealous for Judaism; when it says that he was zealous for the law, that doesn’t mean the Law of God that means the Law Judaism. You’ve got to do “...many things...” He was planning this.

Verse 10: “Which I also did in Jerusalem; and many of the saints I shut up in prisons, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, **I gave my full consent against them.**”

It means he voted to put them to death, because they always asked: Is this person worthy of death? *Yea, he’s worthy of death!*

Verse 11: “And *by* punishing them often in all the synagogues...” So, Saul went into the synagogues and punished them *in the synagogue!* Does this fulfill what we read first in John 16:1? *Absolutely!*

“...I compelled *them* to blaspheme. And being exceedingly furious against them...” (v 11). He was obsessed with

- destroying the name of Jesus
- destroying these people
- destroying what they believed

“...**I persecuted them even as far as to foreign cities.** During this *time*, I was journeying to Damascus

with authorization and a commission from the chief priests” (vs 11-12).

When Paul was struck down and converted, it was *at the height and the intensity of his going after the brethren*; he had the authority to do it. So, when you put those altogether, it gives you an entirely different picture of what was going on and what Saul/Paul was doing.

After Paul was converted, let’s see his attitude. We will go back and see a little bit more of his conversion here in just a minute.

1-Corinthians 15:9: “For I am the least of the apostles, *and* am not fit *even* to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the Church of God”—*and did he ever!*

- with zeal
- with threatening
- with death
- with determination
- with plans
- with anger
- with hatred

Verse 10: “But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me has not been in vain...”

Galatians 1:13: “For you heard of my former conduct when I was in Judaism... [it wasn’t God’s religion, it was in the Jews’ religion, Judaism] ...how I was excessively... [beyond measure, beyond calculation, beyond numbering] ...persecuting the Church of God and was **destroying** it.”

(go to the next track)

That’s quite a statement: ***Wasted it! destroyed it! leveled it!***

Verse 14: “And I was advancing in Judaism *far* beyond many of my contemporaries in my *own* nation, being more abundantly zealous for **the traditions of my fathers**.” Not of the Law of God. But *they think* it’s the Law of God. As Jesus said, ‘The time will come that they will kill you, and they think that they are doing God a service.’

We can see the contrast of the Apostle Paul’s attitude and here he’s writing one of the last letters he was going to write to Timothy:

1-Timothy 1:12: “And I thank Jesus Christ our Lord, Who has empowered me, that He counted me faithful, **putting me into the ministry**”—he had to be directly put in. God had to do it as miracle; no one else could have done it.

Verse 13: “Who was previously a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent person; but I obtained mercy because **I did it ignorantly in unbelief**. But the grace of our Lord abounded exceedingly with *the* faith

and love that *is* in Christ Jesus. *This is* a faithful saying, and worthy of full acceptance: that Christ Jesus came into the world to save **sinner**s, of whom **I am chief**” (vs 13-15). That’s what that means; now you know why.

Now we’re going to see what was the driving force in Paul’s life and in his mind, and that God used for him to preach the Gospel and what happened to him.

How the Apostle Paul was called

Saul/Paul was on his way to Damascus and having authority from the chief priest to take men and women “...who were of that way...” (Acts 9:2), to bring them bound to Jerusalem. Then he came near to Damascus there was a bright light, it knocked him off his horse, and a voice came.

Acts 26:14: “Then all of us fell to the ground; and I heard a voice speak to me, saying in the Hebrew language, ‘Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me? **It is hard** for you to **kick against the pricks**.’ And I said, ‘Who are You, Lord?’ And He said, ‘I am Jesus, Whom you are persecuting’” (vs 14-15).

“...It is hard for you to kick against the pricks...” *or the goads*; you can liken this to short stubble branches or these long prickly goads that you see in the Middle East. When they are hard and dry, if you want to kick against it you would really just destroy yourself! That’s what it means.

Needless to say, he was blind. God had to send Ananias to lay hands on him so he could see, so he could be converted and was baptized.

Acts 9:13—Ananias had to have God tell him: “Then Ananias answered, ‘Lord, I have heard from many *people* about this man, how many evil things he has done to Your saints in Jerusalem.’”

Now if you were Ananias, would you want to go do to Saul what the Lord asked you to do? I mean, that’s a tough question—isn’t it? That’s why God had to do it. He surely would not have done it on the authority of some other person coming up and saying, ‘Hey I’ve got a great idea Ananias, let’s go get this Saul and let’s make him a minister.’ Ananias even said when the vision came: “...I have heard from many *people* about this man, how many evil things he has done to Your saints in Jerusalem.”

Verse 14: “*And even* in this place he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who call on Your name.’ But the Lord said to him, ‘Go, for this *man* is a chosen vessel to Me, to bear My name before *the* Gentiles, and kings, and *the* children of Israel; for **I will show him what great things he must suffer for My name**’” (vs 14-16).

Sufferings of Paul

Now we're going to look at the suffering that the Apostle Paul went through. Could I have endured it? Or compared to what the Apostle Paul brought upon the brethren, and compared to what he went through once he was converted and an apostle:

- Do you think that *you* have suffered for the Church?
- Have you gone through experiences that you are so offended, that you don't think you can recover?

Those are questions we need to ask ourselves!

You know that he received his sight, and immediately he preached in the synagogue that Jesus was the Christ. What a change! What if you were in the synagogue in Damascus, and you've heard that Saul was coming, and he was coming with the authority and the arrest warrants from the high priest. You were afraid that you are going to be arrested. You came to the synagogue that Sabbath, and:

- Guess who is there? *Saul!*
- Guess who brings the message? *Saul!*
- Guess what he says? *Jesus is the Christ!*

You talk about a conversion!

If you are sitting in that synagogue, would you believe your ears? That would be stunning—wouldn't it? Let's put it another way: What if Heinrich Himmler—the one who was in charge of exterminating the Jews—went into a synagogue of the Jews professing that he was wrong, and confessing that God was right? Can you imagine what the Jews would have done?

Let's put the shoe on the other foot. Since you were a trusted agent of the high priest and the priest and the elders, and the authority of the temple in Jerusalem, and that you had your greatest advocate—the one who would be willing to go out and arrest and bring back to prison all those that were following Christ—that he suddenly became a turncoat! What would you have done? I mean, you have heard of the spies and counterspies and intrigue. This is it! That's something! So, this helps us get a little perspective in it.

Were going to see what the Apostle Paul did when he was out preaching and teaching (Acts 13:15). This is kind of a summary, so go ahead and read all Acts 13 and 14 and so forth. He went into the synagogue, stood up to read, after he preaches about Jesus:

Acts 13:38: "Therefore, be it known to you, men *and* brethren, that through this Man *the* remission of sins is preached to you. And in Him everyone who believes is justified from all things, from which you could not be justified by the Law of Moses. Take

heed, therefore, lest that which is spoken in the Prophets come upon you" (vs 38-40). So, when he went in to speak he was just as powerful the other way. And he quoted it:

Verse 41: "Behold, you despisers, and wonder and perish; for I work a work in your days, a work that you will in no way believe, *even* if one declares it to you."

Do you think the Apostle Paul preached conviction or not? Nowhere in anything that the Apostle Paul preaches do you find any compromise whatsoever? *None!* We're going to see why, and we're going to see that the Apostle Paul went through more than any other minister, any other man that we know of to preach the Gospel. His life before was such a contradiction to his life after conversion. He personally received nearly as much trouble and persecution and pain and suffering as he dished out before. It's really amazing what he went through.

Verse 42: "And when the Jews had gone out of the synagogue, the Gentiles entreated *him* that these words might be spoken to them on the next Sabbath."

Notice that he didn't say; 'Oh Sunday's a better day everyone! All you Gentiles come on Sunday.' *Didn't say that!* It was the next Sabbath.

Verse 43: "Now, after the synagogue had been dismissed, many of the Jews and the proselytes who worshiped *there* followed Paul and Barnabas, who, speaking to them, persuaded them to continue in the grace of God. And on the coming Sabbath, almost **the whole city** was gathered together to hear the Word of God" (vs 43-44).

I mean this was a notorious event! They didn't have Saturday afternoon college football, nor Saturday afternoon baseball. This was a small city and the whole city heard this. They had all week to gossip about this. And they all got together on the Sabbath; can you imagine this great swelling crowd out there?

Verse 45: "But when they saw the multitude, the Jews were filled with envy; and they spoke against the things proclaimed by Paul, *and* were contradicting and blaspheming. But Paul and Barnabas spoke boldly, saying, 'It was necessary for the Word of God to be spoken to you first; but since you reject it and do not judge yourselves worthy of eternal life, behold, we turn to the Gentiles... [Oh what a hateful thing to say to a Jew!] ...for so the Lord has enjoined *upon* us: "I have set You for a light of *the* Gentiles that You should be for salvation unto *the* uttermost parts of the earth.'"" (vs 45-47).

Verse 48: "And when the Gentiles heard *this*, they rejoiced; and they glorified the Word of the Lord, and believed, as many as were appointed to eternal

life. And the Word of the Lord was carried throughout the entire country. But the Jews stirred up the devout and honorable women, and the principal men of the city, and raised up persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them from their borders” (vs 48-50).

Notice the fight that was going on. This was a heated fight! Notice all of the politics involved, that the Jews were involved in to get rid of the Christians. They stirred up the chief men and the devout women, raised the persecution, got them to kick them out of the city.

Verse 51: “And after shaking the dust off their feet against them, they came to Iconium. Then the disciples were filled with joy and *with the Holy Spirit*” (vs 51-52). So, he went to the synagogue.

Acts 14:1: “Now, it came to pass in Iconium *that* they went together into the synagogue of the Jews and spoke so *powerfully* that a great number of both Jews and Greeks believed. But the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles and poisoned their minds against the brethren. For this reason, they stayed a long time, speaking boldly in the Lord, Who bore witness to the message of His grace, granting that signs and wonders be done through their hands. But the multitude of the city was divided...” (vs 1-4). They went from city to city and caused religious riots! Part held with the Jews, part with the apostles.

Verse 5: “And when an assault was *about* to be made by both the Gentiles and *the* Jews with their rulers to insult and stone them, They became aware of it... [they snuck out of town] ...so they fled to Lyconia, into the cities of Lystra and Derbe and the surrounding region. And there they preached the Gospel” (vs 5-7).

Then they came into Lystra. There was an impotent man who was healed; you know the whole account, how that the pagan priest came down, and they wanted to go ahead and name Jupiter and Mercury and all of that sort of thing. They barely stopped them. They were received well for a while.

Verse 19: “Then Jews from Antioch and Iconium came there...” The ones who caused all the problems and got them kicked out of town over there! So, they chased them down; I mean, the Apostle Paul was a ‘hunted animal’ as far as the Jews were concerned. What he went through was incredible!

“...and after persuading the multitudes, **they stoned Paul...**” (v 19). Now physically this must’ve been very disastrous. They stoned him! Obviously, he was wounded, he was bleeding, he was limp.

“...and dragged *him* outside the city, supposing *that* he was dead” (v 19).

I’ve never been called to anoint anyone for that, yet. And I say that not facetiously or in jest, but to ask the question to myself, and you to yourselves:

- How much have I suffered for Christ?
- If I experienced this, would I be offended in a man?
- If you are offended in a man, does it even compare to this?
- Is your offense of being offended such that it is your own pride and vanity that is involved rather than a true offense?

We all have to ask ourselves these questions.

I hope that this sermon goes out to a lot of people who feel that they have been offended because of what went on in their church, whatever Church of God it was that they were in, so that they can recover themselves back to God. That’s the whole point in all of this.

Not to ridicule anyone, not put anyone down, it’s not to say that you weren’t offended, it’s not to say that you have not suffered things, but it’s to ask: Can we get all of this and put it in a Biblical perspective so we can see ourselves in the light of God’s Word in relationship to what has been done? ***or*** What has not been done! And the stoning we’re going to see was one little incident in Paul’s life. That’s what makes it so breathtaking when you read about it.

Verse 20: “But while the disciples were standing around him, he arose; and he went into the city *with them*. And the next day, he departed with Barnabas to Derbe. And after preaching the Gospel to that city, and making many disciples, they returned to Lystra and Iconium and Antioch, *where* they established the souls of the disciples, exhorting *them* to continue in the faith, and ***declaring that we must through much tribulation enter into the Kingdom of God***” (vs 20-22).

- Could the Apostle Paul preach that with conviction?
- Could he preach that with knowledge?

I know as a minister, and I can tell you one thing—and you know this too as individuals, when you’re talking to other people—that when you have experienced something and gone through it yourself, you can speak with greater conviction and belief! Now, I would say that when the Apostle Paul said, it’s “...***through much tribulation...***” that there wasn’t one person that he was speaking to that didn’t know what he was talking about, because they had seen him stoned, and thought he was dead!

Paul came to the city of Neapollis in Macedonia, after he cast the demon out of the woman that had the demon of divination:

Acts 16:19: “And when her masters saw that the hope of their gain was gone, they laid hold of Paul and Silas *and* dragged *them* into the marketplace before the magistrates. And they brought them to the captains, saying, ‘These men, who are Jews, are greatly troubling our city...’” (vs 19-20). Now he’s got the Gentiles after him! He’s had the Jews after him all this time, now the Gentiles are after him saying;

“...‘These men, who are Jews, are greatly troubling our city, and are preaching customs that are not lawful for us, as Romans, to receive or to practice.’.... [he had it on both sides] ...Then a multitude rose up against them, and the captains tore off their garments...” (vs 20-22). They didn’t send them out to rent a suit; they tore them!

“...and commanded that they be beaten with rods. And after laying many stripes on them, they cast *them* into prison, commanding the jailer to keep them safely. After receiving this command, he threw them into the inner prison and secured their feet with stocks. But about midnight, Paul and Silas...” (vs 22-25). Were they complaining to God what terrible treatment they had received? *No!*

“...were praying and singing praises to God, and the prisoners were listening to them; and suddenly there was a great earthquake...” (vs 25-26)—and they were miraculously let go!

Verse 38: “Then the sergeants reported these words to the captains. And when they heard *that* they were Romans, they were afraid. And they came *and* entreated them; and after bringing *them* out, they asked *them* to depart from the city. Now, after leaving the prison, they came to Lydia; and when they had seen the brethren, and had exhorted them, they departed” (vs 38-40).

Read chapters 18 and 19 and all of the things that went on there in Corinth and then in Ephesus. Of course, the big riot that took place there in Ephesus because of the destroying of the idols, and destroying of the books of the goddess of Ephesus, Diane or Artemis.

Acts 20:1: “When the tumult was over, Paul called the disciples to *him* and embraced *them*; *then* he left to go into Macedonia. And after passing through those parts and exhorting them with much speaking, he came to Greece. Now, after he had been *there* for three months, he was going to sail to Syria. But when *he learned that* the Jews were lying in wait for him...” (vs 1-3).

He had to be careful where he was going. He had to walk around and look for these spies reading magazines and standing behind the cigar counter as it were. I’m putting it in today’s terminology. Standing

down at the marketplace and chatting and looking around, and asking ‘Who is this?’ Even today the Jews have undercover agents that go over and join and become members in the Intifada as secret agents so that they can expose the different ones of the Palestinians and have them arrested and executed.

That’s what they’re doing here. Paul had to be careful wherever he went. There were spies out looking for him, laid wait for him. As he was about to sail to Syria he proposed to return through Macedonia. He found out, so he went back the other way; retraced his steps, because they were waiting for him to come on down through Syria. Then it talks about those who accompanied him so they had to get away from there.

Read all of Acts 22, because this is when he went up to the temple and James said, ‘We want all of the Jewish brethren to know that you still are not against the law.’ Paul said, ‘Well okay, and I’ll just add a few words in there, and as long as the temple stands I’ll take a vow and offer the sacrifices. Nothing wrong with that, ‘not going to bring me salvation but there’s nothing wrong with that, I’ll do it.’

So, he was arrested! Then he spoke to all the Jews that were there. They were waiting for him; they were waiting to get Paul at Jerusalem. Then as they were about ready to kill him, the Roman guards came in and got him. They kept him from the crowd, and he spoke to them in Hebrew explaining all about what happened to him. Then when he got down to the word Gentiles, there was a great riot, they threw dust in the air, shouted, yelled and screamed, and the captain took him off on the side.

Acts 22:29: “Then those who were about to examine him immediately left *the room*; and the chief captain also was afraid, after ascertaining that he was a Roman, because he had bound him. And on the next day, desiring to know for certain why he was accused by the Jews, he loosed him from *his* bonds and commanded the chief priests and their whole Sanhedrin to come; and after bringing Paul down, he set *him* before them” (vs 29-30).

Paul then begins talking. Let’s notice what happened. This is when he was brought down to Caesarea and the chief priest came down there.

Acts 23:1: “And after gazing intently upon the Sanhedrin, Paul said, ‘Men *and* brethren, I have conducted myself in all good conscience toward God unto this day.’ Then the high priest Ananias ordered those standing by him to strike him on the mouth” (vs 1-2). Give him a big blast on the mouth! Nice, loving, kind people. I think this is the same priest that condemned Jesus. This is the same one that went through all of these things, had to put up with all the Christianity going on.

Verse 3: “And Paul said to him, ‘God is about to strike you, you whitened wall. Do you yourselves now judge me according to the law, while you command me to be struck contrary to the law?’ But those who were standing by *him* said, ‘Do you rail against the high priest of God?’ And Paul said, ‘Brethren, I did not know that he is a high priest; for it is written, “You shall not speak evil of a ruler of your people.”’” (vs 3-5). He didn’t apologize, notice, he just said, ‘Well, the Law says...’

Paul’s Health

Let’s look at some of the Apostle Paul’s health conditions. I can see why God put Paul in prison. God protected him from all of this, and being in prison was not like being in jail as we know it today. It was more like being under house arrest or in minimum security. Let’s see what Paul says about his affliction.

Not only had he suffered all of this—we are going to see his summary of his sufferings—he had health problems. You would have health problems too if you were stoned. Don’t you think there were some scars there? Maybe he had a limp or whatever. I don’t know how many stones he took in the head. I don’t know what his eye condition was. I don’t know if he had a condition of his eyes before he was called, or this is something that came on him after he was called. I do not know.

Galatians 4:13: “Now you know that at first I preached the Gospel to you in *the* weakness of the flesh; and the temptation—namely, my *trial* in my flesh—you despised not, nor rejected with contempt; rather, you received me as a messenger of God, *even* as Christ Jesus Himself. What then was your blessedness? For I bear you witness that, **if *it were* possible, you would have plucked out your eyes and given *them* to me**” (vs 13-15).

Then he says right at the end, Galatians 6:11: “See with what large letters I have written to you with my *own* hand.” It was some great eye affliction. I don’t know what it was. We don’t know if it was glaucoma. We don’t know exactly what it was; it doesn’t tell us. The Apostle Paul went through a lot and he only alludes to some of it.

2-Corinthians 12:5: “I will boast of such a one as this; but of myself I personally will not boast, **except concerning my weaknesses**. But even if I choose to boast, I shall not be a fool; for I will speak the Truth. However, I will forbear, lest anyone think of me above what he sees me *to be*, or what he hears from me” (vs 5-6).

And after all that he went through you’ll understand why he had that.

Verse 7: “But in order that I might not be exalted by the abundance of the revelations, ***there was given to me a thorn in the flesh...***” We don’t know what that thorn is. Whatever it is, it’s something physical.

“...an angel of Satan to buffet me, so that I might not be exalted” (v 7).

Some people say that God sent a demon or a messenger—an angel of Satan—to buffet him. I don’t necessarily believe that, that it was a demon that was bothering him all the time. I kind of doubt that, but nevertheless, he calls it a thorn in the flesh.

Verse 8: “I besought the Lord three times for this, that ***it*** might depart from me”—‘it’ is referring to the thorn in the flesh, and is not a demon.

Verse 9: “But He said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you; for My power is made perfect in weakness.’ Therefore, most gladly will I boast in my weaknesses that the power of Christ may dwell in me. For this reason, **I take pleasure in weaknesses, in insults, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ; for when I am weak, then I am strong**” (vs 9-10). That something! Notice the attitude he came to.

Let’s look at some of his admissions of some of the things that he went through. Paul is being a little sarcastic here, and he’s talking to the Corinthians with all of their problems and thinking that they are spiritually rich. So he says:

1-Corinthians 4:8: “Now you are satiated. Now you have been enriched. You have reigned without us. And I would that you did reign, so that we also might reign with you. For I suppose that God has made us apostles last, as it were appointed to death; for we have become a spectacle to the world, both to angels and to men. *We are* fools for the sake of Christ, but you *are* wise in Christ; we *are* weak, but you *are* strong; you *are* glorious, but we *are* without honor. To the present hour we both hunger and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and wander without a home; and we labor, working with our own hands. When railed at, we bless; when persecuted, we bear *it*; when reviled, we entreat; for **unto this day** we are as ***the refuse*** and *the* off-scouring of the world” (vs 8-13).

The filth/refuse means *the dung*; off scouring. So, they went through a lot of it. Again, when we go through and read these:

➤ **So, you think *you’ve* suffered?**

Or I’ve been offended so badly that even God can’t help me! No, that’s not true. Look at what the Apostle Paul went through.

Verse 14: “I do not write these things to make you ashamed, but as my beloved children I warn *you*.” They were getting all puffed up with how great they

were, and what they were doing, and great and marvelous things of their spiritual accomplishments.

1-Corinthians 15:17: “But if Christ has not been raised, your faith *is* vain; you are still in your sins, and those who have fallen asleep in Christ have then perished. **If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all people most miserable**” (vs 17-19).

A perspective on Paul’s thought of his sufferings that he went through. And you can see why he was miserable. Not only miserable from the point of view of what he did to the Church before God called him, but miserable through all the things that he suffered. I mean, just getting hit by one stone is misery enough!. I mean, if it’s a nice thing when it goes thud in the middle of your back and cracked your rib. You imagine how hard it was to breathe after being drug out there nearly dead. I don’t focus just on that one thing, because we’re going to see some other things in just a minute.

1-Corinthians 15:31: “**I die daily** by our boasting...” That rejoicing/boasting was all of the vein celebration in their great accomplishments.

“...which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord” (v 31). That’s what he thought of his life. We can see why. Much more so than we’ve ever thought of in the past.

Verse 32: “If I fought as a man... [it’s only brought out here one little paragraph] ...with beasts in Ephesus...”

When you read Acts 19 and 20, you don’t find anything about him being thrown into the lions. So, Paul only refers to it here, v 32: “If I fought as a man with beasts in Ephesus, what *did it* profit me, if *the* dead are not raised?....”

I don’t know anyone who’s fought lions to serve God in this day and age. We may have to fight traffic, we may have to fight smog, whatever things that it maybe. We may have accusations that may come. We’re not having to fight beasts out there with our bare hands!

“...Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die” (v 32). You say, If you can have all this foolish religion, then it’s all a bunch of nonsense. He said, ‘If I’m teaching all of this nonsense and stupidity that you’re doing—I’m just summarizing it in today’s terminology—why did I fight beasts in Ephesus? What was the need of it?

2-Corinthians 4:8: “On every *side we are* hard pressed, but not crushed...” You talk about having a good attitude in the face of rotten things, this is it.

“...perplexed, but not despairing; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; Always carrying about in *our* bodies the dying of the

Lord Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies. For those of us who are living are always delivered to death for Jesus’ sake, that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our mortal flesh. So then, on the one hand, death is working in us; and on the other hand, life *is working* in you” (vs 8-12).

I don’t quite know how to take this. I think he’s saying ‘death is working in us so that life might be working in you; that’s the goal of our preaching.’ He might also be saying it kind of facetiously too, by saying, death works in us, but life works in you, because of the Church in Corinth thinking it was all high and mighty in everything that way.

Verse 16: “For this reason, we do not lose heart; but if our outward man is being brought to decay... [and it certainly was in his case] ...yet, the inward *man* is being renewed day-by-day.”

Notice how he viewed all of these things, v 17: “For the momentary lightness of our tribulation is working out for us an immeasurably greater *and* everlasting fullness of glory; while we consider not the things *that are* seen, but the things *that are* not seen. For the things *that are* seen *are* temporary; but the things *that are* not seen *are* eternal” (vs 17-18). He constantly kept his mind on Christ. You talk about an example and things that he did there.

2-Corinthians 6:3: “We do not give offense to anyone in anything, so that the ministry may not be blamed; but in everything we are confirming ourselves as servants of God, in much endurance, in tribulation, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults... [riots] ...in labors, in watchings, in fastings... [all of those things that he went through] ...in pureness, in knowledge, in long-suffering, in kindness, in *the* Holy Spirit, in love unfeigned” (vs 3-6).

I tell you what, the Apostle Paul didn’t have any pretense of love in him at all. He had all the stuffing knocked out of him.

Verse 7: “In *the* Word of truth, in *the* power of God; through the armor of righteousness on the right hand and *on the* left, through glory and dishonor, through evil report and good report, as deceivers and true, as unknown and well known; as dying, but behold, we are alive; as chastened, but not put to death; as sorrowful, but always rejoicing; as poor, but enriching many; as having nothing, yet, possessing all things” (vs 7-10). What an appeal! Boy! Could he make an appeal to them!

Verse 11: “O *you* Corinthians! Our mouths have been opened to you, and our hearts have been enlarged *toward you*.”

*Appealing to them to get their lives
straightened out, to get their priority straightened
out!*

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful
Version* by Fred R. Coulter

Scriptural References:

- 1) John 16:1-2, 26-27, 33
- 2) Acts 2:41-46, 42, 46-47
- 3) Acts 3:4-6, 9, 15, 19,26
- 4) Acts 4:1-22, 33
- 5) Acts 5:12-42
- 6) Acts 6:1, 7-15
- 7) Acts 7:47-60
- 8) Acts 8:1-4
- 9) Acts 11:19-20
- 10) Acts 22:3-12
- 11) Acts 26:9-12
- 12) 1 Corinthians 15:9-10
- 13) Galatians 1:13-15
- 14) 1 Timothy 1:12-15
- 15) Acts 26:14-15
- 16) Acts 9:13
- 17) Acts 13:38-52
- 18) Acts 14:1-7, 19-22
- 19) Acts 16:19-26, 38-40
- 20) Acts 20:1-3
- 21) Acts 33:29-30
- 22) Acts 23:1-5
- 23) Galatians 4:13-15
- 24) Galatians 6:11
- 25) 2 Corinthians 12:5-10
- 26) 1 Corinthians 4:8-14
- 27) 1 Corinthians 15:17-19, 31-32
- 28) 2 Corinthians 4:8-12, 16-18
- 29) 2 Corinthians 6:8-11

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Daniel 7
- Acts 25
- Matthew 6
- Acts 9:2; 13:15

FRC:po/bo
Transcribed: 12-27-15

So, You Think *You* Have Suffered? II

Fred R. Coulter

I want you to write down the worst experience you have gone through, or *the worst suffering* you have endured since you've been baptized.

- Was it a divorce you had to go through?
- Was it the loss of a loved one?
- Is it the death of a baby?
- Was it loss of mother and father?
- Was it loss of a whole family?
- Was it that you were disfellowshipped by a minister?
- Was it that someone gossiped about you and really hurt you?
- Was it that someone slandered you, your reputation or character?

I want you to write down the worst thing that you have endured or suffered since you were baptized!

- Has it been sickness?
- Has it been an illness?

I know of a woman who had cancer wracking through her entire body and filled with so much pain that she could hardly endure! I know someone who suffered the loss of a son by suicide because of things that went on in the Church!

- Was it that your husband or wife committed adultery with a minister?
- Was it because you found out that the minister was an adulterer?

They re-arrested Jimmy Swaggart with a prostitute in his car, as if the trial and the other thing was not enough to show what he was. There were a lot of people who were very, very hurt because of that, because he portrayed himself as a minister of Jesus Christ.

If you don't have 'eyes to see and ears to hear' that he isn't, then nothing can help you, I don't believe. I want you to write down the very worst thing that you have endured! Then we're going to ask:

➤ So, you think *you* have suffered?

You think you have gone through certain experiences... Some people have even gone through them to the point that they have given up on God and many have given up on church.

- What is the worst thing you have suffered?
- So, you think *you* have suffered?

If you've suffered persecution:

- What type of persecution?
- How much persecution?

- How has it really affected you?

I talked to a person who was very bitter; extremely bitter with just excoriating vituperous and bitter language, with a vehemence that was almost unrestrainable against a man who was a minister, whom she considered deceived her. Thankfully, she was not in a situation that she was bitter against God.

What is the worst thing that you have suffered while you have been in the Church of God?

Many parts of the New Testament are written for us so that we understand that whatever you have suffered, you are not alone. Whatever you have gone through, you are not the very first.

John 16—I have never experienced this in my life; I've never experienced this happening anywhere. But nevertheless, Jesus said that it would happen. And we'll review a few cases where it did happen.

John 16:1: "I have spoken these things to you so that you will not be offended."

- Are there not a lot of people who are offended because of the actions of other people?

If you are:

- Are you going to let that offense last forever and keep you from getting into the Kingdom of God?

Verse 1: "I have spoken these things to you so that you will not be offended. They shall **cast you out of the synagogues**; furthermore, the time is coming that **everyone who kills you** will think that he is rendering service to God" (vs 1-2).

Let's think on this a minute. They're going to put you out of the synagogues. So, if you've been disfellowshipped, is that anything new; the abuse of authority?

Yes, "...the time is coming that everyone who kills you **will think** that he is rendering service to God." In other words, they're going to do it in the name of God. Do you know anyone who has been killed? I personally do not know anyone who has been killed by saying that they're a Christian and they're dead. We can look back in history, and, yes, that happened. Look at what happened to all of the apostles and the Christians.

What if you were in the synagogue; of course, Paul wreaked havoc and plowed the Church. He gave his vote and consent to *kill* people. He had authority and power from the high priest to arrest

people, put them in chains and bring them to Jerusalem to be put on trial **for being Christian!**

Very vehement! Very hateful!

- What if your husband had been carted off?
- What if your wife had been carted off?
- What if your sons and daughters were *killed* because of that going on?
- Because you believed in Jesus?

We are living in a time when everything is nice and smooth, when none of us are really suffering anything. You may have a sleepless night, a flat tire on your car, have to have your teeth worked on, your eyes worked on—any health problem—but: Have you ever been sitting in church and someone rushed in and grabbed your husband or wife, or your son or daughter, and yanked them out of the chair and carted them off and killed them? *No!*

- What is the worst thing that **you** have ever suffered?
- What would it take for **you** to be offended?
- What would happen in your life **that would cause you**—because of the action of someone else—to **give up on God?**

You need to think on that, because there are a vast number of people out there who have been in Churches of God, who are offended because of what has gone on either sexually, doctrinally, monetarily, or whatever the case may have been. Who then have not been able to resolve the problem, because they think that they have been offended so badly that there's no reason to recover.

Then they will typically look for all kinds of little doctrinal excuses to pick at and throw away to justify their own positions.

Jesus says, 'Woe, because offenses are going to come' (Matt. 18). *They're going to come!* A lot of people have experienced them; I have experienced them. After watching the 'smear job' done on Clarence Thomas—when a nominee for the Supreme Court—I can truly say that what I went through with a 'smear job' was nothing.

In going through it I was hurt, and I had to ask: What am I going to do? *I finally had to come to the conclusion that this has happened in the Church of God many times over!* We're going to understand why. We're going to realize the most important thing that we need to understand is what I'm going to cover here:

Verse 26: "In that day... [when Christ is with the Father] ...you shall ask in My name; and I do not tell you that I will beseech the Father for you, **for the Father Himself loves you...**" (vs 26-27)—is loving you. *The One Who is controlling the vastness of the universe—Who is love—loves you!*

When you really grasp and understand that, and you really live that: What is the worst experience that you have ever endured in your life?

➤ You think **you** have suffered?

Just think about before Jesus was arrested, just before His final prayer to the Father, He said, "...for the Father Himself..." is loving you! When you understand that, no one can ever take that from you. No one can ever deprive that from you. No one can ever rob that from you, unless you willing let them rob you.

There are many warnings in the New Testament where Paul gives warning: **Take heed that no man deceive you by any means!** If a man can cause you to deceive yourself to reject God, *because of what the man has done*, then he has deceived you to take away your eternal life. You have to *choose* to do it! You have to *choose* to let the offence to ferment and sour! We have a lot to say about the Days of Unleavened Bread when you think about it.

Verse 27: "For the Father Himself loves you, because you have loved Me, and have believed that I came forth from God." Anchor in on that and just really solidify yourself on that.

Verse 33: "These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace..." That is peace in every circumstance you find yourself in, whether for good or for evil. So that you have faith and remain loving God in spite of what you go through, endure or suffer. He said:

"...In the world you shall have tribulation..." (v 33). That means *problems, difficulties, frustrations, trials*, anything you want to add into the word *tribulation* that is truth.

"...But be courageous! I have overcome the world" (v 33). Those are not vain, empty and hollow words.

After God called the Apostle Paul, and we've seen what his life was like—going through the book of Acts—what he had suffered and endured. What he brought upon other people, and what he did! There were a lot of people on both sides of the fence who hated the Apostle Paul, who reject him—who would not be in the same room with the Apostle Paul—because he persecuted the Church.

I imagine that there were fathers/mothers, aunts/uncles, brother/sisters who were so totally offended by the order of the Apostle Paul and his gang raiding the synagogues to take them out, even though they were converted, *probably never accepted him*. Then you have all of those on the other side who were the Pharisees, the priests, and

they saw their #1 agent to do their dirty work:

- *the one who was efficient* in destroying Christians
- the one who was *zealous* in going out and bringing them bound to Jerusalem to be convicted and beaten and scourged

he was a turncoat to them! Christ called him and converted him.

Now you know why God had to send Ananias down there. ‘There’s Saul, and he’s blind and I want you to lay hands on him to receive his sight.’ Ananias says, ‘Lord, isn’t he the one who persecutes the Church? I’ve heard what he does.’ God says, ‘Nevertheless, do what I tell you, you go down and do it.’

It’s a good thing that he was told directly, because if he were told by anybody else, I am sure that he would not have done it. I would not have done it, unless I had that kind of message.

Let’s put it in another perspective today. What if you were told by someone, ‘I want you go down to Orange County to the man who killed the two-year-old girl and lay hands on him that he’s going to be a minister for God.’ Would you do it? If just a person told you to do it? *No!* You’d probably tell him to ‘get out of my house, I don’t want you around here and I never want to see you again. That is the most ridiculous thing that there is.’

That’s what a lot of people felt about the Apostle Paul. Nevertheless, ***God called him!*** Then we went through and saw all the things that he suffered as enumerated in the book of Acts.

Let’s just review a little bit about his health condition. He had some conditions that were most difficult, indeed! That’s why the Apostle Paul had to have someone write for him. Some have thought that maybe he’s had an eye disease. It could be that he had an eye problem or disease because of the stoning that he went through, and the beatings that he endured.

But he apparently turned out to be really quite an unpleasant man to look at. So, you have to ask: Are you offended because of the looks of the messenger? Some people are!

Galatians 4:12, Paul appeals to them: “Brethren, I beseech you, be as I *am*, for I also *am* as you *are*: you have not wronged me in anything. Now you know that at first I preached the Gospel to you in *the weakness of the flesh*” (vs 12-13).

Anybody who has gone through what Paul went through, he would have a lot of infirmity of the flesh. I imagine that he had all kinds of scars from the things that he went through. I imagine that he probably had repercussions of being stoned. I don’t

know anyone who has been stoned. Just hit your hand with a hammer once real hard, and you’ll understand what a little pain is.

How would you like to be stoned and left for dead, and then dragged out of the city like a dead dog and thrown out as dead? *That’s precisely what happened to the Apostle Paul!* So, when he says ‘infirmity of the flesh’ he knows what he’s talking about.

“...at first I preached the Gospel to you in *the weakness of the flesh*; and the temptation—namely, my *trial* in my flesh—you despised not, nor rejected with contempt; rather, you received me as a messenger of God, *even* as Christ Jesus Himself. What then was your blessedness? For I bear you witness that, if *it were* possible, you would have plucked out your eyes *and given them to me*” (vs 13-15). That’s quite a statement!

I know no one in the Church who has that particular situation that brethren would be even willing to do it. Most of us have such short fuses—because of the society around us, and I include myself—because of things that have happened, because of knowledge of what is right and true, that we don’t tolerate any of this sort of thing. That’s why God has us in here, so that:

- we can think
- we can understand
- we can know
- we can realize

The reason I’m going through the life of the Apostle Paul is because someone would surely say to me, if I went through all the sufferings of Jesus Christ, that ‘He was the Son of God and He had to go through that.’

Paul talks about how he was taught of God, maybe going up—in vision—clear up to the third heaven. He didn’t know whether in the body or out of the body.

2-Corinthians 12:5: “I will boast of such a one as this; but of myself I personally will not boast, except concerning my weaknesses.” He said he would glory in his infirmities.

Yet, he hardly told anyone what he went through. He doesn’t elaborate on it, he didn’t let Luke write very much about it, except what we have recorded in the book of Acts, which Luke wrote.

Then in the epistles, where we have what he went through, he only did it, because in many ways he was forced to because of the circumstances of people and what they said and did to him.

Verse 6: “But even if I choose to boast, I shall not be a fool...” Not going to have the vanity

and all this sort of thing, what a great guy he was, how much he suffered and what he went through. He said that if he did that he'd be a fool.

"...for I will speak the Truth. However, I will forbear, lest anyone think of me above what he sees me *to be*, or what he hears from me" (v 6).

What does that do with ministerial reverence by people in the congregation? Where ministers nearly demanded this! Where ministers came to the point that they said from the pulpit that their suggestion was the same as a command of God! You compare this with what the Apostle Paul said.

Verse 7: "But in order that I might not be exalted by the abundance of the revelations, *there* was given to me a thorn in the flesh..."—constant physical problem!

"...an angel of Satan to buffet me, so that I might not be exalted" (v 7). Some people say that Paul had a demon following him around everywhere. I don't believe that's the case. I think it was an affliction that came from Satan, much like God allowed to happen to Job. *It was a thorn in the flesh*, 'lest I be exalted above measure.' That gives us a clue as to why some of these things happen.

Verse 8: "I besought the Lord three times for this, that it might depart from me." You may have a situation that you have prayed about, *prayed about* and ***prayed about***, and God has not answered the prayer.

- Does that mean that God has rejected you? *No!*
- Does that mean that God is not hearing your prayers? *No!*

That means that you're in the same category as the Apostle Paul. There are just certain things that God is going to let you have and do because that's the way that it is. What are all the reasons behind it in God's mind, I do not know, nor do you know. God gave Paul the answer:

Verse 9: "But He said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you...'" That's what we need to do, look for the grace of God in everything!

- by grace you are saved
- by grace you are going to enter into the Kingdom of God
- by grace you stand before God
- by grace you stand before God *as Jesus Christ Himself stands before God*

God says that sufficient for you!

"...for My power is made perfect in weakness.'...." (v 9). Because God, at any time, ***can do anything that He wanted to do!***

"...Therefore, most gladly will I boast in my weaknesses that the power of Christ may dwell in me. For this reason, I take pleasure in weaknesses, in insults, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ..." (vs 9-10).

That's one little verse that says an awful lot. What Paul went through was absolutely incredible!

"...for when I am weak, then I am strong. I have become a fool *in this* boasting. You have forced me *to do so*, when I ought to have been commended by you. For in no way was I inferior to those highly exalted *so-called* apostles—even if I am nothing" (vs 10-11). That's referring to the hotshot false apostles, as we will see a little later.

In many of the things that happened in the Church at Corinth are happening in the Churches of God today. Many of the same things. When I started the series in 1-Corinthians, I got about halfway through and it was so depressing because of all of the problems, I ceased going through it until at a later date. After all, how can you preach to a congregation week after week and go through a series when absolutely none of those things apply to the congregation.

We're going to see some of the other things that the Apostle Paul went through, what he endured, what he lists here very quickly and precisely without any elaboration. What we are going to do with some of these things is a little elaboration on them and find out what he went through.

Here's the Church at Corinth that is carnal, they're fighting, arguing and party-spirited. They're following this man and that man and allowing fornication in the congregation of the worst kind that has ever been mentioned. Yet, they thought that they were on the verge of really being able to reign with Christ. At this time when he was writing, they were anticipating Christ's return in a very short period of time.

1-Corinthians 4:7[transcriber's correction]: "For what makes you superior *to others*? And what do you have **that you did not receive**?...."

- What does anyone have from God that he didn't receive?
- What does anyone have in life, period, that they didn't receive?
- Did you create yourself?
- Did you make your own self?
- ***NO! Everything you have you received!***

But if you also received *it*, why are you boasting as if you did not receive *it*? That is you did it all on your own!

He's saying this very facetiously. He says, v 8: "Now you are satiated. Now you have been enriched. You have reigned without us. And I would that you did reign, so that we also might reign with you." *I really to wish you were in the Kingdom of God that I might be there with you and reign with you.*

Verse 9: "For I suppose that God has made us apostles last..." So much for apostolic authority! So much for *the one, the only apostle on earth!* Maybe you can now understand the vanity involved in that.

"...as it were appointed to death... [which they all did with the exception of John] ...for we have become a spectacle to the world, both to angels and to men" (v 9). What he's going through here was so confounding that he's saying it's even difficult for angels to understand.

Verse 10: "We *are* fools for the sake of Christ, but you *are* wise in Christ; we *are* weak, but you *are* strong; you *are* glorious, but we *are* without honor. To the present hour we both hunger and thirst... [Anyone gone without food for Christ?] ...and are naked..." (vs 10-11).

- Is that your condition?
- Have you suffered?
- What is it that you have gone through?
- Are all of these things all fluffed up in your mind so much, and fermented with the leaven of bitterness that you can't even see the reality of your own situation?
- Could that be?

"...and are buffeted, and wander without a home" (v 11). I don't know about you, but I know about me, and I can tell you that if I sleep on a bed that I'm not used to, I really am fit to be tied. When I look at that and see that Paul had no certain dwelling place, and was naked and thirsty and scorned, what a foolish, stupid thing for me to be upset about.

Verse 12: "And we labor, working with our own hands..." Paul later admitted that was one of his mistakes. He had the authority to collect the tithes and offerings from the people, but he didn't do it so he wouldn't be chargeable to them.

What happened, it created a whole lot of problems because they took it as a 'free ride' from God. Paul was bending over backward to do it.

"...When *railed at*, we *bless*; when *persecuted*, we *bear it*; when *reviled*, we *entreat*; for unto this day we are as *the refuse and the off-scouring of the world*" (vs 12-13). That is dung, the refuse, the sewer, the worst possible part of human life. Is that clear? Is that understandable? That is graphic language, but it is so.

Verse 14: "I do not write these things to make you ashamed, but as my beloved children I warn *you*." Maybe out of this we can take all of this as a warning and back away from these things that we think we have been offended about.

Truly and honestly go before God and ask God to help us see that He loves us, and that everything else beneath that needs to be put in proper perspective.

Again, we'll see the attitude that the Apostle Paul had, and when you read 1-Cor.—this is why God has it here—in spite of all the problems that they went through, ***God still loved those in Corinth!*** He preserved it for us today ***so that we may know that God loves us!*** If God knows every hair on our head, He certainly understands what we have gone through.

1-Corinthians 15:9: "For I am the least of the apostles, *and* am not fit *even* to be called an apostle, because ***I persecuted the Church of God.***" We saw how he did that.

Verse 10: "But by *the* grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me has not been in vain; rather, I have labored more abundantly than all of them; however, *it was* not I, but the grace of God with me." So, what did the Apostle Paul do? *He used that as a driving force and an impetus to work and to do God's will* to preach the Gospel wherever he went. And all that would do is bring more persecution upon him.

It's interesting that he wrote to this church that had all the righteousness in the world and nearly ready for the Kingdom of God if it would come tomorrow. So, he had to tell them that they hadn't gone through anything, yet.

2-Corinthians 4:6: "Because *it is* God Who commanded *the* light to shine out of darkness, Who shined into our hearts *the* light of the knowledge of the glory of God in *the* face of Jesus Christ." Again, focusing in on and pointing to the most important thing we need to keep in our heart and mind and our very lives and beings, regardless of what we go through.

Verse 7: "Now, we have this treasure... [of God's Holy Spirit and the love of God toward us] ...in earthen vessels... [our physical bodies] ...in order that the supremacy of the power may be of God, and not from us." Not to boast in what he is and what he had done or accomplished, whatever.

Verse 8: "On every *side we are* hard pressed..." There was hardly a day that the Apostle Paul went through that wasn't a passel of trouble.

"...but not crushed; perplexed..." [frustrated. Have you ever been frustrated? *Paul was!*] ...but not

despairing.” Some people have allowed themselves to fall into a total state of despair.

Verse 9: “Persecuted... [and even though persecuted] ...but **not forsaken**... [the obvious implication is *of God*] ...cast down... [went through a lot of difficulties] ...but not destroyed; always carrying about in *our* bodies the dying of the Lord Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies. For those of us who are living **are always delivered to death for Jesus’ sake**, that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our mortal flesh. So then, on the one hand, death is working in us; and on the other hand, life *is working* in you” (vs 9-12). There are two way this could be:

1. He’s saying that because we are going through all of this as apostles, we are doing this so that the Spirit of God can be in you and the life works in you.
2. It could be that Paul is again taunting them because of the foolishness of what they were doing, by saying that ‘death works in us, but oh yes, life works in you.’

Isn’t that a way that a lot of people figure when they get all self-righteous and uplifted. It may be that.

Verse 13: “And having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, ‘I believed, therefore, I have spoken,’ we also believe; therefore, we also speak, knowing that He Who raised the Lord Jesus *from the dead* shall also raise us through Jesus, and shall present *us* with you. For all things *are* for your sakes, so that the abounding grace may cause the thanksgiving of many to overflow unto the glory of God. **For this reason, we do not lose heart...**” (vs 13-16).

- he didn’t give up
- he didn’t faint
- he kept right at it

“...but if our outward man is being brought to decay...”

Regardless of what happens to the physical, the outward, and nearly ready for the Kingdom of God if it were to come tomorrow. Paul had to tell them, ‘Look, you haven’t gone through anything, yet.’

(go to the next track)

What is the worst thing that you have ever suffered?

2 Corinthians 6:5 “**In stripes...**” Paul was beaten many times. Have you ever been beaten?

“...**in imprisonments...**” Have you ever been thrown in jail?

“...**in tumults...**”—riots against him. Have you ever preached so strongly that there was a riot in

the hall that you were preaching in, and you had to leave to save your life?

“...**in labors...**” If it isn’t served to you on a golden platter, you wouldn’t do it.

“...**in watchings...**” How many times did he have to watch out for false brethren? And Jews ready to get him?

“...**in fastings**, in pureness, in knowledge, in long-suffering, in kindness, in *the* Holy Spirit, in love unfeigned” (vs 5-6). That’s why you get through all of these things. That’s why he just made a very short mention of them.

Verse 7: “In *the* Word of Truth, in *the* power of God; through the armor of righteousness on the right hand and *on the* left, through glory and dishonor, through evil report and good report, as deceivers and true, as unknown and well known; as dying, but behold, we are alive; as chastened, but not put to death; as sorrowful, but always rejoicing; as poor, but enriching many; as **having nothing, yet, possessing all things**” (vs 7-10).

If you have the Spirit of God and you look to Christ, you, in reality, ***possess all things!*** Everything else does not count. This generation that we are living in is going to learn that lesson *because God is going to root it all out!*

There may be a lot of suffering ahead of us, yet; it’s going to come! But you can almost be guaranteed, since you’ve had all of these good times over here with hardly any difficulties, if you’re going to be faithful to God, ***you know that you’re going to have this time down here when it’s going to be very difficult!***

Verse 11: “O *you* Corinthians! Our mouths have been opened to you, and our hearts have been enlarged *toward you*. You are not suppressed by us, but you are restricted in your own hearts” (vs 11-12). He’s saying, ‘Look, we’re not causing you the problems and difficulties, but these problems and difficulties of you have just gotten to our innermost being.

Verse 13: “Now in return *for our ministry to you* (I am speaking to you as to children), you should also enlarge *your hearts toward us*. Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and lawlessness *have* in common? And what fellowship *does* light *have* with darkness?” (vs 13-14). Some of them were bringing a lot of the problems on themselves.

2-Cor. 11—I just imagine when the Apostle Paul was writing this and seeing what he puts here, maybe you can understand several things:

1. how he felt about the people
2. how he felt about his calling from God

3. what a terrible condition that the Church was in, that he would even have to write this

It's preserved for us today so that we can understand what was going on. For us, in our lives everything we go through is unique and has never happened before from our perspective. But it's really happened before, and even worse.

2-Corinthians 11:13: "For such *are* false apostles—deceitful workers who are transforming themselves into apostles of Christ." How many people are out there with 'itching ears'—as Paul said—waiting for new doctrine to throw away doing the Truth and living God's way. Just so ready and anxious for it, it's unbelievable.

Verse 14: "And *it is* no marvel, for Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. Therefore, *it is* no great thing if his servants also transform themselves as ministers of righteousness—whose end shall be according to their works. Again I say, no one should consider me a fool; but if otherwise, receive me even as a fool..." (vs 14-16). I'll even take that, but "...receive me..."—take me serious.

"...that I also may boast a little" (v 16). He has to give a little cushion of his introduction here of what he's going to say. He's saying, 'I really don't want to say this, because it's really foolish and it really doesn't amount to anything. But since your situation is so desperate and you're listening to all of these false apostles and teachings that I better relate to you so you understand.

Verse 17: "What I am *now* saying, I do not speak according to *the* Lord... [this has nothing to do with the Lord] ...but as in foolishness, in this confidence of boasting. Since many boast according to *the* flesh, I also will boast" (vs 17-18).

He's going to say, 'If you want to stack up the cards, I'm going to stack them up and we're going to look at them. You've got all these false apostles and teachers over here claiming their doing this, I'm going to be a fool and say what I've gone through.'

Verse 19: "For since you are *so* intelligent, **you gladly bear with fools.**" That is so true! People put up with fools and stupidity gladly, somehow hoping that everything is going to be fine.

Verse 20: "For you bear *it* if anyone brings you into bondage, if anyone devours *you*, if anyone takes *from you*, if anyone exalts himself, if anyone beats you on the face." How many abuses have people taken in the Church? Only to sit there in fear and say, 'If I leave the Church I'm leaving God, because this is the only place where God is working on the earth.'

- *Nonsense!*
- *Balderdash!*
- *Foolishness!*
- *A direct lie!*
- Is a man going to tell God what He can do?
- Who He can call?
- Who He can give His Spirit to?

To those who are hearing this today, this does not apply. They've suffered many things to be here. This is for those who are going to hear this! This is for those of you who think that you had really suffered and you haven't gotten a tablespoon full of sand out of the sandbox to even start to begin.

Verse 21: "I speak as though we were under reproach for being weak; but in whatever *way* anyone else is bold (I speak in foolishness), I also am bold. Are they Hebrews? So am I..." (vs 21-22).

I heard a man that he can't get out of preaching because he was 'born to do this.' Don't come and tell me that you're *born* to do it.

Verse 22: "Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they *the* seed of Abraham? So am I. Are they servants of Christ? (I am speaking as if I were out of my mind.) So am I, above *and beyond measure*—in labors more abundant... [and he did] ...in stripes above measure... [had been beaten and scourged; 'I can't even count them,' Paul says] ...in imprisonments more frequent, in deaths often" (vs 22-23). Lying there, sitting there, groaning there, moaning there, saying, 'O God, am I going to live to see the dawn?'

Verse 24: "Five times from *the* Jews I received forty *stripes* less one." When did he receive those? *When he went into the synagogues to preach, and they grabbed him, took him and beat him right in the synagogue!*

When Paul went to preach in the synagogues, it was not a friendly little invitation to come down and speak to this loving congregation that is so puffed up in its vanity. 'We're just all nice, good, loving folks.' I say that foolishly! It was a fight. There were riots in the synagogues because of what he said.

Here was one who was a renegade, that persecuted the Church, whom God called. Who was now a renegade to every living walking Jew because he turned his back on the high priest, and is the preaching of Christ that is going to end the temple system in Jerusalem.

When he walked into that congregation, in the synagogue, he knew that he was walking into a snake's den. So, five times that happened to him.

Verse 25: "Three times I was beaten with

rods; once I was stoned..." I'd like to see your back. You want to show me your back? Show me all the difficulties and problems that you have gone through. And I say that foolishly! I dare say that if you had one boil in the middle of your back you would be laid out, moaning and groaning and complaining because of the pain.

"...three times I was shipwrecked..." (v 25). You would think that if God was is a God of love, why did He let the Apostle Paul go through all of this? Couldn't God have stopped it? How many times have we blamed God when God had nothing to do with it? God allowed time, circumstances and people, and He allowed these things to be.

- Why did God let my son die?
- Why did God let my husband die?
- Why did God let my wife die?
- Why did God let me get in this car wreck?
- Why did God let me get cancer?
- Why did God let me get disfellowshipped?

Can we set those all over here in its proper perspective?

- that, my beloved brethren, is part of life
- that is part of being Christians
- that is part of our calling

That's why Jesus said, 'I'm telling you this so you won't be offended.'

"...a night and a day I spent in the deep.... [I would imagine he was praying] ...*I have been* in journeyings often..." (vs 25-26). He didn't have a car or a bus. He had his sandals, maybe sometimes a donkey. But it doesn't report: 'Timothy, since I'm done preaching here, saddle up the jackass so we can go on to the next church.'

When he said journeys, he walked! Yet, there are some people who will not even take an hour's time to drive to church.

"...in perils of rivers... [trying to cross some of those rivers in boats] ...in perils of robbers, in perils from *my own* race..." (v 26)—who were waiting for him, sending messengers ahead and waiting for him. There are times in the book of Acts that he had to turn around go the other way because the Jews were waiting to kill him.

➤ **So, you think *you* have suffered!**

"...in perils from *the* Gentiles, in perils in *the* city, in perils in *the* desert, in perils on *the* sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Besides *all* these things from the *world* outside, **pressing on me daily is the care of all the churches**" (vs 26-28).

- Do you want to be the Apostle Paul?

- Do you want to set yourself up as some great minister for something?
- *You'd better think again, because that's not the way it's going to be!*

➤ **So, you think *you* have suffered?**

If Paul, in all of this, could rejoice, what should we do?

Luke 14:26 is where we are to always begin in whatever you do as a Christian. If you did not make this commitment at the time you were baptized, then you better reaffirm it and do it now. God is going to hold you accountable for it, because there is no way that you're going to enter into the Kingdom of God until you do what Jesus has said here. There were great multitudes following Him, because He was healing the sick and all that sort of thing.

Luke 14:26: "If anyone comes to Me... [that's what we're professing] ...and does not hate his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brothers and sisters, and, in addition, his own life also, he cannot be My disciple."

- What is *your* commitment to God?
- Is that *your* commitment to God?
- Have you said, 'God, this is the most important thing that there is'?

Whether for life or death, whether for relatives or whatever thing that there is that may come including my own life, you cannot be a disciple of Jesus.

Maybe this will help us put our perspectives correct. Maybe this will help us understand where we need to look. That's why Jesus said that you have to 'love God with all your heart, mind, soul and being.' If you do that you will have no problem with v 26. In addition to that commitment, He gives us one thing more that we need to do:

Verse 27: "And whoever does not carry his cross..."—where you suffer, where you are crucified. We are with Christ buried in baptism unto His death of crucifixion.

The Apostle Paul said, 'I am crucified with Christ, yet, I live. Yet, not I, but Christ lives in me.' You have to bear your cross.

"...and **come after Me...**" (v 27) God doesn't have to prove anything to anyone. God is! Do we want what God has to give us? *We've got to come after Him!*

- we have to walk in His footsteps
- we have to walk in His way
- we have to walk in His Truth

If you don't do that, He says, "...[you] cannot be My disciple" (v 27).

➤ **So, you think you've suffered for Christ?**

Let's understand something that may have perplexed you, and analyze it a little bit differently from the point of view that we need to realize what is actually being said here.

Luke 22:31: "Then the Lord said, 'Simon, Simon, listen *well*. Satan has demanded to have all of you, to sift as wheat.'" Now, that's kind of an awesome thing to think of; that Satan came and said, 'I want Peter, and I'm going to sift him as wheat.'

Jesus didn't say, 'I stopped him from doing that.' He said, v 32: "But **I have prayed for you, that your faith may not fail...**" That's what is important in any trial that you go through. It's like the sifting of wheat, and what does the sifting of wheat get rid of? *The chaff!* Yes, it does! "But **I have prayed for you, that your faith may not fail...**"

So, regardless of what you go through, God is not going to let your faith fail, if you turn to Him!

Note 1-Cor. 3, about every man's building on the foundation of Christ is going to be tried, whether he builds with gold, silver or precious stone, or wood, hay and stubble. Peter had some stubble that was going to be gotten rid of. Jesus did not prevent it, but He said, "But **I have prayed for you, that your faith may not fail...**"

God isn't going to stop a lot of things. But He's praying that your faith not fail.

"...and **when you are converted**, strengthen your brethren.... [Peter's answer] ...And he said to Him, 'Lord, I am ready to go with You both to prison and to death'" (vs 32-33).

I can look back and see the litany of ministers that stood up in the same kind of vanity and said the same thing, the minister that they were worshiping and idolizing, 'I will walk into the sea. If he walks into the sea, I will follow him.' The one who said that is now cowering in his home, deprived of all duties as a minister. Where is your faith?

Verse 34: "But He said, 'I tell you, Peter, *the* cock shall in no wise crow today before you have denied knowing Me three times.'"

- Is that the sifting that Peter was going to go through? *I'm sure that was part of it!*
- Did God abandon Peter because he denied Him? *No!*
- Did Christ reject him because of that? *No!*
- Did Peter do that? *Yes!*
- Did he go through it? *Yes!*

Verse 54: "And after arresting Him, they led *Him away* and brought Him into the house of the high priest...." Every lynching takes place in the

middle of the night or on the weekend.

"...Now, Peter was following at a distance. And when they had kindled a fire in *the* middle of the court, and had sat down together, Peter sat among them. And a certain maid saw him sitting by the light; and after looking at him intently, she said, 'Now this one was with Him.' But he denied Him, saying, 'Woman, I do not know Him.'" (vs 54-57).

- Did Peter lie? *Yes, he lied!*
- Did he deny Christ? *Yes, he denied Christ!*
- Could God have stopped it? *God can do anything!*
- Did God stop it? *No!*
- What did Jesus say? *'I prayed for you, Peter, that your faith fail not!'*

Verse 58^[transcriber's correction]: "And after a little *while*, another saw him *and* said, 'You also are *one* of them.' But Peter said, 'Man, I am not.' Now, after about an hour had passed, a certain other *man* strongly affirmed, saying, 'In truth, this one also was with Him, for he is indeed a Galilean.' And Peter said, 'Man, I do not know what you are talking about.' And immediately, while he was yet speaking, the cock crowed" (vs 58-60). It shows in another account that he blasphemed and cursed, and then the cock crowed!

- What cock is going to crow in your life?
- What is the wakeup call for you?
- What is the thing that is going to turn you back to God?

God hasn't given up on you, yet! Nor on any of us!

➤ **What is it that *you* have suffered?**

- Compared to what we've gone through here, of what account is it really?
- Are you willing that the wounds be healed?
- Are you willing that your life be changed?
- Are you willing to let the cock crow in your life?
- Are you willing for you to do as Peter did and return to God?
 - ✓ though you may have denied Him?
 - ✓ though you may have not committed the unpardonable sin?
- What is it that you are willing to do?

I've often thought about this, here's Peter out there and just saved his own neck; the same stupidity and vanity where he said, 'Lord, I'll go to the death with You. I'll go to prison with You. This isn't going to happen to You'—which is inspired by Satan the devil!

- Did Satan sift him? *Yes!*
- Does God know everything that goes on? *Yes!*

It's the same way in our lives today.

- Is God looking into your life today? *Yes!*

Just picture yourself here as Peter. This was really a miserable rotten and terrible thing that he did. Not once, not twice, but three times within the space of about an hour and a half. The cock crowed!

Verse 61: "Then the Lord turned *and* looked at Peter..." I imagine that they looked eyeball to eyeball! That day is going to come for every one of us! One day, for better or for worse, we're going to look Christ in the eyes: for a blessing or for a curse. Just remember that.

"...and Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how He had said to him, 'Before *the* cock crows, you shall deny Me three times.' And Peter went outside *and* wept bitterly" (vs 61-62). He repented bitterly! He was able to be pricked in his heart because of that, to realize his foolishness and stupidity, his rottenness and vanity, and carnality. Yet, Jesus said, ***'I pray that your faith fail not!'***

Regardless of what the sifting is in your life, Jesus has prayed that your faith fail not! Jesus has prayed that we have been kept from being devoured by Satan the devil. That we have been saved from him. So was Peter! So was Paul! But they were still sifted!

Whatever it is that God is doing to let you be sifted, do you have that commitment to God? Do you have that total dedication to God that in spite of everything that goes on, regardless of what happens in your own particular life, that you love God with all heart, mind, soul and being, and that *you* love Him more than father, mother, brother, sister, wife, husband, children, lands, and your own life also?

If you do, nothing else matters! We're going to see that Peter learned some things. We will see that, yes, Peter did learn the lesson. He had to learn it to the very, very end. Here is what Peter had to go through three times:

John 21:15: "Therefore, when they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, 'Simon, *son* of Jonas, do you love Me more than these?' *And* he said to Him, 'Yes, Lord. You know that I love You.'...." Not the strong love of 'agape' love, but this is the friendship love.

"...He said to him, 'Feed My lambs.' He said to him again a second time, 'Simon, *son* of Jonas, do you love Me?' *And* he said to Him, 'Yes, Lord. You know that I love You.' He said to him, 'Shepherd My sheep.' He said to him the third time, 'Simon, *son* of Jonas, do you love Me?' Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, 'Do you love Me?' *And* he said to Him, 'Lord, You know all things. You know that I love You.' Jesus

said to him, 'Feed My sheep'" (vs 15-18). This is the lesson for every minister:

- Are you a minister?
- Do you love God?
- Are you feeding the flock?
- What are you doing?
- Do you play politics?
- Do you submit to authority that isn't right?
- Do you blind your eyes with steel trapdoors?

so you can

- get your paycheck?
- have your car?
- stay in your church home?

and you know that

- you're compromising the Truth
- you're not feeding the flock
- you're changing doctrine
- you're preaching things that are wrong
- Are you willing to put yourself to the test?
- Do you love Jesus more than anything else in the world?
- ***Feed His sheep!***

Even after Peter went through this, he was told he was going to be led about and crucified, and that's how you're going to die.

1-Peter 4:12: "Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery trial among you *which is* taking place to test you, as if some strange thing *were* happening to you."

Does that verse have any meaning to you? More than before? ***Sure does!***

Verse 13: "But to the degree that you have a share in the sufferings of Christ, rejoice so that at the revelation of His glory, you also may rejoice exceedingly. If you are reviled for *the* name of Christ, *you are* blessed because the *Spirit* of glory and the Spirit of God is resting upon you; on their part He is blasphemed, but on your part He is glorified" (vs 13-14).

Do you think that Peter learned the lesson of John 21? ***Yes, he did!***

1-Peter 5:1: "*The* elders who *are* among you I exhort, even as a fellow elder... [Peter wrote this when he was old] ...and an *eyewitness* of the sufferings of Christ, and a partaker of the glory that is about to be revealed: **Feed the flock of God *that is* among you**, exercising oversight not by compulsion, but willingly; not in fondness of dishonest gain, but *with an eager attitude*; **not as exercising lordship over your possessions**; but *by* being examples to the flock *of God*. And when the Chief Shepherd is manifested, you shall receive an unfading, *eternal* crown of glory. In the same manner, *you* younger

men be subject to *the* older men; and all of you be subject to one another, **being clothed with humility...**" (vs 1-5).

- Did he learn the lesson of humility? *Yes, he did!*
- Did he have the chaff sifted out of his life? *Yes, he did!*
- Did his faith remain? *Yes, it did!*
- **Is yours going to remain?**

"...**being clothed with humility** because God sets Himself against *the* proud, but He gives grace to *the* humble. Be humbled, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that He may exalt you in *due* time; **casting all your cares upon Him, because He cares for you**" (vs 5-7).

- whatever your problem
- whatever your difficulty
- whatever your trial
- whatever your circumstances
- whatever you are suffering

Verse 8: "Be sober! Be vigilant! For your adversary *the* devil is prowling about as a roaring lion, seeking anyone he may devour. Whom resist, steadfast in the faith..." (vs 8-9). Did Peter learn that lesson? *Yes, he did!*

"...knowing *that* the same afflictions are being fulfilled among your brethren who *are* in the world. Now, may **the God of all grace, Who has called us unto His eternal glory in Christ Jesus**, after *you* have suffered a little while, **Himself perfect you, establish, strengthen, and settle you**" (vs 9-10).

There's a resolution to all of these problems one way or the other!

Let's go back and see how the Apostle Paul counted all of these things.

Romans 8:14: "For as many as are led by *the* Spirit of God, these are *the* sons of God." There's the whole story of being a Christian.

Verse 15: "Now, you have not received a spirit of bondage again unto fear, but you have received *the* Spirit of sonship, whereby we call out, 'Abba, Father.'" You can go to God at any time with any problem, anywhere, under any circumstances. God will forgive it and strengthen you; God will rescue you. Maybe not in the way that you think. Maybe He won't rescue you from what *you think* you ought to be rescued from, but God is going to add to you:

- faith
- love
- understanding

'to strengthen, establish and settle you.'

Verse 16: "The Spirit itself bears witness conjointly with our own spirit, *testifying* that we are *the* children of God. Now, if *we are* children, *we are* also heirs—truly, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ—if indeed we suffer together with Him, so that we may also be glorified together with Him" (vs 16-17). After all that the Apostle Paul went through, look at his attitude toward this.

Verse 18: "For I reckon... [calculate, figure, estimate] ...**that the sufferings of the present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us.**" That is really quite a statement! That's what we need to look to. Can you imagine with the spiritual state of mind that the Apostle Paul had to come though:

- he was beaten on every side
- he was persecuted by every hand
- he was chased from town to town
- he was despised
- he was hated
- he was rejected

Even of his own brethren! He said that ***those things re not even worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us!*** That's something! Maybe you will understand v 28 a little more:

Verse 28: "And we know... [Did the Apostle Paul know? *Yes!*] ...that **all things work together for good...**" You might have to go over that many times to understand that. You may have to go through many sufferings to really grasp it.

"...to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose..." [which we have been] ...because those whom He did foreknow He also predestinated *to be* conformed to the image of His own Son, that He might be *the* Firstborn among many brethren. Now, whom He predestinated, these He also called; and whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified" (vs 28-30).

If you have this attitude that the Apostle Paul had, as motivated by the Spirit of God, there is *nothing* that can prevent you from entering into the Kingdom of God.

- in spite of all the sifting of Satan the devil that may come your way
- in spite of the suffering
- in spite of depravation
- in spite of whatever may be

Verse 31: "What then shall we say to these things? If God *is* for us, who *can be* against us?" There's not one thing that can be against you really. You may have to suffering some thing, go through

some things. I have; you have! I look at them now and the anguish that I went through, and I'm really ashamed to even mention—from the point of view after studying what the Apostle Paul went through—that I suffered. I didn't suffer! I had a little anguish, but I did not suffer. I was not beaten, I was not imprisoned, I maybe suffered some rejection, but the question comes down to all of these:

- Did I believe God?
- Do you believe God?
- Do you love God?

God is for you, nothing can be against you—***nothing!***

Verse 32: "He Who did not spare even His own Son..." Took His Son and crucified Him for the sins of this world. Not for the righteousness of the world, but for the *sins* of the world! For the evil, wretchedness and every rotten, filthy thing that can ever be described.

"...but gave Him up for us all... [He did it for you and me, everyone that God calls] ...how shall He not also grant us all things together with Him? Who shall bring an accusation against *the* elect of God? God *is the One* Who justifies. Who *is* the one that condemns? *It is* Christ Who died, but rather, Who is raised again, Who is even *now* at *the* right hand of God, ***and Who is also making intercession for us***" (vs 32-34).

What is He saying? ***I am praying that your faith fail not!***

Verse 35: "What shall separate us from the love of Christ? *Shall* tribulation..." And all of these things that Paul suffered to the greatest degree of any human being outside of Christ.

"...or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? Accordingly, it is written, 'For Your sake we are killed all the day long; we are reckoned as sheep for *the* slaughter.' But **in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him Who loved us.** For I am persuaded..." (vs 35-38).

- Do you think Paul was persuaded?
- Do you think he really had conviction of this?
- *I say that, yes, he did!*
- Are you persuaded?

"...that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (vs 38-39).

- What is the worst thing that you have ever suffered for God?

- Are you willing to put it aside and come back to God?

Christ has prayed that your faith fail not!

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version* by Fred R. Coulter

Scriptural References:

- 1) John 16:1-2, 26-27, 33
- 2) Galatians 4:12-15
- 3) 2 Corinthians 12:5-11
- 4) 1 Corinthians 4:7-14
- 5) 1 Corinthians 15:9-10
- 6) 2 Corinthians 4:6-16
- 7) 2 Corinthians 6:5-14
- 8) 2 Corinthians 11:13-28
- 9) Luke 14:26-27
- 10) Luke 22:31-34, 54-62
- 11) John 21:12-18
- 12) 1 Peter 4:12-14
- 13) 1 Peter 5:1-10
- 14) Romans 8:14-18, 28-39

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Matthew 18
- 1 Corinthians 3

Also referenced: Sermon Series: *1st and 2nd Corinthians*

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To Return to God

Fred R. Coulter

Today's sermon is a very important subject and topic that we need to get into the Bible to understand today. I especially want to talk to those who are the 'scattered sheep':

- who have been cast away
- who have been disfellowshipped
- who have been discouraged
- who have given up on God
 - ✓ either because of the actions of men
 - ✓ because of the actions of people within the Church
 - ✓ because of the changing the doctrines by a church
 - ✓ because, frankly, too many people abuse the Bible for *their own* ends and means rather than preaching and teaching the Word of God as they ought to

Let's understand something very important concerning God and concerning ourselves. Let's also understand that *we can come back to God*. Many times when were out there, because, of the difficulties and problems that are in the world that are in our particular lives, and each one of us knows down deep inside in our heart the innermost part of our being.

As one man told me who had left the church for 20 years because of some of the things I just mentioned.

He came back, and when I first talk to him he said you know, all during that time, I didn't live what I believed, but he said *I never forgot* what I believed. I just wonder:

- How many people are in that same exact situation?
- How many people are out there knowing that they need to return to God?
- How many people are out there wondering how to return to God.

Having such a, probably, a deep guilt complex because you know you're not doing right. And every time you try and do something, your conscience is going to be gnawing at you, and actually what that is, that is *God's Spirit pricking your conscience* to remind you.

Let's see something very important, because what God has started He's going to finish. What God has begotten in your life He is going to complete. First of all, we need to ask a couple of basic questions, which we'll answer as we get into this:

- If you have not completely rejected God, is

there any sin that God cannot forgive?

- If you have not completely rejected God, cannot God's love cover your weakness?
- Doesn't the Bible tell us that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God?

Too many people who want to come back to God do not come back because they feel so ashamed. They would know that if they would come back to the Church that they had left, all they would hear from the minister for months and months of preaching from the pulpit: how dastardly, how miserable, how sinful, how rotten that these people have been who have left God. But is that so?

Jesus is talking to the scribes and the Pharisees there, John 10:26: "But you do not believe because you are not of My sheep, as I said to you. **My sheep hear My voice, and I know them**..." (vs 26-27).

Christ knows you! If you're one of the 'scattered sheep,' as it were, on the mountains being scattered around:

- God knows you
- God knows where you are
- God wants you
- God is not going to let you go

That's why your conscience is bothering you! That's why you still long in the innermost part of your being to be right with God. You can be right with God beginning with this promise:

"...I know them, and they follow Me. And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; and **no one shall take them out of My hand**" (vs 27-28).

Regardless of your backsliding, regardless of your sins and problems, as long as you're alive and as long as you can repent ***you can return back to God!*** Christ said, "...no one shall take them out of My hand."

Verse 29: "My Father, Who has given *them* to Me, is greater than all; and **no one** has the power to seize *them* from My Father's hand."

Because if you received the Spirit of God—that is the begetting from God the Father—*He is never going to let that not produce what He wants!* You have your choice in it; ***you can come back to God!***

Luke 18—this is what too many people would be confronted with if they actually came back and told the same story that I just related to you of this man who had given up on God for 20 years. But he gave up

on God because:

- the ministers were harsh
- the authority was overbearing
- of all the hypocrisy that he saw
- of all the infighting of the leadership
- of all the extravagant spending and wasting of money and tithes, which he would give

So, they're afraid to come back because of this attitude.

Luke 18:9: "And to some who trusted in themselves..." That's the biggest problem that there is with the ministers of the Church of God today wherever the Church of God is. They are interested in law, sin and condemnation. They're are not interested in love, forgiveness or covering these things under the blood of Jesus Christ. They have the same attitude as this man who despised others. Oh yes, they were righteous in their own eyes.

Verse 10: "Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one *was* a Pharisee... [most righteous most strict as can be] ...and the other a tax collector." You can say the meanest and most hated IRS agent you could ever imagine today.

Verse 11: "The Pharisee stood and prayed **with himself**..." It's the most interesting that he wasn't praying to God he was praying with himself His prayer got no higher than the words out of his mouth. If you're going to return to God if you're going to return to a congregation, you don't want to come to a congregation where there is a Pharisee in charge. Because even though **God** will forgive you, even though **God** wants you back, you will never live under this condemnation. God doesn't want you to. That's the whole purpose of this parable.

"...in this manner: 'God, I thank You that I am not like other men ...'" (v 11).

- oh, yes, I'm better
- God, I'm special
- God, I'm good
- God, I have authority and rank
- God I can preach
- God I can teach
- oh yes, I was born to this, as one man said

"—extortioners... [you shouldn't be] ...unrighteous... [you shouldn't be] ...adulterers... [you shouldn't be] ...or even as this tax collector" (v 11).

Isn't that what's wrong with the Churches of God today. Everyone is judged in this little corner or this little box or their little place. Why? *Because the love of God and the mercy of God is not preached and*

taught! They end up just like this.

Narrating his righteousness to God, v 12: "I fast twice in the week, *and* I give a tithe *of* everything that I gain."

My, my, he's really some guy! But notice the publican who knew he was a sinner. Everyone knows! I know I'm a sinner; you know you're a sinner! Every one of us down deep inside knows that we can't give ourselves eternal life. Part of our problem in backsliding and going away from God is not only just the problems we've encountered with other people, but because we somehow think that we are going to get rid of sin *ourselves*.

Too many people, when they sin, don't repent. They say, 'I'll repent when I get things right,' which is an incongruous statement when you think about it. *You can't make things right unless you repent!* Repentance is what makes it right. There is nothing you can do to undo the past. The latest example would be what if you murdered someone. Can you bring life back to that person? *No!* How much could you do to restore. *Nothing!*

Repentance is the key, just like this publican, v 13: "And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven..."—guilty conscience, knowing he sinned and feeling bad inside.

You know the time will come that you're going to feel like there is no one in the whole entire world who loves you, wants you or cares for you. But I'm here to tell you **God does and Christ does!** It's like this publican.

"...but beat himself on *the* chest, saying, 'God, be merciful to me, a sinner'" (v 13). That's the first place we all need to begin if we're going to return to God. Then we have to repent of our sins and God is there to forgive, and we'll see how quickly He will forgive!

Jesus said, v 14: "I tell you, this man went down to his house **justified**, rather than the other..."—to be put in right standing with God.

In other words this Pharisee over here doing everything that he was supposed to do anyway. If God gives you a command to do something, and you do it: What great thing is it to you? What great thing is it to God? ***That's required!*** We can't brag on keeping the commandments of God.

When you properly understand it, God expects the whole world to keep his commandments, otherwise how could you judge them for sin? *We have sin inherent within us!* God knows that, and that is to serve a greater purpose: that ***all the glory goes to God,*** not to ourselves. This was a terrific example here.

"...For everyone who exalts himself shall be

humbled; and the one who humbles himself shall be exalted” (v 14).

But people backslide. When they sin, rather than repent they just kind of feel they will kind of bury it, then more sin comes, and it gets into what is called ‘backsliding.’

Here is what God says concerning people. And this is what is part of our very nature, Hosea 11:7: “And My people are bent on backsliding from Me....” Just given to backsliding. But there is a way out and we’re going to see the end result of that.

Let’s see what happens to backsliders, and let’s see if this does not describe your life with the difficulties and problems that you are going through. I tell you one thing, there is no person in the whole entire world whatsoever anywhere, anyplace that is ever going to lead a perfect life. You’re never going to come to God when you’re perfect. You can’t be perfect! Even if you were perfect and what you did as Job did, you still end up being a sinner before God because you are not God. You’re a human being with sin and death within you.

Proverbs 14:14: “The backslider in heart shall be filled with **his own ways**...”

- Is that not happening to you?
- Is not your life getting miserable and downtrodden, filled with problems so much that you can’t handle them or cope with them?

Some have given up on God and they’ve gone through divorce and remarriage, they’ve gone through drugs, they’ve gone through all of the things that human beings go through, and they’re filled with *their own ways*. If you really want to get right with God and return to God then you have to stop those things, and come with the attitude of the publican.

Ezek. 33 is very important for us to understand. When you come back to God, God is going to wipe the slate entirely clean. Did you know that? When you come to God and say, ‘O God, forgive me for all of my sins, does he retain any to you?’

Now, here’s quite a very important section of the Bible, Ezek. 33. This is showing the mercy, kindness and longsuffering of God. Showing the graciousness and the goodness of God *even in the face of abject rebellion and rejection by the people of God*. Here they were the Israelite’s ready to be carried off into captivity. What did God want? Did he want to send them in the captivity? What did he say? Here’s what he told Ezekiel to say:

Ezekiel 33:11: “Say to them, ‘As I live,’ says the Lord GOD... [God lives eternally so God is

saying: *by My very existence*] ... ‘I have no delight in the death of the wicked...’”

Even the death of the dedicated wicked. God knows that he must punished because He’s Judge. God knows that he must correct because of sin. But is that what God delights in? Does He delight in finding sin? Well, *in every human he’s going to find sin!* It’s no surprise to Him! He doesn’t delight in the death of the wicked. Here is what He delights in.

“...except **that the wicked turn from his way, and live...**” (v 11).

- that’s what God wants *you* to do
- that’s what God wants *me* to do
- that’s what God wants *all* of us to do

This is *His* desire! This is *His* word! It’s sworn on *His* life. God says as I live. That’s pretty profound!

“...**Turn you, turn you** from your evil ways...” [notice that he says “...turn you...” three times] ...for why will you die, O house of Israel?” (v 11).

God does not delight in that! That’s not what God wants! But God has given us free moral agency, and in giving free moral agency you must give *free* moral agency. You can’t give partial free moral agency. If you tell people here’s the way of God. God says ‘here’s My way I want you to choose life. On the other hand if there is evil over here I don’t want you to choose it but *you choose*.’ Then if God says choose he can’t take away choice.

That’s why God is not down here stopping sin. That’s why God is not down here preventing evil. We could do good as well as evil if we choose it. He’s not interested in the death of the wicked. But too many times people enter into a very difficult situation where they resist. All you have to do is turn on a switch.

The Apostle John said, I John 2:15: “**Do not love the world, nor the things that are in the world.** If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him, because everything that *is* in the world—**the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pretentious pride of physical life**—is not from the Father, but **is from the world**” (vs 15-16).

If you’re all caught up in that you know you have to repent. *You know* you have to come back to God. And I’ll guarantee you one thing: God is just going to let you wallow in your sorrow in your sins and in your difficulties until you do this:

Hebrews 3:15: “As it is being said, ‘Today, if you will hear His voice...’” ***you can return to God!*** God is waiting for you to return. God is wanting you to return. He wants to restore you, and you can be restored.

Verse 15: “As it is being said, ‘Today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts, as in the rebellion.’”

Now, you’ve been called out of the world just like they were called out of Egypt. Let’s see what we need to do. God wants this understood, and this is one of the reasons why right in the middle of the Tribulation when the sixth seal is opened and the heavens roll back as a scroll and the sign of the Son of Man is seen in heaven then God stops everything and shows His mercy. He calls and seals the 144,000 and a the great innumerable multitude to show His mercy. Before God ever brings His wrath He wants his mercy shown.

This is what he did with the children of Israel. Can you imagine what an affront it was to God? Here they were at Mount Sinai. God had just spoke the Ten Commandments and all the people said, ‘Yes, we’ll do what you say.’ Moses went up on the mountain and they said, ‘We don’t know where Moses is it’s been all these days.’ And they went to Aaron and said, ‘Make us a golden calf.’ He made a golden calf. They had all their pagan ritual and debauchery that they had.

And God told Moses, ‘Look, Moses I’ll fulfill My plan through you, but leave Me alone and I’ll go down and destroy them. Moses intervened and said, ‘Look, God, far be it from me to say anything to You. However, would it not be a horrible thing for the nations to say that You did take them out here in the wilderness to kill them? If you’re gonna kill them then take my name out of the Book of Life.’

God answered and said, ‘I will do what I’m going to do, nevertheless, I won’t destroy them.’ But He destroyed some of the worst sinners. But before God did that, here’s what he said:

Exodus 34:5: “And the LORD came down in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the LORD.” This is when God revealed the glory of the backside to Moses.

Verse 6: “And the LORD passed by before him and proclaimed, ‘The LORD, the LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth.’” This is the God that you come back to. God is waiting to extend this to you This is what God delights in. He doesn’t delight in the death of the wicked.

Verse 7: “Keeping mercy to the thousandth generation, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but Who will by no means clear *the guilty*...”

- those who *refuse*
- those who *reject* God
- those who *refuse* God
- those who *harden their hearts*

He won’t clear *them*, but he will clear *you*!

Right in the end-time when there’s destruction, when there’s death, when we enter into a time that it’s told us in prophecy that the dead are going to be scattered from one end of the earth unto the other. They’re going to be piled in such horrendous piles and death and mayhem everywhere, and here’s what God is still looking to:

Joel 2:10: “The earth shall quake before them... [God’s mighty army that’s coming] ...the heavens shall tremble. The sun and the moon shall grow dark, and the stars shall withdraw their shining. And the LORD shall utter His voice before His army; for His camp *is* exceedingly great; for powerful *is He* who executes His Word, for the Day of the LORD *is* great and very terrible; and who can endure it? ‘Therefore, even now,’ says the LORD, ‘turn to Me...’” (vs 10-12).

God is interested in repentance! How? This is how you need to return to God: ***with all your heart!*** You have to come back to God *knowing* that He loves you.

- His love for you is *constant*
- His love for you is *perfect*
- His love for you is *eternal*

“...‘turn to Me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning...’ [that’s the kind of repentance that God wants] ...Yes, rend your heart...” (vs 12-13).

That’s what God wants! He wants you to come to Him with a broken heart and a contrite spirit.

- God will bless that
- God will forgive you
- God will lift you up

“...and not your garments, and return to the LORD your God...” (v 13). ***Turn to God!***

- Is there any solution in the world?
- Is any man going to help you?
- Is any woman going to help you?
- Will money help you?
- Will lands help you?

Jesus said, ‘What is that if you gain the whole world and loose your soul.’ God doesn’t want you to do that! He says ***turn!***

“...for He *is* gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and He repents of the evil” (v 13).

A lot of ministers like to get up there and preach, ‘Day of the Lord! He’s going to kill everyone around! God doesn’t delight in that! Here right in the

middle of it, He's pleading for repentance—isn't He? Yes!

Verse 14: "Who knows *if* He will return and repent and leave a blessing behind Him..."

These are tremendous verses! This is also important to show you how merciful, kind, good, forgiving and ready to forgive that God is. He sent Jeremiah; a very young man, the son of a priest. He said, 'Jeremiah, the situation is so bad here that I'm gonna make your forehead like a flint.' Jeremiah even lamented and said, 'O God, I'm here to preach Your Word, to tear down and destroy. So, God said:

Jeremiah 5:1: "Run to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem, and see now, and know, and seek in her open places... [God is telling Jeremiah] ...if you can find **a** man, **if there is one** who does justice, who seeks the Truth; and I will pardon her."

He would forgive everything that was being done where he was going to send them off in the captivity, *if* He could find *one* man. Is God interested in truth? Is God interested in repentance? *Yes, He is!*

Verse 2: And though they say, "As the LORD lives"; surely they swear falsely.' O LORD, *are* not Your eyes on the Truth? You have stricken them, but they have not grieved..." (vs 2-3). No, they harden their hearts!

"...but they have not grieved; You have destroyed them, but they have refused to receive correction; they have made their faces harder than rock; they have **refused to return**" (v 3)—or repent.

- What is *your* choice?
- What are *you* going to do?
- Are you going to *return to God*?

or

- not?

I tell you what, if there was ever a message that was really a difficult one to give that was one Jeremiah had to give. Why don't you just begin *your repentance* by just going through the book of Jeremiah? Let all the correction that God has here come to you, to your heart, into your mind, into your very soul and being **and return to God!** That's the easiest way to do it. Do you want to fall under the hands of the living God? *Of course not!*

Jeremiah 15:6: "'You have forsaken Me,' says the LORD; 'you have gone backward; therefore, I will stretch out My hand against you, and destroy you; I am weary with repenting.'"

Wrong kind of repentance! You've got to have the right kind of repentance. And it's got to be from the heart! Now, the book of Jeremiah is really quite something! There comes a point when you have

a chance: you are alive, God can reach you; you can reach God. Don't let it come to this point here:

Jeremiah 19:15: "'Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, 'Behold, I will bring upon this city and upon all its towns all the evil that I have spoken against it because they have hardened their necks so that they might not hear My words.'"

Will the Word of God be able to penetrate into your heart? and into your mind? so that the Word of God and His love can be given to you? Is that what you want? *Well then you're going to have to do some things*, we'll see what they are.

I know this is difficult; this is hard. I know some of the things that have to be brought out are difficult. The hardest thing in the world is to face yourself before God. The hardest thing in the world is:

- to admit to God that you been wrong
- to carry around this guilt, burden that you have
 - ✓because you left God
 - ✓because you don't think that God will forgive you

Well, as long as you are alive and as long as there is hope *you will be forgiven*.

Proverbs 28:14: "Blessed *is* the man who fears always... [type of repentance] ...but **he who hardens his heart shall fall into mischief**." It's going to happen!

- Do you want to get out of mischief?
- Do you want to avoid the difficulties and problems, which are coming into the world?

You can repent!

- How bad is your sin?

Think about it!

I just draw your attention to the episode concerning King Ahab, who was king of Israel, and he married Jezebel the daughter of the high priest of the Canaanites Baal-worship. Ahab connived in his evil, giving himself over to Baal-worship and following the ways of Baal. God sent Elijah the prophet and said, 'You go tell Ahab that he's sold himself to evil. That he's going to die and the dogs are going to eat his flesh lick his blood against the wall.'

So, Elijah^[transcriber's correction] went over there and said, 'Ahab, God says you're going to die; this is going to happen to you! Lo and behold, he fasted, he repented, he put on sackcloth and ashes walked tenderly. So, the Word of the Lord came to Elijah, and said, 'Elijah you see My servant Ahab how he walks tenderly. Now you go tell him that I'm going to defer My judgment because he repented.' Isn't that a tremendous thing? Have your sins been as bad as

Ahab's? *If God can forgive him He can forgive you!*

Or how about King Manasseh? *One of the most wicked kings of all of Israel!* He reined for 55 years. He consulted with familiar spirits; he divined. He caused much innocent blood to be shed in Jerusalem. He caused the children to pass through the fire, which means through the fire unto Baal, sacrificing children. God said, I am going to send the worst of the heathen against Jerusalem, which He did; carrying them off in the captivity, which He did.

So, Manasseh is in the dungeon over at the King of the Assyria. In this dungeon Manasseh repented, after 55 years. He repented! God honored his repentance. God heard his prayer. God lifted him out of the dungeon by the hand of the king, and the king of Assyria sent him back to Jerusalem to be a vassal king.

- What did Manasseh do? *Manasseh went in and he tore down the idols that he erected right in the temple God!*
- Is your sin worse than Manasseh's sin?
- Can your sins be forgiven?

Yes indeed! Absolutely! Without a doubt!

Now here is King David, who was called 'a man after God's own heart.'

- one whom God loved
- one who loved God
- one who wrote Psalms, hymns and praises
- one to whom God revealed how the temple was to be built
- one to whom God revealed how to structure the priesthood
- one who was given the instructions on how to make the Holy of Holies
- one who was given the instruction on how to make the altar of burnt offerings right out there in front of the temple
- one to whom God said, 'I'm going to build a house for you and that you are always going to have someone sitting on the throne before Me forever!'

Let's see what happened. One day David was out on the rooftop called the porch, and he looked down and here's Bathsheba. Bathsheba was a beautiful woman, and she was down there taking a bath right so the king could see.

(go to the next track)

David said, 'Go down there and get that woman. I want her,' She came up. She could have said, 'No, my lord, I'm not going to the king, I'm married.' But she willingly went. You know what happened. She got pregnant and he tried to entice her husband Uriah the Hittite to come back and sleep with

her so that it would be covered up.

How many times have we tried to do that with our sins? *Cover them up! Ignore them!* But they won't go away! Uriah wouldn't do that. He said, 'No, I'm a loyal soldier and while men are out there fighting, I'm not going to go lie with my wife. I've got to go back in the field.'

David said, 'I've got no recourse. Joab, put him in the thick of the battle, and back off and let him die.' All planned, and this is over a long period of time.

So, Nathan the prophet came to David and gave him a parable of a man who had plenty of sheep of his own, and came and took a little ewe lamb from the poor person. David got angry when he was told that parable:

1-Samuel 12:5: "And David's anger was greatly kindled against the man. And he said to Nathan, 'As the LORD lives, the man who has done this shall surely die.'"

Don't we always do that? Isn't that always true, when we're in the middle of our own sins? We know that we're miserable and rotten inside, what do we do? *We get righteous!* We condemn other people: 'Anyone who would do that is worthy of death!' Here it is preserved forever in the Scriptures.

Verse 5: "And David's anger was greatly kindled against the man. And he said to Nathan, 'As the LORD lives, the man who has done this shall surely die. And he shall restore the lamb fourfold because he did this thing, and because he had no pity.' And Nathan said to David, 'You *are* the man!'...." (vs 5-7). David had no choice at this point to listen, or harden his heart.

"...Thus says the LORD God of Israel, 'I anointed you king over Israel, and I delivered you out of the hand of Saul. And I gave you your master's house and your master's wives into your bosom, and gave you the house of Israel and of Judah. And if that *was* too little, I would have given to you such and such *things* beside" (vs 7-8). God would have given David anything he wanted. But God is not going to tolerate this kind of sin.

You have to face the reality of what you're doing and be honest before God. So, David had to face it.

Verse 9: "Why have you despised the Word of the LORD to do evil in His sight? You have stricken Uriah the Hittite with the sword and have taken his wife *to be* your wife, and have killed him with the sword of the children of Ammon. Now, therefore, the sword shall never depart from your house..." (vs 9-10).

He had a penalty to pay. And even though God forgave the sin, there was still a penalty that had to be paid.

What is the penalty that you may have to pay? *You may have to face the reality that all this time, however long it may have been:*

- you've been backsliding
- you've turned your back on God
- you've known that whenever the Sabbath came around that you ought to keep it
- you've known that whenever you've eaten those unclean foods that you shouldn't
- you've known that whenever you should assemble to worship God that you didn't
- you've known down deep in your heart that you should have repented long ago and you didn't

But **today, if you will hear His voice**, harden not your heart! David had that choice, but he had a penalty that was going to come.

"...because you have despised Me..." (v 10). He was a man who was after God's own heart that got so carried away with his own authority, ego, sexuality and arrogance to where he despised God!

If there are any ministers who hear this sermon, I say to you:

- Do you have an ear to hear?
- What are you doing with your authority and ego?
- Are you like King David despising God and misusing it?

Verse 11: "Thus says the LORD, 'Behold, I will raise up evil against you out of your own house...'" And that very day Absalom committed adultery.

"...and I will take your wives before your eyes and give *them* to your neighbor. And he shall lie with your wives in the sight of this sun, for you did it secretly, but I will do this thing before all Israel and before the sun.' And David said to Nathan, 'I have sinned against the LORD.' And Nathan said to David, 'The LORD also has put away your sin; you shall not die'" (vs 11-13).

- Have you sinned as bad as David?
- Can God put away your sin if you repent? *Yes!*

Because David was king and because his sins affected other people, God had to let it be known that his name is going to be publicly slandered, that in the name of God you are not going to commit atrocious sins of great hypocrisy and not have it known.

So, God said through Nathan, v 14: "Only,

because by this deed you have given great occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme..." I say to every minister:

- Have you not done that, too?
- Have you not given the enemies of God great occasion to blaspheme because of your hideous authoritarian behavior?
- Because of your own vanity, ego and rottenness?

God is going to extract a penalty from you! Your day is coming! God will not be mocked!

"...this child born to you shall surely die" (v 14). David did what he could to turn back the judgment of God, but it didn't turn back. Sometimes there's a judgment that we have to pay, but God is still merciful.

Let's see the repentance of David. Here's the repentance that you need to have, that I need to have, that comes from the innermost part of our very being. Surely, we're not going to go against God and get away with it. Surely, in the name of God we're not going to sin and say that we're delivered to do it.

Psalm 51:1: "Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Your loving kindness..." David understood the greatness of his sin.

"...according to the greatness of Your compassion, blot out my transgressions"(v 1). He was deeply and profoundly repenting here.

Verse 2: "Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin." Is this how you're going to come to God? *You can!* With weeping and fasting!

Verse 3: "For I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me." I tell you one thing for sure, your sins—unless you repent—are ever going to be before you, just like frontlets before your eyes.

Verse 4: "**Against You, You only, have I sinned, and done evil in Your sight...**" When you sin, Who are you really sinning against? *God the Father and Jesus Christ!* You need to acknowledge that.

"...that You might be justified when You speak and be in the right when You judge. Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity... [a sinner from birth] ...and in sin did my mother conceive me. Behold, You desire Truth in the inward parts..." (vs 4-6). That's what sin does:

- it purges the heart
- it purges the mind
- it purges the soul
- it purges the thoughts

So that inwardly there is Truth, the Truth of God!

“...and in the hidden part You shall make me to know wisdom. Purge me with hyssop... [cleanse me thoroughly] ...and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow” (vs 6-7).

That’s what God wants to do with your sins, ‘though they be crimson, they shall be like wool.’ Though you’re backsliding, all the things that you have done, *God will forgive!* I don’t know any of us who has done as bad as David has done. We’re all like this.

Luke 15 is a very important parable, a place where God the Father is saying, ‘Yes, in spite of anything you have done, **if today you will hear My voice...** This is quite a parable and a great lesson for us. This is worth a whole sermon in itself.

Luke 15:11: “Then He said, ‘A certain man had two sons; and the younger of them said to *his* father, “Father, give me that portion of the property which falls to me.” And he divided to them *his* living. And not many days after, the younger son gathered everything together *and* departed into a distant country. And there he wasted *all* his substance, living *in* debauchery. But after he had spent everything, there arose a severe famine throughout that country, and he began to be in need. Then he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, and he sent him into his fields to feed swine” (vs 11-15). You know that for a Jew that’s got to be the lowest thing in the world, *to feed swine!*

Have you ever been in a place where they raise hogs? It smells, stinks, is filthy, messy. There can be nothing lower than feeding swine. But in his pride, he said, ‘I’m going to work it out. There will be a day when I work it out. I’ll do this.’

Verse 16: “And he was longing to fill his stomach with the husks that the swine were eating... [they gave them good food to grow them fast] ...but no one gave *anything* to him.”

You see, when you’re at the bottom, which he was; when you are in the pit, when you are walking through the valley of death as it were, there’s one thing that happens: *you come to yourself*, like he did.

- Are you ready to come to yourself?
- Are you ready to understand?

God is there, but you’ve got to come to that point! I know a man who was so beaten down one time that the only thing he could say is, ‘O God, heal my soul!’

Verse 17: “And when he came to himself, he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired servants have *an* abundance of bread, and I am dying of hunger? I will arise and go to my father... [he’s going to work it

out *his* way] ...and I will say to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you... [had his speech already worked out and face his father] ...and I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me as one of your hired servants.” And he arose *and* went to his father...” (vs 17-20).

He returned, came back, and the father wasn’t standing there saying, ‘Well, it’s about time! I am so glad that you suffered!’ **NO!** When you come back to God, He’s not going to treat you that way, because God loves you. God is not going to let you fall out of His hands. God wants you back.

This is what God is going to do, that’s why it’s here. Backsliding is part of our very being because of the law of sin and death in us.’

“...But while he was still a long way off...” (v 20). The father probably sat out there every day at sunset watching the road, wondering: ‘Will my son come home today?’

“...his father saw him and was moved with compassion, **and ran and embraced him**, and ardently kissed him.... [happy to have him back] ...And his son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you, and I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’” (vs 20-22).

The father didn’t say, ‘Yeah, that’s right, you go down and join with the slaves down there, and when you’ve made yourself right, you come and see me and I’ll decide what I want to do.’

No, the father wanted the best for his son! “...But the father said to his servant, ‘Bring out a robe, the best robe...’” (v 22). When he met him, and hugged him and kissed him, he didn’t say, ‘Man, you smell like hogs. What on earth have you been doing?’ **NO!**

“...‘Bring out a robe, the best robe, and clothe him, and give *him* a ring for his hand... [my ring] ...and sandals for *his* feet; and bring the fattened calf and kill *it*, and let us eat and be merry” (vs 22-23). Let’s be happy! Let’s rejoice!

Verse 24: “‘For this my son was dead, but is alive again; and he was lost, but is found.’ And they began to be merry.”

God is waiting for *you!* Your Father in heaven above *wants you to return to Him!* This is how you return to God, with this kind of repentance.

Let’s see the type of repentance that we need to have. Psa. 88 is the type of attitude that we need to have. This is how we return to God. This is how we **come to ourselves** in our own misery and our own rottenness. It’s surely true that when any man or woman is alone and shuts the door behind them, that’s what they are. Not what you are when you present

yourself to other people.

But God knows every thought, every hair on your head. So, this is the kind of repentance that's necessary:

Psalm 88:1: "O LORD God of my salvation, I have cried day and night before You. Let my prayer come before You; bow down Your ear to my cry, for my soul is full of troubles, and my life draws near the grave" (vs 1-3). Put all that trouble on God.

Verse 4: "I am counted with those who go down to the pit..." He was ready to die, just like the prodigal son who was dead, but is alive.

"...I am like a feeble man with no strength" (v 4). What strength do any of have to fight our spiritual battles without God? *None of us!*

Verse 5: "Set apart among the dead, like the slain that lie in the grave, whom You remember no more... [just forgotten all about me] ...and they are cut off from Your hand.

Verse 6: "You have laid me in the lowest pit, in darkness, in the deeps. Your wrath lies hard upon me, and You have afflicted me with all Your waves. Selah." (vs 6-7). Isn't that how your life has been, tossed to and fro and knocked about, empty and hallow.

Some people have even said that they wished they were dead, and some people even in the Church of God have become so absolutely discouraged that they have committed suicide! Some so absolutely bad that with one minister things got so out of hand that he murdered his wife and killed himself—in the Church of God!

All because of the administration of condemnation. Not the administration of love and mercy, not showing the truth of the mercy of God so that they could recover themselves out their problems and difficulties.

Psalm 86: "Bow down Your ear, O LORD, answer me, for I am poor and needy."

- Is that not us?
- Are we not poor and needy?
- Do we not need God?
- Is there anyone who doesn't need Christ?
- Is there anyone who doesn't need the Father?

Verse 2: "Preserve my soul, for I am Holy..." Yes, you've been called! God has called you for a great and marvelous purpose!

"...O You my God, save Your servant who trusts in You. Be merciful to me, O LORD, for I cry unto You all day long. Rejoice the soul of Your

servant..." (vs 2-4). Let God rejoice your soul!

- *You* repent!
- *You* return to God!
- *You* come back!

Why will you die! Let there be joy in your soul just like the prodigal son when he came back. That's what God wants it to be for you.

"...for to You, O LORD, do I lift up my soul, for You, LORD, are good..." (vs 4-5). You accuse God of evil. Don't be bitter against God—***today if you will hear His voice harden not your heart!***

Verse 5: "For You, LORD, are good and ready to forgive..."

- God is *ready* to forgive!
- God is *willing* to forgive!
- God is *wanting* to forgive!

That's what God wants for you!

"...and rich in mercy to all those who call upon You" (v 5). Go call upon God! Right now at this moment *in your heart and mind*, call upon God!

- He *will* hear!
- He *will* answer!
- He *will* provide!
- He *will* forgive!

Verse 6: "Give ear, O LORD, to my prayer, and attend to the voice of my supplications. In the day of my trouble I will call upon You, for You will answer me" (vs 6-7). God will answer; you are guaranteed that.

God wants you back! There is none like unto to God! There is also a message for those who have not backslidden. There's also another message that's very important. When those who have backslidden repent and come back into the congregation of God, they need to be welcomed with joy and happiness and open arms. And don't go say, 'Where have you been? What have you been doing? My, you haven't been in church for a long time, have you?'

No! Be happy and thankful! If they want to tell their story, let them tell their story. If they don't want to tell their story, don't interfere, just be happy that God loves them, that they are back, that you are back, that Christ loves you, that salvation is for all.

Luke 15:25: "But his elder son was in a field; and when he was coming *back*, and approached the house, he heard music and dancing. And after calling one of the servants nearby, he inquired what these things might be. And he said to him, 'Your brother has come *home*, and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has received him safe and well.' Then he was angry..." (vs 25-28).

- Are you angry because God will forgive someone?
- Do you get mad because God will have compassion and mercy?
- Are you angry because you didn't get what the other person got?

"...and would not go in..." (v 28)—refused to go in. There's a little bit of stubborn self-righteousness.

"...As a result, his father came out and pleaded with him.... [he entreated him; talked nice to him] ...But he answered *and* said to *his* father, 'Behold, I have served you so many years, and never did I transgress your commandment; yet, you never gave me a kid, so that I might make merry with my friends; but when this son of yours came, who has devoured your living with harlots, you killed the fattened calf for him.' Then he said to him, 'Son, you are always with me, and all that *is* mine is yours. But it was fitting to make merry and rejoice because your brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, but is found.'" (vs 28-32).

In our experience in the Church of God there are literally thousands of brethren out there alone, having given up on church, on God and brethren, self-righteous brethren just like this. They're afraid to come back to Church. They're afraid of the condemnation! God is not going to condemn them. We need to have the same forgiving attitude that God wants us to have.

What I want you to do as you read the book of Hosea, I want you to study it and put yourself as the wife of Hosea. The wife was the one who left Hosea and was a harlot, had children of harlotry and Hosea would follow her around, watch her afar off, and see if she would change and quit her backsliding. Hosea would go prepare the nicest and the best in hopes that she would come back.

This is type of Israel and a type of us. Here is a wonderful, wonderful verse concerning Israel. This is what it needs to be. This is what our motto needs to be to help people That's why in the Christian Biblical Church of God we've nicknamed ourselves 'The No Hassle, Recycled, Last Resort Church of God.' That literally is true! Here's the attitude we need to have, and here's what God is going to do:

Hosea 14:4: "I will heal their backslidings..." Do you want God to heal you?

- heal your heart
- heal your mind
- heal your soul

Bring you back in right standing in joy and happiness! *Yes!*

"...**I will love them freely...**" (v 4). The only

thing that is going to heal is the love of God! The only thing that is going to reach down into your heart, mind and being is ***your repentance*** and:

- the love of God
- the kindness of God
- the mercy of God
- the graciousness of God

Notice that He says, "**I will heal their backslidings; I will love them freely...**" There's no cost! There's no price! There's nothing you can do except repent and return to God, and He'll love you freely!

- The Father has called you!
- The Father loves you!
- Christ loves for you!
- Christ died for you!

Let's apply John 3:16 to ourselves. Let's understand the great commitment of love that God has, not only for the whole world, but for us, those whom He has called.

- Do you not think that those whom God has called, even though they're backsliding, that God loves them? *Sure He does! Yes, He does!*
- Does He want them? *Yes!*
- Does He want them to repent? *Yes!*
- Does God want you? *Yes!*
- Does God want you to repent? *Yes!*

Here's why, John 3:16: "For God so loved the world..."

- His love is perfect!
- His love is great!
- His love is greater than your difficulty!
- His love is greater than your problems!
- His love is greater than your fears!

"...that He gave His only begotten Son..." (v 16). That's something! What Christ did to empty Himself, to become a human being, to give up being God ***to save you!***

- to reach down in *your life* with His love
- to reach down in *your life* with the love of the Father

So, when you're walking through that 'valley of death' remember, ***God loves you!*** He sent Christ because He loves you. He sent Christ to bring you eternal life. You're not going to fall out of His hand. The Father is not going to give up on you, neither will Christ.

"...so that everyone who believes in Him may not perish, but may have everlasting life" (v 16). That's what God wants to give to you. When you

repent in this way and come back, which you will:

Verse 17: “For God sent not His Son into the world that He might judge... [condemn] ...the world...” No, He’s not like the second son that condemned the repentant sinner.

- He is there to forgive!
- He is there to give graciousness!
- He is there to give love!
- He is there to give hope and joy!

Not to condemn! “...but **that the world might be saved** through Him” (v 17). That’s God’s desire. Just like we started out. God said, ‘I delight not in the death of the wicked. Turn you, *turn you, turn you*; for why will you die O house of Israel!’ Just put your name in there. ‘Why will I died!’

Let’s see the great hope that God has called us to. God has given us the greatest hope, the greatest calling, the most magnificent thing that could ever happen in our wildest imaginations, ***that we should be the very sons and daughters of God!*** Think about that! God wants you to have an eternal, ever-living, everlasting, glorified life! That’s why Christ came. You go look at this whole world out there. There’s nothing you can compare to what Christ has given, and what Christ did.

John 17:1: “Jesus spoke these words, and lifted up His eyes to heaven and said, ‘Father, the hour has come; glorify Your own Son, so that Your Son may also glorify You; since You have given Him authority over all flesh...” (vs 1-2).

- Christ has the power over all flesh!
- He can get rid of those sins!
- He can draw you back!
- He can bring you to the Father again!

“...in order that He may give eternal life to all whom You have given Him. For this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, Whom You did send” (vs 2-3).

The ultimate thing that we’re going to see is ***God face-to-face! To know God!*** That’s something! That is amazing! Think about that! Let that sink down deep into your soul, into your heart and mind!

Verse 4: I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work that You gave Me to do. And now, Father, glorify Me with Your own self, with the glory that I had with You before the world existed. I have manifested Your name to the men whom You have given Me out of the world. They were Yours...” (vs 4-6).

We belong to the Father; we have been begotten by the Father, the greatest Sovereign Ruler of the universe Who desires nothing but His greatest love

and joy to each one of us. That’s Who we are dealing with. You’re as close to Him as the next thought. There’s no minister, no pope, no priest ***between you and God!***

All you have to do is as Jesus said, ‘Our Father,’ and you are instantly in communication with God. Cry out to Him to forgive your sins. He’s not going to let you go. He wants you!

“...and You have given them to Me, and they have kept Your Word. Now, they have known that all things that You have given Me are from You. For I have given them the words that You gave to Me; and they have received *them* and truly have known that I came from You; and they have believed that You did send Me. **I am praying for them; I am not praying for the world...**” (vs 6-9).

Christ’s prayer for you. Let this prayer be applied to you. Christ is praying for you. Christ is advocating for you at the right hand of the Father to forgive your sins, to blot them out, to remove them ‘as far as the east is from the west.’

Verse 17: “Sanctify them... [Make them Holy, set them aside for Holy use and purpose to be in God’s kingdom.] ...in Your Truth; Your Word is the Truth.”

- Will you hear His Word *today*?
- Will you listen to Him *today*?
- Can God speak to your mind and your heart *today*?
- *Today*, while it is today?

Harden not your hearts as in the provocation!

Verse 20: “I do not pray for these only, but also for those who shall believe in Me through their word.” This prayer is continuous and eternal, right on down to this day!

Here’s the whole goal and purpose; this is what God sets out for us, v 21: “**That they all may be one, even as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You;** that they also may be **one in Us**, in order **that the world may believe** that You did send Me.” That’s what God wants! That’s why you need to ***return to God!*** That’s why you need to come back. God is read, willing, able, and wants to forgive; but you have to come back to God.

- you have to *make that choice*
- you have to *make that step*
- you have to *return to God*

This is how you do it! This more profound and more magnificent and meaningful than anything I could say:

Verse 22: “And I have given them the glory that You gave *to Me*, in order that **they may be one, in the same way that We are one**.... [in perfect love,

unity, faith, and glory] ...I in them, and You in Me, that they may be perfected into one; and that the world may know that You did send Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me” (vs 22-23).

- Do you want the Father’s love to come to you?
- How much do you think the Father loved Jesus Christ?
- Was there any limit to that?
- Is there any limit to the love that God wants to give to you?

Have you ever gone before God and just asked God to pour out His love upon you? That you would be:

- filled with His love
- filled with His Spirit
- filled with His strength

And the ultimate, ***to be born into the Kingdom of God as a spirit being!***

- Is that not the greatest thing that could happen?
- Isn’t that the most magnificent gift that God can give?

All He wants is your heart! All He wants is your soul, mind and being in perfect love, and He’ll even give that. ***He’ll give that!*** It’s amazing! Go back and read that *there isn’t anything we didn’t receive!* It’s all from God!

Verse 23: “I in them, and You in Me, that they may be perfected into one; and that the world may know that You did send Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me.” ***That’s His prayer for us!*** ‘Father, I will!’ That is His desire. That is His will.

Jesus said that ‘all power in heaven and earth has been given to Me.’ Here’s His will:

Verse 24: “Father, I desire that those whom You have given Me may also be with Me where I am, so that they may behold My glory, which You have given Me; because You did love Me before *the* foundation of *the* world.”

He’s going back to before anything was ever created and saying, ‘Father, You loved Me.’ And I’m sure Christ loved the Father, and that love and forgiveness is available to you.

- ***Will you hear today*** while today is today?
- ***Will you hear His voice*** and harden not your heart?
- ***Will you return*** to God?

Verse 25: “Righteous Father, the world has not known You; but I have known You, and these have known that You did send Me. And I have made

known Your name to them, and will make *it* known; so that the love with which You have loved Me may be in them, and I in them” (vs 25-26).

- ***Return to God!***
- ***He is there!***
- ***He is waiting!***

And it can be this very day! This very minute!

We all have to face ourselves before God. When we backslide and when we sin, *we need to go to God and repent from the very innermost part of our beings!* Today is a day! ***That is how you can return to God!***

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version* by Fred R. Coulter

Scriptural References:

- 1) John 10:26-29
- 2) Luke 18:9-14
- 3) Hosea 11:7
- 4) Proverbs 14:14
- 5) Ezekiel 33:11
- 6) 1 John 2:15-16
- 7) Hebrews 3:15
- 8) Exodus 34:5-7
- 9) Joel 2:10-14
- 10) Jeremiah 5:1-3
- 11) Jeremiah 15:6
- 12) Jeremiah 19:15
- 13) Proverbs 28:14
- 14) 2 Samuel 12:5-14
- 15) Psalm 51:1-7
- 16) Luke 15:11-24
- 17) Psalm 88:1-7
- 18) Psalm 86:1-7
- 19) Luke 15:25-32
- 20) Hosea 14:4
- 21) John 3:16-17
- 22) John 17:1-9, 17, 20-26

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Transcribed:12-30-15

True Fellowship

Fred R. Coulter

The subject that we're going to cover today has a tremendous amount to do with fellowshiping with God. Let's first of all understand about *true fellowship* and how fellowship has a tremendous meaning for God with us, and how that fits into the overall meaning for us today.

1-John 1:3: "That which we have seen and have heard we are reporting to you in order that you also may have fellowship with us; **for the fellowship**—indeed, our fellowship—**is with the Father and with His own Son, Jesus Christ.**"

In other words, the *true* fellowship is with Them. So fellowshiping with God becomes very important. Fellowshiping has to do with more than we understand as just fellowshiping on the Sabbath with people, eating with them or talking with them, or talking with the brethren, It has to do with ***partaking and receiving***. Fellowship also has to do with the meaning of the Feast of Tabernacles, and what the Father is doing *for us, in us, through us and to us!*

Let's carry this a little bit further, and let's see what it is that God is teaching us concerning the way that we need to be fellowshiping with Him. Let's understand some of the precious promises that God is giving us. Let's understand that one of the things that it pictures for us and for God the Father, is that *God is tabernacling in us!* God is not living in a building made with hands; God is in heaven above. But He is temporarily *tabernacling and fellowshiping* with us.

2-Peter 1:1: "Simon Peter a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who have obtained the same precious faith as ours by *the* righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ: Grace and peace be multiplied to you in *the* knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, according as His Divine power has given to us all things that *pertain* to life and Godliness, through the knowledge of Him Who called us by *His own* glory and virtue; through which He has given to us the greatest and *most* precious promises..." (vs 1-4).

This is so great, the superlatives in this are almost inexplicable what he's talking about, that it is so fantastic.

"...that through these you may become partakers of the Divine nature..." (v 4). That is, by these with the fellowshiping of God, *partaker* is the same word as *fellowship*.

- God is giving us of His nature
- God is giving us of His Spirit

so that we can have fellowship with Him and He have fellowship with us. In other words, *so that we can tabernacle with God!* That is really a tremendous thing for us. That, brethren, is really something fantastic, because this special *spirit of promise* has been given to us as a begettall.

Now let's carry this little bit further and see how all of this fits into what God is showing us. We also have ***fellowship*** or we are ***partakers*** with Christ. Remember, to receive the Holy Spirit is to be *partaker* of God's Divine nature, because of the Holy Spirit. We're going to see that the Bible actually talks about *God dwelling in us, dwelling in our heart and our mind by faith!*

1-Corinthians 1:9: "God *is* faithful, by Whom you were called into *the* fellowship... [the partaking] ...of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord."

Now, when this fellowshiping and the partaking is given to us, this is also symbolized by all of the Holy Day because they tie in together one with another. This goes all the way back to eating of the bread and drinking of wine, that we are *partakers* of that.

Let's see how the Apostle Paul defines us. When we have this kind of fellowship with God, God wants us to fellowship with Him *truly* in fellowshiping.

- in order to make this fellowship realistic
- in order to make this fellowship permanent
- in order to give us a foretaste of what it is like now

He gives us of His Holy Spirit! This is something that is not shared with anything else, with anyone else, except those who are also brethren who fellowship with us because we're also partakers of the Holy Spirit.

1-Corinthians 10:16: "The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not *the* fellowship... [communion (KJV)] ...of the blood of Christ?..." I don't necessarily like that word *communion* because that reminds me of the Catholics, what they call the *communion*. But this actually means *the fellowship of Christ*. How do we fellowship with the blood of Christ?

"....The bread that we break, is it not ***the fellowship of the body of Christ?***" (v 16). How do we fellowship with the blood *and* the body of Christ? There are two ways that we do this. Rom. 6 is a very basic thing concerning how we fellowship with God. When we are baptized and we are buried

in that watery grave, something very special happens to us.

Romans 6:3: “Or are you ignorant that we, as many as were baptized into Christ Jesus, **were baptized into His death?** Therefore, we were buried with Him through the baptism into the death; so that, just as Christ was raised from *the* dead by the glory of the Father, in the same way, we also should walk in newness of life” (vs 3-4).

Because we are fellowshiping, we are *partaking of the blood* and we are *partaking of the body* of Christ. That gives us newness of life because now we have the Divine nature. We have that given to us as a begettal from God the Father.

Verse 5: “For if we have been conjoined together in the likeness of His death, so also shall we be *in the likeness* of His resurrection.” That means in the Greek that we are conjoined into the likeness of His death, therefore we are going to be conjoined into the likeness of His resurrection. When we have *the fellowship of the body of Christ*, and we have *fellowship of the bread of Christ*, then it gives us something else that we need to constantly do.

This is something that we constantly need to do, keep in mind, walk in, live in and understand: That this is all a part of the fellowship with God, and, in fact, God tabernacling with us. When you look at it this way God, is dwelling in us, and we will see the Scriptures that say that exact thing.

John 6:56—Christ said: “The one who eats My flesh and drinks My blood is dwelling in Me, and I in him.” There is the temporary dwelling. Not only did Christ come and dwell temporarily on this earth in the flesh, but God is temporarily dwelling in us, with the begettal of the Holy Spirit.

Verse 57: “As the living Father has sent Me, and I live by the Father; so also the one who eats Me **shall live by Me**”—because you are fellowshiping with the body and the blood of Jesus Christ. We will see why these Scriptures are here, because this is very important for us.

- if God is doing this to us, which He is
- if God has done this for us, which He has
- if Christ is living in us, which He is

—and we’re going to also see that the Father is living in us or dwelling in us—then we have some tremendous obligations, loyalty and faith to God, which then is translated in the love of God.

1-Corinthians 10:17: “For we, being many, are one body *and* one bread, because **we are all partakers** of the bread.... [fellowshippers of that one bread, which was Christ] ...Consider Israel according to *the* flesh. Are not those who eat the sacrifices partakers of the altar? What then am I

saying? That an idol is anything, or that which is sacrificed to an idol is anything? But that which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons, and not to God; and I do not wish you to have fellowship with demons” (vs 17-20).

So you see why this is so important for us to understand today, in the times in which we’re living within the Church. There are too many people that are beginning to fellowship with demons, through the doctrines of demons, and they’re walking away from the light of God. If that happens:

- if you are not walking in the way that God wants you to
- if you’re not walking in the light
- if you’re not living in the light
- if you’re not practicing the Truth

sooner or later then God is not going to be fellowshiping in you.

Verse 21: “You cannot... [it’s impossible—‘ou dunatai’] ...drink *the* cup of *the* Lord, and *the* cup of demons. **You cannot...** [fellowship with or receive] ...**partake of the table of the Lord, and the table of demons.** Now, do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? Are we stronger than He?” (vs 21-22). Of course not!

So, this is a special and a particular fellowship that God wants us to have with Him. Now let’s carry this little bit further and see what else that there is for us.

We’re going to see that not only do we participate and partake of the blood and the body of Jesus Christ, as we do for the Passover, but let’s carry this even further. When the children of Israel were living in the wilderness tabernacling in booths, they had to walk in God’s way. Here we have the same thing for us. If we are going to live in Christ and Christ in us and the Father in us—by the power of the Holy Spirit—if they are going to give us Their fellowship into us, then this gives us the obligation on how we ought to live.

1-John 2:6: “Anyone who claims to dwell in Him... [that is living in Christ] ...is obligating himself also to walk even as He Himself walked.” As Christ walked. Now ‘abiding’ (*KJV*) means to be dwelling or living in him. That’s why Jesus said anyone who eats Me, even He shall live by Me.’ That is through Him because of the power of God’s Holy Spirit and the keeping of the commandments of God.

Again we find something so important in it. This is how that the love of God is perfected in us, because God is tabernacling and in us.

1-John 4:12: “No one has seen God at any time. *Yet*, if we love one another, God dwells in us,

and His own love is perfected in us.” That’s really quite a tremendous thing for us to understand. **God is dwelling in us!**

- that how He fellowships with us
- that’s how we are made partakers of Christ
- that’s how we are partakers of the Father
- that’s how we are partakers of the Divine nature

Verse 13: “By this *standard* we know that **we** are dwelling in Him...” We also have to know that by:

- understanding by fact
- understanding by living
- understanding that the Spirit of God is in us

“...and He *is dwelling* in us: **because of His own Spirit**, which He has given to us” (v 13).

There comes a time, when *we know* that we know, that we have the Spirit of God. When we have the Spirit of God in us, God is dwelling in us, Christ is dwelling in us; ***They are literally tabernacling with us.*** Now let’s notice what else this will do for us.

1-John 3:24: “And the one who keeps His commandments is dwelling in Him [Christ]... [this is also meaning God the Father] ...and He [Christ] in him; and by this we know that He is dwelling in us: **by the Spirit which He has given to us.**” That’s really quite a tremendous thing to realize, this kind of fellowship that God has for us. This is a tremendous meaning for us, brethren.

- that God is actually living in us
- that God is actually dwelling in us
- that that is Their desire

Now, as we go through and understand this even more, we need to realize how great and tremendous the grace of God is. Isn’t that something? That God the Father Himself:

- would select you and call you and me
- lead us in His graciousness to repentance
- have us baptized in the same death of Jesus Christ
- raised out of that watery grave
- give us His Holy Spirit by the laying on of hands of the one who baptized us
- actually takes up residence within us

Now, ***that is profound!***

2-Corinthians 4:13: “And having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, ‘I believed, therefore, I have spoken,’ we also believe; therefore, we also speak, knowing that He [God the Father] Who raised the Lord Jesus *from the dead*

shall also raise us through Jesus, and shall present *us* with you” (vs 13-14).

That’s going to be quite a presentation! Every time you think about the first resurrection and about the events that are going to take place in the first resurrection, ***that is giving us the fullness of the fellowship with God!*** Not only will it just be spiritual with a partaking of it now, but it will be in the fullness of what God wants, because we will literally be as God is.

Verse 15: “For all things *are* for your sakes, so that the abounding... [abundant] ...grace... [God dwelling in us] ...may cause the thanksgiving of many to overflow unto the glory of God. For this reason, we do not lose heart...” (vs 15-16). In other words, he is saying that we are *never ever, ever* going to give up! ***Not ever!***

“...but if our outward man is being brought to decay, yet, the inward *man* is being renewed day-by-day” (v 16). How? ***By the very Spirit of God!***

- to be renewed
- to be up-built
- to be inspired
- to grow in grace
- to grow in knowledge
- to grow in love
- to grow in dedication
- to grow in walking God’s way
- to grow in practicing the Truth
- to grow in letting Christ *in* you, the hope of glory
- to grow in letting Christ motivate and inspire you to do the things that God wants you to do, in the way that’s pleasing to Him

We’re renewed day-by-day!

Verse 17: “For the momentary lightness of our tribulation...” That’s what Paul says of all of his tribulations that he and Timothy and the different ministers went through in serving the brethren.

“...is working out for us an immeasurably greater *and* everlasting fullness of glory” (v 17)—because what we’re doing is not in vain. What we’re doing is just not temporary. What we are doing, ***and what the Father is doing***, is for all eternity, and this is just the start.

Verse 18: “While we consider not the things *that are* seen...” In other words, don’t focus and just look at the appearance of things that are happening. They’re happening whatever it may be. But the total reality is the end of it with eternal glory, as Paul said.

“...but the things *that are* not seen. For the things *that are* seen *are* temporary; but the things

that are not seen are eternal" (v 18).

2-Corinthians 5:1: "For we know that if our earthly house of *this* tabernacle is destroyed..." Paul is talking about this body. Why is it called the tabernacle? *Because God is tabernacling in us!* Peter even talks about his tabernacle being his body. They understood the tabernacling:

2-Peter 1:12: "Therefore, I will not neglect to make you always mindful of these things, although you *already* know them and have been established in the present Truth. For I consider it my duty, as long as I am in this tabernacle... [his body] ...to stir you up by causing *you* to remember *these things*; knowing that shortly the putting off of my tabernacle *will come*, even as our Lord Jesus Christ has signified to me" (vs 12-14).

So, the apostles understood that this body was a tabernacle, a present dwelling place for the Spirit of God.

Now let's see something else concerning that they knew this! Paul saw the Lord Jesus Christ. And as he said:

- whether in the spirit or not, *he could not tell*
- whether the spirit or the flesh, *he could not tell*
- whether it was in the third heaven, or in a vision on earth, *he could not tell*

But he was taught of God, and he'd seen the glory of Jesus Christ. All of the apostles saw Him after He was resurrected. But something unique happened to teach us this lesson:

Matthew 17:1: "And after six days, Jesus took with *Him* Peter and James and his brother John, and brought them up into a high mountain by themselves. And He was transfigured before them; and His face shined as the sun... [he's showing them what they're going to be like in the resurrection] ...and His garments became white as the light. Then behold, there appeared to them Moses and Elijah talking with Him" (vs 1-3)—so they would know that they are going to be in the Kingdom of God, resurrected with them.

Verse 4: "And Peter answered *and* said to Jesus, 'Lord, it is good for us to be here. If You desire, let us make three tabernacles here: one for You, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah.' While He was speaking, a bright cloud suddenly overshadowed them; and behold, a voice out of the cloud said, 'This is My Son, the Beloved, in Whom I delight. **Listen to Him!**'" (vs 4-5). When they came down off the mountain Jesus said, 'Tell the vision to no man.'

Let's see how our bodies today are, in fact, a tabernacle for God; 2-Corinthians 5:1: "For we

know that if our earthly house of *this* tabernacle is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with *human* hands... [but God's hands] ...eternal in the heavens. For in this we truly are groaning, longing to be clothed with our dwelling from heaven; if indeed *that* being clothed, we may not be found naked" (vs 1-3).

There a lot of other things that we can tie in with this. We have to have the garments that covers our nakedness, we have to have the wedding garments of righteousness, which is the righteousness of the saints, and that we don't want to—in our relationship with God, with God dwelling in us—be naked. In other words, we want to be wholly clothed with as much of God's Spirit as we can.

Verse 4: "For we who are in *this* tabernacle truly do groan, being burdened; not that we wish to be unclothed, but to be clothed upon so that the mortal *flesh* may be swallowed up by life. Now, He Who is working out this very thing for us *is* God, Who has also given us the **earnest of the Spirit**" (vs 4-5). With *the earnest of the Spirit*, we *know* that we *know* that we know, that God is *in* us and we are in God.

2-Corinthians 1:21: "But He Who establishes us with you in Christ, and Who has anointed us, *is* God, Who has also sealed us and has given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts. But I call upon God to bear witness of my intentions, that in order to spare you I did not yet come to Corinth; not that we exercise lordship over your faith, but because we are working with you to *increase* your joy. For you stand by faith" (vs 21-24).

He's saying, 'Look, we can't do this by policing you. Once you receive the Holy Spirit of God, then you have to cultivate between you and God.' Let's see how this is done, how important this is and how great it is. When you stop and think about it:

- God the Father Himself loves you
- God the Father Himself has given you of His Spirit
- it is the Holy Spirit of promise that God the Father has sealed us until the resurrection

2-Corinthians 6:14: "Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers...." This does not mean just in marriage alone, I want you to understand this. He's talking to the whole congregation, that they be not unequally yoked with unbelievers. Why? *Because:*

- the unbelievers do not have Christ in them
- the unbelievers do not have the Father dwelling in them
- the unbelievers do not have the Spirit of

God

That's why you would be unequally yoked!

"...For what do righteousness and lawlessness have in common? And what fellowship does light have with darkness?"

We're talking about the **true fellowship with God the Father in us!** We've covered before about walking in the light and practicing the light in the Truth of God's way. These Scriptures just mean all that much more.

Verse 15: "And what union *does* Christ have with Belial? Or what part *does* a believer have with an unbeliever? And **what agreement is there between a temple of God and idols?** For **you** are a temple of the living God" (vs 15-16). That is a collective *you*, which means *you all, ye!*

As God has said, 'I will dwell in them, and walk in them, and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.' Where is it that God truly desires to be? *In you and in me, and in everyone that He's given the Holy Spirit to!* Each one of us then is part of the temple of God. As God has said, 'I will dwell in them, walk in them, and I will be their God and they shall be My people.' That is absolutely tremendous when we understand that, really live that, and we fully comprehend and realize that.

Yes, *God dwells in us!* Now, how important is it? I know that during the Feast of Tabernacles, we go to Isa. 66 quite a bit, because it has an awful lot to do with the meaning of the Feast of Tabernacles, and dwelling temporarily in booths, or a temporary dwelling place.

- Is not God, also participating in the Feast of Tabernacles? *Yes, He is!*
- Is not God, with the power of His Spirit living in you and every one of us, tabernacling with us? *Yes, He is!*

He is fellowshiping! That's why this verse is so important:

Isaiah 66:1: "Thus says the LORD, 'The heaven *is* My throne, and the earth *is* My footstool. Where, then, *is* the house that you build for Me? And where *is* the place of My rest?'"

- What is the Sabbath called? *It is called the rest of God!*
- What is the Millennium called? *It is also called the rest of God!*

That's why you can picture God's plan in a 7000-year plan.

Verse 2: "'For all these things My hand has made, and these things came to be,' says the LORD. 'But to this one I will look, to him who is of a poor and contrite spirit and who trembles at My Word.'" That's more important than anything that there is

that God has created.

- *by choice*, you love God
- *by choice*, you submit to God
- *by choice*, you fear and tremble at His Word
- *by choice*, you yield yourself to God

This helps us up to understand even more, Isaiah 57:15: "For thus says the high and lofty One Who inhabits eternity; Whose name *is* Holy; 'I dwell in the high and Holy place, even with the one who is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.'"

Yes, brethren, the Truth of the Feast of Tabernacles for God the Father is that **He is temporarily dwelling in us**, each one of us being a tabernacle for God.

Let's see how important that this is, 2-Corinthians 6:16: "And what agreement *is there between* a temple of God and idols?...." Now do you see how important this is? How absolutely profound it is for us? *No*, God doesn't have any agreement with idols at all.

"...For **you are a temple** of the living God, exactly as God said: 'I will dwell in them and walk in *them*; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people'" (v 16).

That is wonderful, brethren! That is absolutely fantastic! As God builds this temple with each one of us, He is building the permanent dwelling place. Now that's something! While we're on the earth, we're called the temple of God. This is all done by the Spirit of God:

- that's why we need *the spirit of grace*
- that's why it's called *the spirit of grace*
- that's why it is that *by grace we are saved*
- that's why it is *by grace we are partakers of the Divine nature*
- that is why it is *by grace we fellowship with God*
- that's why it is that *God fellowships with us*

That's something we really need to grasp and understand, as we already know God the Father Himself personally loves each one of us. Loves us so much that He gave of His own body, the begetting of His seed that remains within us:

- so that He can fellowship with us
- so that we can think the thoughts of God
- so that we can know the things of God
- so that we can have the plan and the secrets of God revealed to us through Christ in us, the hope of glory

Ephesians 2:18: "For through Him [Christ]

we both... [Jews and Gentiles] ...have *direct* access by one Spirit to the Father.”

I want you think on that, because that is profound! I don't think we can say it enough, and I don't think we can really grasp it, even though we say it as many times as we would, that ***we have access directly to God the Father by His Holy Spirit through Jesus Christ!*** And not only do we just have that access, but we have that access ***because of the begetting of the Holy Spirit and the Father and Christ, living and dwelling in us!***

Verse 19: “So then, you are no longer aliens and foreigners; but *you are* fellow citizens with the saints, and *are* of the household of God. You are being built up on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being *the* chief Cornerstone in Whom all the building, being conjointly fitted together...” (vs 19-21). So, out of all this temporary dwelling that God is doing in us now:

- He is making a body for us, a *spiritual* body
- He is building a New Jerusalem
- He is building a new temple

The whole temple is going to be God the Father and Jesus Christ, that we can permanently live or tabernacle with them. As God is temporarily tabernacled in this temporary tabernacle of our bodies, then we will permanently live and tabernacle with God the Father and Jesus Christ

“...is increasing into a Holy temple in *the* Lord; in Whom you also are being built together for a habitation of God in *the* Spirit” (vs 21-22). So, you see how Paul again comes:

- from God to us
- us to God
- it is building the temple
- it is the tabernacling
- it is the living together
- it is with the Spirit of God that that is done

2-Corinthians 6:17: “Therefore, come out from the midst of them...” That's why we're called out of the world. That's why Jesus said ‘they are not of the world’ We are not of the world. We are not to be part and parcel with the world, because the believers should have no fellowship with the unbeliever and be unequally yoked with them.

“‘...and be separate,’ says *the* Lord, ‘and touch not *the* unclean, and I will receive you; and I shall be a Father to you, and you shall be My sons and daughters,’ says *the* Lord Almighty” (vs 17-18).

2-Corinthians 7:1: “Now then, beloved, since we have these promises, we should purge

ourselves from every defilement of *the* flesh and *the* spirit, perfecting Holiness in *the* fear of God.”

That's how we need to be living. Let's see how Jesus tied all this together concerning tabernacling, concerning dwelling in, and here in the book of John it is translated ‘abiding.’ This leads right into it all the way through, and some of the things that were going to find in here are absolutely marvelous when it talks about living and dwelling in God.

John 14:1: “Let not your heart be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in Me. In My Father's house...” (vs 1-2).

- God's house
- God's tabernacle
- God's New Jerusalem

Jesus said that He's going to build a place for us; that He has a name for us. But in the meantime, we have the name of Christ upon us, we have the name of God the Father upon us. ***We are His!***

“...are many dwelling places; if it were otherwise, I would have told you. I am going to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again... [and Christ is] ...and receive you to Myself; so that where I am, you may be also” (vs 2-3).

Verse 20: “In that day... [that you receive the Holy Spirit] ...you shall know that I am in My Father, and ***you are in Me, and I am in you.***”

Now were going to find the real profound essence, as it were, the real teaching of our bodies as a tabernacle, which God the Father and Jesus Christ truly dwell in.

(go to the next track)

Notice that we saw that Christ said, “...I am in My Father, and ***you are in Me, and I am in you.***” The way that we know—it ties right in with the series *Epistles of John*—is this:

Verse 21: “The one who has My commandments and is keeping them, that is the one who loves Me; and the one who loves Me shall be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will manifest Myself to him.”

Verse 23: “Jesus answered and said to him, ‘If anyone loves Me, he will keep My Word...’”

I want us to always understand something very, very, ***very*** important. Everything that we do comes down not just to a listed number of commandments: this is the first commandment, the second commandment, this is the third commandment.... That is true, if you love God you will automatically do that. But if you are doing as

Jesus did, because He always did those things that pleases the Father, here's what were going to be doing:

“...**If anyone loves Me, he will keep My Word...** [all of them; not argue; not try and take away some of them, but all of them] ...and My Father will love him... [He emphasizes that the Father loves us] ...and **We...** [the Father and the Son] ...will come to him and make Our abode... [dwelling place] ...with him” (v 23).

There is the *fellowshipping and tabernacling* that comes from God the Father and Jesus Christ, “...We will make Our abode *with* him and *in* him.”

The Holy Spirit comes from God the Father, but also it is the same Spirit that was in Jesus Christ. Therefore, through this Christ is *in us* and the Father is *in us* because He said, ‘We will come and make Our abode with him.’

Romans 8:9: “However, you are not in *the* flesh...”—that is *before* God. God is already looking upon you as having made it into the Kingdom of God if you remain faithful. If you let God dwell in you, if you let Christ dwell in you, live in you—the temporary dwelling for God today—then you will be in the permanent dwelling of God forever.

“...but in *the* Spirit, if *the* Spirit of God is indeed dwelling within you.... [the living Spirit, the Spirit of Life dwelling in you] ...But if anyone does not have *the* Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him” (v 9).

And it doesn't matter what they say, it doesn't matter what they profess, if they don't have the Spirit of Christ and the Spirit of God they are none of His. Notice that it says the *Spirit of God* and the *Spirit of Christ*. So, in the Holy Spirit of God the Father—which comes from the Father, and Jesus said that the Father will ‘send in My name’—the Father and Son both are dwelling in you.

Verse 10: “But if Christ *be* within you, the body *is* indeed dead because of sin...” Which body are we in? We are in the Body of Christ, which is the Church. Our body is dead because of sin, because it is buried in death, crucified in the likeness of Jesus Christ. And this means that we are no longer living to ourselves to do what we want to do, but with Christ in us and the Father in us, *we are living to do the will of God!*

“...however, the Spirit *is* life because of righteousness. Now, if the Spirit of Him Who raised Jesus from *the* dead is dwelling within you... [that comes from God the Father] ...He Who raised Christ from *the* dead will also quicken... [that is make alive to a spirit being] ...your mortal bodies because of His

Spirit that dwells within you” (vs 10-11).

Just like the Apostle Paul wrote to the Corinthians, that we are to be separate; we are to not touch the unclean thing. We are to come out of the world. We are to come out, as it were, from our own lives and let Christ live in us, which is the hope of glory.

Verse 12: “So then, brethren, we are not debtors to the flesh, to live according to *the* flesh; because if you are living according to *the* flesh, you shall die; but if by *the* Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you shall live. For as many as are led by *the* Spirit of God, these are *the* sons of God” (vs 12-14). Let's see how:

- that is to give us comfort
- that is to give us help
- that is to give us hope

John 14:26: “But *when* the Comforter comes, *even* the Holy Spirit, which the Father will send in My name, that One shall teach you all things...” Brethren, that is so tremendous! We're not going to learn all things:

- unless we hunger for it
- unless we thirst for it
- unless we long for it
- unless we crave it
- unless we let God the Father and Christ dwell in us
- unless we let Them complete the work that They had started to do

This becomes so important for us to know, understand and realize.

John 15:1: “I am the true vine, and My Father is the husbandman. He takes away every branch in Me *that* does not bear fruit; but He **cleanses...** [purges (KJV)] ...each one that bears fruit...” (vs 1-2).

- He proves it
- He trims it
- God works with it

That's why you have *a conviction of sin* when you sin. Why? *Because the Father dwelling in you is telling you that is sin!* Repent of that sin, because it is the graciousness of God that is leading you to repentance. That's the purging, that's the pruning, that's the trimming that takes place.

“...in order that it may bear more fruit” (v 2). Because God doesn't want you have sin. God—by His grace and by His Spirit—wants you to grow into the perfection of love. And this is how the love of God is perfected in us by this very operation.

Verse 3: “You are already clean through the word that I have spoken to you. Dwell in Me

[Christ] and I [Christ] in you. As a branch cannot bear fruit of itself, but only if it remains in the vine, neither *can* you *bear fruit* unless you are dwelling in Me. I am the vine, *and* you *are* the branches. The one who is dwelling in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; because apart from Me you can do nothing. If anyone does not dwell in Me, he is cast out as a branch, and is dried up..." (vs 3-6).

Notice what it says. "...If anyone does not dwell in Me..." If he chooses not to dwell in Christ, that's the choice that everyone who commits the unpardonable sin makes, if they make that choice. If they don't heed the conviction of God the Father and Christ in them to repent of the sins that they are committing—to change, grow and overcome, to put the things aside—then they're going to wither as a branch and men are going to gather them and going to cast them into the fire and they are burned. That's the Lake of Fire.

Verse 7: "If you dwell in Me, and My words dwell in you, **you shall ask whatever you desire, and it shall come to pass for you.**"

What is one of the answers to our prayers? *Christ in us, the Father in us!* The fellowshiping with God the Father and Jesus Christ

- through prayer
- through study
- through yielding ourselves to God
- through loving God with all our heart, mind, soul and being
- Will God love you back? *Yes, He will!*
- Will God cleanse you and purge you from your sins? *Yes, He will!*
- Does God want you to dwell with Him forever and ever? *Yes, He does!*

That's why this is here so that we will know.

"...you shall ask whatever you desire, and it shall come to pass for you" (v 7).

- Do you want anything that is not the will of God done for you?
- Do you want to live your life in any way that is not in conformity to the will of God? *No you don't!*
- Do you have things that do? *Yes, you do!*

That's why with the Spirit of God you're convicted so you can repent!

Verse 8: "In this is My Father glorified, **that you bear much fruit**; so shall you be My disciples. As the Father has loved Me, I also have loved you; live in My love" (vs 9-10)—which is from the Father!

Jesus Christ kept this understanding, and knew—when He came to the crucifixion—the whole purpose the whole reason for it.

John 17:1: "Jesus spoke these words, and lifted up His eyes to heaven and said, 'Father, the hour has come; glorify Your own Son, so that Your Son may also glorify You; since You have given Him authority over all flesh, in order that He may give eternal life to all whom You have given Him. For this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God...' (vs 1-3). God the Father at that time was the only true God, because Christ was not yet glorified.

"...and Jesus Christ, Whom You did send" (v 3). To make it abundantly clear, He talks about the glories that He had with the Father before the world was.

Verse 4: "I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work that You gave Me to do. And now, Father, glorify Me with Your own self, with the glory that I had with You **before the world existed**" (vs 4-5).

In order to dwell in the flesh on this earth, to tabernacle among us, Christ divested Himself of all of His glory and all of His Divinity to become the only begotten of the Father. He was asking because He had finished the work; the Father in Him was the One Who did the work. Isn't that what Jesus said? *Yes!* Now He's saying, "...I have finished the work that You gave Me to do. And now, Father, glorify Me with Your own self, with the glory that I had with You **before the world existed.**"

Verse 20: "I do not pray for these only, but also for those who shall believe in Me through their word; that they all may be one, even as You, Father, *are* in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us..." (vs 20-21).

The Father and the Son are dwelling in us now. So, we have the earnest, the begettal, of that oneness with God. That we may be totally, completely, absolutely at-one with Go, the whole total fulfillment of the Feast of Tabernacles. Not only are we given the begettal of the Spirit now. Not only are we picturing living on this earth as strangers and sojourners—walking in it as Abraham, Isaac and Jacob did, looking for the city that comes from God—but also God is living in us because we can't live with God now because were in the flesh. God has sent His Spirit so that He and Christ can live in us *now*. He's saying, "...that they also may be one in Us..."; the ultimate!

"...in order that the world may believe that You did send Me" (v 21). The world is not going to believe that until Jesus Christ returns with all the saints. Then the world will know and believe that Christ was sent.

Verse 22: "And I have given them the glory

that You gave *to* Me, in order that they may be one, in the same way *that* We are one: **I in them, and You in Me, that they may be perfected into one...**" (vs 22-23).

- in the Family of God
- in the Kingdom of God
- in the City of God: New Jerusalem

"...and that the world may know that You did send Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me" (v 23).

How much greater love can anyone have given to them than the love that God the Father gave to Jesus Christ. Think on that, brethren! How many times do we limit God, because we're all wrapped up in our own little lives and our own little problems and our own little difficulties, and we forget that God loves us as He loved Jesus Christ.

Verse 24: "Father, I desire that those whom You have given Me may also..." This is the desire of Jesus Christ to God the Father. Is the Father going to fulfill the desire of Christ for us? *Yes, He is!*

"...be with Me where I am.... [Where is Christ going to be? Ultimately? *In New Jerusalem!*] ...so that they may behold My glory..." (v 24)—which glory He said He had with Him, with the Father, **before** the world was.

"...which You have given Me; because You did love Me before *the* foundation of *the* world. Righteous Father, the world has not known You; but I have known You, and these have known that You did send Me. And I have made known Your name to them, and will make *it* known; so that the love with which You have loved Me may be in them, and I in them" (vs 24-26). That is the ultimate of the tabernacling of God.

Now let's go to the book of Revelation and see how absolutely fantastic that this is, brethren. Let's see how that this is pictured in everything. There is another oneness, there is another living together, which we as the firstfruits are going to have that no one else is going to share. They may live in the Kingdom of God. They may be given eternal life, which they will, but they are not going to share this kind of living that you and I are going to share, who have the firstfruits of the Holy Spirit of God.

After Babylon the Great is destroyed, and the smoke and everything, the destruction of Babylon the Great, as it says here:

Revelation 19:1: "And after these things I heard *the* loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying..." That's us singing with Christ on the Sea of Glass. We are on the Sea of Glass in the clouds, which is the first heaven. We are not in heaven

above in the third heaven, but now we're getting ready to come back to the earth as pictured on the Feast of trumpets. And we are saying:

"... 'Hallelujah! The salvation and the glory and the honor and the power *belong* to the Lord our God. For true and righteous *are* His judgments; for He has judged the great whore...' (vs 1-2)—which we are to not have fellowship with. 'What agreement does harlotry have' with the true righteousness of God? *It doesn't!*

"...who corrupted the earth with her fornication, and He has avenged the blood of His servants at her hand.' And they said a second time, 'Hallelujah! And her smoke shall ascend upward into the ages of eternity.' And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God, Who sits on the throne, saying, 'Amen. Hallelujah!' And a voice came forth from the throne, saying, 'Praise our God, all His servants, and all who fear Him, both small and great.' And I heard a voice like that of a great multitude, and like *the* sound of many waters, and *the* sound of mighty thunderings, saying, 'Hallelujah! For *the* Lord God Almighty has reigned'" (vs 2-6).

Here is the special relationship of living and dwelling together that we are going to have with Jesus Christ, and yes, with God the Father, forever *and ever* **and ever**. So, those in the first resurrection have this special fulfillment of the tabernacling with God to look forward to.

Verse 7: "'Let us be glad and shout with joy; and let us give glory to Him; for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready.' And it was granted to her that she should be clothed in fine linen, pure and bright; for the fine linen is the righteousness of the saints. And He said to me, 'Write: Blessed *are* those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb.'...." (vs 7-9). As the bride of Christ we're going to have a special relationship forever.

Let's see what were going to do during the Millennium. The Apostle John then gives this encouragement to us. We are going to go through some horrific times, just exactly as the apostles did, just exactly as the New Testament church did. They went through some horrific times, and we need this to just be burned in our mind, in our spirit, and in our very being so that we're going to understand this is what is going to keep us going.

Revelation 22:16: "'I, Jesus, sent My angel to testify these things to you in the churches.... [unto every one of you in the churches] ...I am the root and the offspring of David, the bright and morning star.'.... [that's talking about His glory] ...And the Spirit... [Who is Christ] ...and the bride say, 'Come.'...." (vs 16-17).

When we're living in the *rest* of God, when we are living with Christ, when we as the bride of Christ begin to bring salvation to this world, we're going to say, 'Come.'

"...And let the one who hears say, 'Come.' And let the one who thirsts come; and let the one who desires partake of the water of life freely" (v 17). Because we're going to have the opportunity to bring salvation to this world in a time when Satan the devil will not be around. To prepare the whole world for the greatest salvation, the greatest rest, the greatest thing that God could possibly do: *bringing of the Kingdom of God to this earth!*

A fulfillment of it right now for God the Father and you and I, is Christ *in us* and God the Father *in us*. Then together we're going to bring the Kingdom of God on this earth and we're going to have that special relationship with Jesus Christ forever *and ever and ever*.

Let's even magnify this a little bit more in the promise that is given to the churches. One of the promises that is given... and this is something; I want us to think on this, I want us to dwell on this and I want us to realize that, yes, this is where we are going to live. That, yes, here is the promise that Christ gave. There's something that we need to understand and there's something that we need to do. Because of God living in us and Christ living in us:

- God wants to give us His glory
- God wants to give us a crown
- God wants to give us the splendor and the eternal life, which He alone can share with us

Revelation 3:11: "Behold, I am coming quickly; hold fast that which you have so that no one may take away your crown. The one who overcomes will I make a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall not go out anymore..." (vs 11-12).

- Permanent residence!
- Permanently in the City of God!
- Permanently with Christ!
- Permanently the bride of Christ!
- Permanently existing as a spirit being to dwell with God!

"...and I will write upon him the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which will come down out of heaven from My God; and *I will write upon him* My new name" (v 12). There are several fulfillments, but I want you to understand what that means for us today.

Revelation 21:1: "Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth..." I want you to picture what that is

going to look like, if you can, the first time you're going to see that. Can you imagine what that's going to be like when you see new Jerusalem come down out of heaven?

"...for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away, and there was no more sea" (v 1). Now this is got to be a time when there is no more human life, because human life cannot exist without the ocean being here to modulate the temperature.

Verse 2: "And I, John, saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem... [put your name in there] ...coming down from God... [God the Father] ...out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice from heaven say, 'Behold... [see, look, comprehend, understand, it is] ...**the tabernacle of God is with men; and He shall dwell with them...**'" (vs 2-3).

- now face-to-face
- now person-to-person
- now in real existence
 - ✓ not temporarily just dwelling in the flesh
 - ✓ not temporarily with the begetting of the Spirit
 - ✓ not that we are, as we are now, temporary strangers in sojourning on this earth

NO!

"...**He shall dwell with them** and they shall be His people; and God Himself shall be with them *and be* their God.... [that's going to be an absolutely tremendous time] ...And God shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; and *there* shall not be any more death... [but eternal life] ...or sorrow... [but eternal happiness] ... or crying... [but joy forever] ...neither shall *there* be any more pain... [because there will be no more sin] ... because the former things have passed away.' And He Who sits on the throne said, 'Behold, I make all things new.'" (vs 3-5).

Yes, the place that Jesus prepared for you, the place that the Father has prepared for you, the heavens and the earth that God has created is *all to be made new*.

"...Then He said to me, 'Write, for these words are true and faithful'" (v 5). Yes, it *will* come to pass! Yes, it *will* take place! Just as you have God the Father living in you and Christ living in you now, *this is going to happen!*

Verse 6: "And He said to me, 'It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End. To the one who thirsts, I will give freely of the fountain of the water of life. The one who overcomes shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be My son'" (vs 6-7).

That's why the *true fellowship* of God today is so important. God the Father dwells in you, Christ dwells in you, and you in Them, *so that you can be made perfect in love* and when the Kingdom of God comes and the true tabernacle of God comes—you will be there as a very son and daughter of Jesus Christ and God the Father!

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version* by Fred R. Coulter

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- 6) John 6:56-57
- 7) 1 Corinthians 10:17-22
- 8) 1 John 2:6
- 9) 1 John 4:12-13
- 10) 1 John 3:24
- 11) 1 Corinthians 4:13-18
- 12) 2 Corinthians 5:1
- 13) 2 Peter 1:12-14
- 14) Matthew 17:1-5
- 15) 2 Corinthians 5:1-5
- 16) 2 Corinthians 1:21-24
- 17) 2 Corinthians 6:14-16
- 18) Isaiah 66:1-2
- 19) Isaiah 57:15
- 20) 2 Corinthians 6:16
- 21) Ephesians 2:18-22
- 22) 2 Corinthians 6:17-18
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- 25) Romans 8:9-14
- 26) John 14:26
- 27) John 15:1-8
- 28) John 17:1-5, 20-26
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Epistles of John

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The Will of God *vs* The Will of Men

Fred R. Coulter

I provoked some thoughts with Dwight Blevins spurring the thoughts on what we're going to study today. He brought out and analyzed, after being in Pasadena {former Ambassador College/Worldwide Church of God} and working there for years, why did things go bad?

What does the Lord require of you? Let's start out with what is the ultimate that God wants for us. We're going to see that one of the most important things in our whole life, in our entire conversion in the whole process of becoming the sons of God, is *the process of choosing to do the will of God!*

God does not want you to be like a Jesuit who completely gives up his will. He's to become a cadaver in the hands of the leader to do unquestioningly whatever he's told, regardless of what it is:

- to lie
- to cheat
- to steal
- to infiltrate
- to kill
- to subvert

All for the cause of the papacy!

God does not want us to give up our free moral agency. He wants us, by choice, to use our free moral agency so that ***our will becomes the will that He has told us; we choose to do so!***

Let's look at *God's will* first and then we'll come back at this and understand why it was that human will interferes. This applies to anything. As we go through this:

- we can apply this to personal lives
- we can apply this to a group
- we can apply this to a church
- we can apply this to anything

—and it fits.

In Jesus' final prayer He says, John 17:20: "I do not pray for these only, but also for those who shall believe in Me through their word." You can take this whole final prayer of Christ and apply it to you. Christ prayed for you. Will the Father answer His prayer? *That's a foolish question! Absolutely, He will!*

Verse 21: "That they all may be one, even as You, Father, *are* in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us... [the will of God] ...in order that the world may believe that You did send Me. And I have given them the glory that You gave to Me..."

(vs 21-22) That's one thing that we're beginning to see and understand even more. So, it is God's will that we become like Him. That's what *God's will* is.

Verse 23: "I in them, and You in Me, **that they may be perfected into one...**" We're going to look at some of the requirements, a perfection that God has for us, why He wants us to be perfect and how do we become perfect. How can God take us, with our human will, with 'the law of sin and death' in us, and make us perfect. *That's a process of conversion!*

"...and that the world may know that You did send Me, and have loved them..." (vs 23). That day is going to come. God says to the Philadelphians that He's going to make 'the synagogue of Satan come worship before our feet' (Rev. 3:8). That's something! Those include all the great leaders of the world, whether they be Jewish, Catholic, New Age, occultists or whatever, they are all part of the synagogue of Satan. The 'movers and shakers' of the world. Notice, it's all based on love.

"...as You have loved Me..." (vs 23). That's the whole missing ingredient that all the brethren have been missing—the love of God and knowing how much God loves them. Rather, everyone has been in too much fear of how much God hates them if they just cross their eyes the wrong way. *No, that's not so!*

Verse 24: "Father, **I desire...** [the will of Christ] ...that those whom You have given Me may also be with Me where I am, so that they may behold My glory, which You have given Me; because You did love Me before *the* foundation of *the* world." ***There's the ultimate will of the Father and the ultimate will of Christ!***

Verse 25: "Righteous Father, the world has not known You; but I have known You, and these have known that You did send Me. And I have made known Your name to them, and will make *it* known; so that the love with which You have loved Me may be in them, and I in them" (vs 25-26). When you have that then you're following *the will of God*.

Let's see something that Peter said that is part of the will of God. We're going to see that it is *the will of men* that has caused all the problems. ***The way of Cain is the ultimate of the will of men!*** The way of Cain is this: I will tell God what I will do. I will worship God my way and He *must* accept it. I know that's a little strong, but that's why God told Cain, 'Sin lies at the door,' (Gen. 4), because he was doing something contrary to the will of God. Abel did which was right and he was called 'righteous.'

1-Peter 1:14: “As obedient children, do not conform yourselves to the former lusts, *as you did in your ignorance.*”

- What is your former lust? *The will of the flesh! The will of man!*
- Do we do it in ignorance? *Sure, because we don't know the will of God!*
- What happens when you know the will of God, and you start super-imposing the will of men upon the will of God? *You're going to be in trouble like Cain was!*

Verse 15: “But according as He Who has called you *is* Holy, you yourselves also be Holy in all *your* conduct; for it is written, ‘You be Holy because I am Holy’” (vs 15-16). That’s something! God wants us to be Holy **as He is Holy**. There’s a whole process for us. There’s a whole tremendous goal; this is the ultimate goal.

From the point of view of the flesh, from the point of view of the human mind, God gives us an impossible task. What is it said of God? *That nothing is impossible with God!* What is impossible for men is possible for God.

Christ is telling us, Matthew 5:48: “Therefore, you shall be perfect, even as your Father Who *is* in heaven is perfect.” There’s no sin in God. There’s no variableness or shadow of turning. Every good gift comes down from God. So, ***the will of God is perfect:***

- What about human endeavors?
- What happens when human beings come along and they want to exert *their* will?

With the human will, human brains, human technology, you can do a lot, but:

- How does that count spiritually?

We’re going to take a principle here, which is very important for us to understand. This will also help us to comprehend even more the grace of God and the love of God. What I want you to do is think about all of your experiences:

- in the Church of God, wherever it may be
- in the Baptist Church you belonged to
- in the Catholic Church you used to belong to
- maybe you were even a Buddhist or a Hindu

You all had things that you were to do!

The rage on PBS was this Indian Guru who talks about enlightenment, meditation, tapping the power within you and all this sort of thing. Let’s read this and see where it’s going to come to.

Romans 9:16: “So then, ***it is not of the one who wills...***” The human will is not going to bring about the will of God. The *human will* is not going

to bring about the calling of God. You can seek God, but when you find Him, ***you do His will!***

“...nor of the one who runs... [can be ability, strengths] ...rather, *it is* of God, Who shows mercy” (v 16). That becomes important.

Now, let’s look at human will for those who superimpose the human will over the will of God. We’ve already mentioned about Cain, but let’s go to Deut. 1:

- What was the will of God concerning the children of Israel when He brought them over to go into the ‘promised land’?
- What was His will? *That they could go in!*

So, they sent in the spies. We have several things involved here. Moses made an error in allowing the people to persuade him to send in the spies into the land. It wasn’t God’s intention. If you are going to follow God in faith, you don’t need to go spy it out. They sent one representative—good democracy—from each tribe. Here’s a committee going in to spy out the land.

By the way, I’ve never found any committee to really work. Committee *without the will of God* cannot ensure righteousness whatsoever. As a matter of fact, I’ve found that every committee has failed:

- think of all the doctrinal committees
- think of all of the ministerial councils
- think of the human governments

Moses went ahead and allowed the ‘committee’ to persuade the children of Israel with *their* will. God would have still taken them into the land, but they got their own punishment coming back because ten of those spies came back and said, ‘Oh, my. This is an impossible task. The walls are high and the people are tall and they’re strong; we’re just like grasshoppers before them. Oh, God has brought us out here in the wilderness to kill us.’ Caleb and Joshua stood up and said, ‘Don’t do that! Don’t do that! No! *Don’t accuse God!*’

Moses is relating here, after they come back and are standing by the Jordan ready to go in:

Deuteronomy 1:37: “Also the LORD was angry with me for your sakes, saying, ‘You also shall not go in there.... [he let the spies go in so, Moses was in trouble] ...Joshua the son of Nun, who stands before you, he shall go in there. Make him strong, for he shall cause Israel to inherit it. And your little ones, who you said would be a prey, and your children...’” (vs 37-39)—because they *accused* God!

Here’s another lesson we all need to learn: **Will your anger against God persuade God to accept your will?** That’s a pretty heavy question, because in many lives things don’t work out the way you think. What happens? *People end up blaming God, getting mad at God, and that’s the root of*

bitterness! The anger of a man against God is not going to persuade God to do anything. It's going to persuade Him to do this:

He got angry and said, 'All right! You accused Me; I'm not going to kill your children out here, they're going to live but you're going to die.'

He says, "...and they shall possess it. But you turn and take your journey *back* into the wilderness in the direction of the Red Sea.' And you answered and said to me, 'We have sinned against the LORD... [repentance too late] ...**we will go up and fight according to all that the LORD our God commanded us.**' And when each one of you had buckled on his weapons of war, you were ready to go up into the hill. But the LORD said to me, "Say to them, 'Do not go up, nor fight, for I *am* not among you, you will be beaten by your enemies'" (vs 39-42).

When you go out and do you own will contrary to the will of God, then you lay yourself open for great trouble!

The people were saying, 'Well, we're not going to accept the will of God. We don't want to wander around here in this wilderness. We're going to do it Lord. Yes, we're going to do it.' So they did!

Verse 43: "So, I spoke to you. And you would not hear, but rebelled against the commandment of the LORD, and went presumptuously up into the hill. And the Amorites who lived in that mountain came out against you and chased you, even as bees do, and destroyed you in Seir, to Hormah. And you returned and wept before the LORD. But the LORD would not hearken to your voice, nor give ear to you" (vs 43-45).

No one is going to impose the will of man over the will of God!

What did Jesus say when He was tempted? What was the very first thing He said? *'Is Satan trying to insert his will over the will of God?'* When Jesus was tempted of Satan, He said, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God that that proceeds out of His mouth.' That's very profound and we're going to key on that as we go along.

Let's also mention that all the way through the Bible the thing that is important is—and Abraham was commended for it—because Abraham:

- obeyed My voice
- kept My charge
- My commandments
- My laws
- My statutes

When God was telling Israel about the covenant that He would give them, the first thing He said is, ***'If***

you will obey My voice indeed' (Exo.19). That ties right in with what Jesus said, '...every word that comes out of the mouth of God.' Is it His will? *Yes!* Every word of God is tremendous. Let's look at two things, here, that are very important.

John 14:21: "The one who has My commandments and is **keeping them...**" Did not God express His will for man in His commandments? *Yes, it's His will?*

"...that is the one who **loves** Me..." (v 21). It's a constant on-going thing. You are keeping, you are loving.

"...and the one who loves Me shall be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will manifest Myself to him" (v 21).

Verse 23: "Jesus answered and said to him, ***'If...*** [it's always conditional] ...anyone loves Me, he will keep **My word...**" Now, we're greater than just commandments, words. We're going to see why this is important, why the words of Jesus Christ are important and why they're so profound.

"...and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him. The one who does not love Me does not keep My words... [anything that Jesus says, *the will of God*] ...and the word that you hear is not Mine, but the Father's, Who sent Me" (vs 23-24). That's also profound.

Let's look at it from a little bit different perspective, which is this: Let's look at those who superimpose their will over the will of God. It can be anything:

- it can be Sunday-keeping
- it can be Christmas
- it can be Easter
- it can be leveraging the brethren
- it can be merchandizing the brethren
- it could be like a lot of these evangelists you may see on television out there doing their 'televangelizing' thing

We're going to key this to the Ezekiel message. So, they're doing *their* will. They're looking in the Bible to see 'what can we key *our* will to?' And *never ask what the will of God is.* There are going to be a lot of surprised people around one of these days.

Matthew 7:21: "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven... [they did a lot of things] ...but the one who is doing the **will of My Father, Who is in heaven.**" We must be doing the will of God and not superimposing *our will* over the will of God.

I want you to think about all the things, all the additions and things that men have added with *their* will to try and make God more righteous.

- Was this not the sin of the Pharisees with their traditions? *Yes!*
- Is this not a sin when people come along and say, 'How much does God allow us to innovate in or worship to God?' *None!*

God says that He desires those who worship Him in Spirit and in Truth. Notice what's happening. There's going to be this day that's going to come. *It's amazing!*

Verse 22: "Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy through Your name?..."

- look at all the radio stations we were on
- look at all the TV stations we were on
- look at all the booklets, magazines and pamphlets that we have written
- Are we not great?
- Did we not prophesy in Your name?
- Did we not use the name of Jesus Christ?

"...And *did we not* cast out demons through Your name?..." (vs 22). My, that's something! You'd really get a following casting out demons. Was it the will of the person that cast out the demons? *or* Was it God protecting His sacred name that cast out the demons? I think the latter, not the *will of the man* who used the name of Christ.

"...And *did we not* perform many works of power through Your name?" (vs 22). You can turn this on. You can turn it on any time. Turn on the television and you can watch the *700 Club* and you can see the *will of man* being superimposed upon the will of God, and all of the good works they are doing—believing in the trinity, believing in Sunday, Easter and Christmas, which God spoke nothing that said they could keep those. Notice what's going to happen:

Verse 23: "And **then**... [at this day of judgment] ...I will confess to them, 'I never knew you....'" They were pleading all the time, 'Lord we did this. Didn't you notice this?' *No!* 'We used Your name to cast out demons. Didn't we do a wonderful work?' *No, I never knew you!*

"...Depart from Me, you who work lawlessness" (vs 23). The Greek there is 'anomia'—which means *anti-law*. You can be against law, but you can be very nice about it. You can say, 'Well, God didn't mean that.' Isn't that what all Sunday-keepers do? 'Oh, God meant the nine of them, but He didn't mean that forth one.' *That's the will of men* superimposed upon the will of God. What happens when you superimpose *your will* upon the will of God? There is an inherent problem, which is the story of Job.

- Is God righteous? *Yes! Holy, perfect, absolutely righteous without a doubt!*

- What is man? *Man is capable of good!*

But his: 'heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked' *and* 'there is a way that seems right to a man, but the end thereof is the way of death.'

So, if you superimpose the will of men over the will of God, what happens? *You end up with trouble, disaster!* You're seeing it happen before your very eyes. You can look at all the trouble that you see in the Churches of God. It's not happening just in the churches you know of. It's happening in the Seventh-Day Adventists Church of God. As a matter of fact, they lost an entire university to the Jesuits. It's happening in the Church of God Seventh-Day. It's happening in any church that picks up the Bible and says, 'I represent God.' If you do and you don't do the will of God, *you don't represent God*. Here's what will happen. It will come out a mixture, regardless of how good you intend and you'll see this.

The Apostle Paul said something that becomes very profound for us to understand. We're told to 'be Holy as God is Holy,' which means that we are not Holy, which means we are carnal. How can our will be better than the will of God? That's why we are to be led of the Holy Spirit, which is the 'Spirit of Truth,' to do what God wants us to do. We are not to lead God and tell God what we are going to do. 'Oh, by the way, God, You have to bless it because this is Your work.'

I learned that lesson when I got knocked down the second time. We ended up with seven people and three on the mailing list. I asked all the brethren: 'What work of God are you going to do?' Was everyone satisfied? *No!* 'We're going to find the will of God before we try to do any of God's work.' I said, 'Brethren, I'm not going to run down the road and say that *this is the work of God, this is the work of God* and it's my work, it's my will. Then turn back and say, 'Yes, God, You better bless it because this is Your work,' *because it's not!*'

Romans 7:15: "Because what I am working out myself, I do not know. For what I do not desire to do, this I do... [that's the way human nature is] ...moreover, what I hate, this *is what* I do.... [everyone wants to do what God wills, but can't] ...But if I am doing what I do not desire to do, I agree with the law that *it is good*.... [consenting to God that He is good] ...So then, **I am no longer working it out myself; rather, it is sin that is dwelling within me**" (vs 15-17). Human nature has sin dwelling in it, every human being. So, the will of man then is imposing sin upon God in the final analysis, when you understand it.

Verse 18: "Because I fully understand that there is not dwelling within me—that is, within my fleshly being—*any* good. For the desire to do good

is present within me...”—the *human will*, intending good. Is not all *human will* intending good? Except those who are dedicated to evil and diabolical in what they are doing? That’s borne out in every accident that happens. ‘Well, I didn’t intend that.’ *No!* Your intention was to do right. Your will was to do right.

“...but how to work out that which is good, I do not find. For the good that I desire to do, I am not doing; but the evil that I do not desire to do, this I am doing. But if I do what I do not desire to do, I am no longer working it out myself, but sin *that is* dwelling within me. Consequently, **I find this law in my members, that when I desire to do good, evil is present with me**” (vs 18-21).

That’s why it is important that *you choose to conform your will to the will of God*. Otherwise, you’re going to have evil come in over a period of time, the more human devices that are used to carry out and preach the Gospel of God. There are some physical things we need to do, that’s okay.

- we’re using a CDs
- we use mail
- we use computers

That’s fine! Those are inert objects and they are subject to our will. If we use the will of God to use them correctly, then it will be fine. When we start taking:

- the devices of the world
- the merchandising of the world
- the manipulation of the world
- the control of the world

and start bringing that into the Church, guess what’s going to happen? *Evil is going to result!*

- you can take that in your own private life
- you can take it into any group
- you can take it into any community
- you can take it into any business
- you can take into any government

The same thing applies.

“...when I desire to do good, evil is present with me” (vs 21). Now you know why Washington, D.C., can never do anything right. They’re well intentioned. Every politician says, ‘Vote for me. I know what to do,’ but *all they do is just the will of men!*

Paul said, v 22: “For I delight in the Law of God according to the inward man; but I see another law within my own members, warring against the law of my mind, and leading me captive to the law of sin that is within my own members.... [the only salvation is Christ] ...O *what a wretched man I am!* Who shall save me from the body of this death? I thank God *for His salvation* through our Lord Jesus

Christ. Because of this, on the one hand, I myself serve the Law of God with *my* mind; but on the other hand, with the flesh, *I serve* the law of sin” (vs 22-25).

It’s also called in Romans 8:2: “...the law of sin and death.” Within every one of us is “...the law of sin and death.” That’s why ‘the way of man seems right,’ but it ends up in death. How can we improve upon God’s will? *We cannot!*

Psa. 2 is what we are seeing in the world today. This is what happens when people begin to impose their will upon the will of God. They have to do something. They have to elevate themselves and put down God. They have to tell themselves how good they are, how good their methods are and how well God’s way... ‘Well, you know, you really don’t need that law.’

What does it say about those who resist the laws? With the laws you’re not even into loving God, yet. What does it say about those who resist the Law of God? *They are carnal minded, because the carnal mind is not subject to the Law of God!* Here’s what we are looking at in the world. This is being fulfilled before our very eyes:

Psalm 2:1: “Why do the nations rage and the people plot in vain?” That’s their own will. This is the coming globalism. *We’re seeing it happen right today!*

Verse 2: “The kings of the earth set themselves... [they’ve got their agenda; they have their course] ...and the rulers take counsel together...” Don’t we have counsels here, counsels there, counsels everywhere, here a counsel, there a counsel, everywhere a counsel, counsel? *Yes!*

“...take counsel together against the LORD...” (vs 2). Why? What are they doing? *They’re setting their own way!*

“...and against His Christ, saying, ‘Let us break Their bands asunder and cast away Their cords from us.’” (vs 2-3). In other words, they’re cutting any control that God has in their lives. That’s what they’re doing. They’re completely superseding *their will over the will of God*. That’s what’s happening in the world today and that’s what Satan wants to do.

Verse 4: “He who sits in the heavens laughs...” Let’s put it this way: you can change the will of God if you plead for mercy and grace. *Moses did!* God spared all Israel. So, I won’t say that. Can *your* will undo the will of God. *No!* So, God “...sits in the heavens and laughs...”

“...the LORD scoffs at them. Then He shall speak to them in His wrath, and in His fury He terrifies them” (vs 4-5). Why do you think we’re going through all the things we are in this nation

today and in the world? You turn on the news. We have wonderful CNN—*World Report*:

- disaster here
- disaster there
- everywhere a disaster
- here a disaster
- there a disaster
- death here
- death there

They had one report on that in one week *the third triple murder* and no one cared! When God sets His wrath, it's going to be something. You can read Rev.

Verse 6: “‘Yea, I have set My king upon Zion, My Holy mountain.’ I will declare the decree of the LORD. He has said to Me, ‘**You are My Son; this day I have begotten You**’” (vs 6-7).

So, the One of God, of Elohim, Who became Jesus Christ, divested Himself of all of His Divinity, of all of His glory, to become the pinprick of life, so that He could become a human being. This is talking about the day that He was begotten.

Verse 8: “Ask of Me...” We’ll see then, why this will be of Christ, because we’ll examine what Christ did.

“...and I shall give the nations for Your inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Your possession. You shall break them with a rod of iron; You shall dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel” (vs 8-9). When Christ returns He’s going to.

There’s a wonderful song in the *Messiah* by Handel, and the one who really sings it well, he sings, ‘And You shall *dash* them.’ He really has some emphasis in it. You can just see Christ coming back to the earth and doing that.

Verse 10: “Now therefore, be wise, O kings; be admonished, O judges of the earth. Serve the LORD with fear and rejoice with trembling.... [stop your own will; follow the will of God] ...Kiss the Son, lest He be angry and you perish in the way, for His wrath can flame up in a moment. **Blessed are all who take refuge in Him**” (vs 10-12). In other words, follow the will of God.

We’re all called to be the children of God, and we are all to be perfected spiritually. This is applicable today.

Galatians 3:1: “O foolish Galatians...” You can put anything in there that you want. You can put:

- church members
- ministers
- whatever church you want to put in there

- whatever organization which claims to be leading to eternal life

“...who has **bewitched** you...” (v 1). That means, deceived you, beguiled you. Bewitched is part of the way of psychology—you control.

“...**into not obeying the Truth...**” (v 1). Is there anything wrong with the Truth? *Not a thing wrong!* That’s why it’s true.

“...before whose eyes Jesus Christ, crucified, was set forth in a written public proclamation? This only I desire to learn from you: did you receive the Spirit of God by **works of law...**” (vs 1-2).

‘The works of *the law*’ is not correct. It’s ‘works of law’ in the Greek, having nothing to do with the commandments of God, but works of law. It can, in a broad sense, include the commandments. We know that that is modified by Acts 5:32, that God gives His Spirit to those who obey Him.

The ‘Spirit’ is the gift of the Holy Spirit, ‘Repent and be baptized and you shall revive the gift of the Holy Spirit.’ It is a gift. If you have ‘works of law,’ any works, whatever it may be.

“...or by *the* hearing of faith?” (vs 2).

- Were you not convicted in heart?
- Were you not brought to repentance?
- Is that not what brought you to Christ?
- *Yes!*

Verse 3: “Are you so foolish? Having begun in *the* Spirit, are you now being perfected in *the* flesh?” This is what has happened to every church in the world. They start out, hopefully, with the Word of God We’ve see this with the Churches of God. They start out the Spirit of God and then they begin to get the devices of men and ***the will of men, which is perfection in the flesh***. You can do things:

- you can get responses in the mail
- you can get money
- you can by television time
- you can do all of those things

But are you doing the will of God? If you’re trying to be perfected by fleshly means, then, what’s going to happen? *There’s a way that seems right to a man, but the end thereof is the way of death!*

Organizations die! We’re seeing two of the major Churches of God being destroyed in the same year; on moral corruption, for one, spiritual corruption for the other and probably moral and spiritual corruption for both of them. God is saying, ‘Enough is enough! You’re either going to follow Me and love Me or you are going to have had it.’

In the process, He wants all of us to repent and find God. That's the whole thing in it. You stop and think, what one event could make every minister and every member, find out what is the Truth and what is the will of God? What we're going through right now, it's not comfortable, it's not fun, it's not pleasant, but we were trying to be *perfected by the flesh*.

Verse 4: "Have you suffered so many things in vain, if indeed it *has been* in vain?" Paul was going through the same thing.

Let's change the focus just a little bit here. Let's look at a couple of things that are very important concerning Christ, Whom we are to follow. We will see why He was called *the Word*. We will see what Jesus did and we're going to learn something very profound about what Jesus did. The very basis for His coming was:

Hebrews 10:7: "Then said I, 'Lo, I come (as it is written of Me in *the scroll of the book*) **to do Your will, O God.**'" That's what Christ did. ***Christ did only and solely the will of the Father!*** In order to become a human being, He had to take on human nature. *The only way He could succeed was to do the will of God!*

Verse 8: "In the saying above, *He said*, 'Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and *sacrifices* for sin (which are offered according to the *priestly law*) You did not desire nor delight in.'.... [you could offer those all day long] ...Then He said, 'Lo, **I come to do Your will, O God.**' He takes away the first *covenant* in order that He may establish the second *covenant*; **by Whose will** we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" (vs 8-10).

We'll survey a few things in the book of John. Let's apply this to Christ, which it rightly should rather than those of us. It can obliquely apply to us. Let's apply this to Christ, staying with the will of God.

John 1:13: "Who were not begotten by bloodlines... [it was of Spirit] ...nor by *the will of the flesh*... [it wasn't the passion and desire of the human flesh] ...**nor by the will of man, but by the will of God**.... [from the very conception of Jesus Christ] ...And the Word became flesh and tabernacled among us (and we ourselves beheld His glory, *the glory as of the only begotten with the Father*), full of grace and truth" (vs 13-14). Let's see how He maintained being in 'grace and truth.'

After the disciples came and said, 'Do you have anything to eat?'

John 4:34: "Jesus said to them, '**My meat** [food] **is to do the will of Him Who sent Me, and to finish His work.**'"

- Is the work of Christ completed?
- Did He have a work to complete up to His crucifixion? *Yes!*

John 17:4: "I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work that You gave Me to do." That was His goal, all the way through. He did finish it. He was just starting in John 4:34. That was His 'food.'

(go to the next track)

After Jesus was accused of breaking the Sabbath—let me cover this because a lot of people don't understand it—did Christ sin? *No!* Even once? *No!* So, He couldn't break the Sabbath. This really means that He *loosed* the Sabbath from the burden of *their* interpretation of work. Then He said to the Pharisees who were questioning Him about this:

John 5:17: "But Jesus answered them, 'My Father is working until now, and I work.' So then, on account of this *saying*, the Jews sought all the more to kill Him, not only because He had **loosed the Sabbath** ...['broken' (KJV) the Sabbath, which He didn't do, but it was an accusation against Him] ...but also *because* He had called God His own Father, making Himself equal with God" (vs 17-18).

You tie that in with our calling. Don't people get all mad at us and want to do us in because we're going to be as Christ is? They don't want that. They want us to be 'divine humans,' which as you'll learn is the doctrine of philosophy in satanism—'divine humans fully illuminated.'

Verse 19: "Therefore, Jesus answered and said to them, 'Truly, truly I say to you, **the Son has no power to do anything of Himself...**'" This is very interesting in the Greek, because 'of' comes from the Greek word 'ek'—meaning *out from*. He's talking about His fleshly body 'out from' Himself. In other words, Christ chose to make His will the will of the Father, all the way through. He came to do His will, *the will of the Father*, not His own.

So, 'I can do nothing of Myself.' What would happen if Jesus did something of His own? Having human nature, which He did, He was subject to death. He had to strive and overcome, and the truth is, He carried within Him the 'law of sin and death,' yet, never sinned. You talk about a trial and a struggle. Some people don't understand that.

"...but only what He sees the Father do..." (v 19). What are you seeing the Father do? *They had a tremendous communication back and forth with each other!*

"...For whatever He does, these things the Son also does in the same manner. For the Father loves the Son, and shows Him everything that He Himself is doing. And He will show Him greater

works than these, so that you may be filled with wonder” (vs 19-20).

Verse 30: “I have no power to do anything **of Myself**... [‘ek’—out from; ‘ego’—me] ...but as I hear, I judge; and My judgment is just... [Why?] ...because **I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father, Who sent Me.**” This is why we have to have Christ in us. This is why Christ is the hope of glory:

John 6:38: “**For I did not come down from heaven to do My own will, but the will of Him Who sent Me.** And this is **the will of the Father** Who sent Me: that *of* all whom He has given Me, I should not lose any, but should raise them up in the last day. And this is **the will of Him Who sent Me**: that everyone who sees the Son, and believes in Him, may have eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day” (vs 38-40). The will of God.

Let’s go to Luke 22 and hopefully we can answer a question. In the book *The Other End of the World* by Roger Rusk, he brought this out, which I think is profoundly correct. He brought out something which I think is important and I think answers the question here in Luke. This is when Jesus went to pray before He was arrested.

Luke 22:41: “And He withdrew from them about a stone’s throw; and falling to *His* knees, He prayed, saying, ‘**Father, if You are willing to take away this cup from Me—; nevertheless, not My will, but Your will be done**’” (vs 41-42).

- Why would Jesus say that when He was coming to do the will of the Father? *We’ve said in the past that this means because of the weakness of His human nature!*
- He never succumbed to the weakness of human nature—did He? *No!*
- Why did He say this?
- What was He going to be arrested for and led off to become? *The sacrifice of the sins of the whole world, hence, all mankind!*
- What cup was this that He had to drink?
- What cup has all the sins and abominations of the world? *The cup out of the hand of Mother Babylon!*

That symbolizes all the sins of all humankind and that’s why He said, ‘If You be willing...but nevertheless, not My will but Your will...’

You might have to take some time to think on that. Since He died for the sins of the world and Babylon is the one that is Satan’s instrument to bring the sins of the world, there may be some pretty profound validity to that.

Verse 43: “Then an angel from heaven appeared to Him, strengthening Him. And being in agony, He prayed more earnestly. And His sweat

became as great drops of blood falling down to the ground” (vs 43-44).

He knew what was going to happen. Have any of us followed the will of God to this extent, yet? *No!* Jesus is the ‘Author and Finisher’ of our salvation. As Paul said, ‘none of us have resisted unto blood striving against sin.’

I have yet, as I’ve said before many times, to anoint someone who has been wounded for resisting sin, because they come up and say, ‘I have this big gash in me because I was resisting sin.’ I’ll be happy to anoint anyone at that time for that. How are we going to be perfected? Let’s go back and we’ll, as ‘Uncle’ Paul Harvey would say, finish the rest of the story.

Let’s focus in on the words of God where we started out, because *the words of God express the will of God.*

- Is not man to ‘live by every word of God that proceeds out of His mouth?’

You stop and think about the Word of God!

- Is any word of God going to fail?
- What did Jesus say? *‘Heaven and Earth can pass away, but My words will not pass away!’*
- Is heaven and Earth still here? *Yes!*
- Have any of His words failed or fallen to the ground? *No!*

I think that when men begin to superimpose their will over the will of God, they become enamored and in love with *their own way*. They forget:

Psalm 12:6: “The words of the LORD are pure words...” Every word of God is a pure word and I’m beginning to learn that more and more. There’s so much here in the Word of God for us to learn that I don’t think that we have time to learn it between now and the time Christ returns.

When we get enamored with our own words, our own will and our own way, Satan will bless you for that because he’s taking you away from God.

- Can he bless you? *Yes!*
- What did he tell Christ in ‘the temptation? He took Him to the mountain and said, ‘*Look at all the kingdoms of the world,*’ in a moment of time and he said, ‘*All this will be Yours if You just fall down and worship me!*’
- Wouldn’t people consider controlling the world a blessing? *Yes!*
- Where did it come from? *Satan!*

That’s true!

“...like silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times” (vs 6). That’s why when you really start doing the will of God and following the

Spirit of God, you are going to study. There are going to be things that leap right out of the Bible and almost smack you in the face, that you never understood were ever there before. There's so much in it. It's just 'precept upon precept' and concept upon concept and all put together. These are the inspired words of God. *Tremendous!*

Verse 7: "You shall keep them, O LORD; You shall preserve them from this generation forever." A guarantee that His words are preserved. *Isn't that amazing!* You go back and you think how many writings of the ancient civilizations do we have. There are a couple of copies of *The Odyssey* and *The Iliad* by Homer, but how many Bibles? *Billions, billions, everywhere! It's amazing!* Counter this with the will of man.

Verse 8: "The wicked walk on every side when vileness is exalted among the sons of men." That's the ultimate result of rejecting the Word of God and superimposing the will of men in the name of Christ. Have not people been killed in the name of Christ? Stretched out on a rack? *Yes!* Jesus said that would happen.

Let's carry this further. God's Word is the Word of Truth. One of the first things that we learned:

John 17:17: "**Sanctify them...** [Make them holy. That's what sanctify means.] **...in Your Truth; Your Word is the Truth.**" There is no lie coming from the Truth.

Psalm 18:30: "As for God, His way is **perfect...**" Any man who criticizes the Word of God, you will see that what happens when the will of men is superimposed over this, then men begin to think that *they* are perfect. Then when you criticize them, you're in trouble. Whereas, no, they are not perfect. It is the Word of God that is perfect.

I know a man who stood for Truth and was fired for discovering the Truth and discovering that the evangelist that he served for ten years:

- was living a double life
- was lying through his teeth
- was deceitful beyond any measure
- corrupt to the worst degree

He got himself in trouble. God's way is perfect.

"...the Word of the LORD is **tried...** [refined] ...He is a shield to all those who take refuge in Him,...[in His will] ...for who is God besides the LORD? Or, who is a Rock except our God? The **God who girds me with strength and makes my way perfect**" (vs 30-32). Christ in you can make the way perfect. No man, not the will of men.

Verse 33: "Who makes my feet like hinds' feet, and sets me on my high places. He trains my hands for battle..." (vs 33-34). Let's look at this way and do it spiritually. Our weapons of our warfare are not carnal but spiritual. We war not 'against flesh and blood but against principalities and wicked spirits in high places.'

"...so that my arms can bend a bow of bronze. You have also given me the shield of Your salvation; and Your right hand has held me up, and Your gentleness has made me great" (vs 34-35). Not by authority, but you the Word of God. *Amazing! Amazing! Amazing!*

Anyone who wants to go up to God and say, 'God, I agree with You. Nine of your commandments are really great. Once we handle this one there are some others I want to talk to You about, which are not so great.'

Psalm 19:7: "**The Law of the LORD is perfect...**" Is God perfect? *Yes!* Is His character Holy? *Yes!*

"...restoring the soul; the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple. The precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandments of the LORD are pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever... [the love of God is cleaner, enduring for eternity] ...the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether" (vs 7-9).

If you want to have a converted attitude toward the laws, commandments and statutes of God, you read, study and dissect it.

Psalm 119:127: "Therefore, I love Your commandments above gold..."

- What is said because people do not receive the love of the Truth?
- What happens?
- *because they receive not the love of the Truth, they will believe a lie*
- Have you believed lies because you were willing to set aside the Truth?
- Was that the will of man? *Yeah, it's the will of man!*
- Was it the will of God? *No!*

"...yea, above fine gold" (vs 127). Here is the total, converted, attitude toward the will of God:

- since God is perfect, nothing can be better
- since God is righteous, nothing can be more Holy
- since God is Spirit
- since God is eternal

Verse 128^[transcriber's correction]: “Therefore, I esteem all Your precepts... [anything that You have to say or think about, God] ...concerning all things **to be right, and I hate every false way**”—which is *the will of man*.

Let's look and see what God requires of us. Let's see what our prayer is to be. Too many times our prayers are shopping lists *for our will*—are they not? You think about it.

- Is that why you haven't had many prayers answered?
- Are you trying to impose the will of man over the will of God?

Here's how we are to pray. That doesn't mean you don't have will. *You do!* You use your free will and choice to choose God's way and ask God to lead you and ask God to guide you.

Matthew 6:9: “Therefore, you are to pray after this manner...” This is daily. We'll compare this with the will of man. We'll get the comparison, because there's a comparison meant to be here.

Verse 7: “And when you pray, do not use vain repetitions, as the heathen *do*... [that's the will of man] ...for they think that by multiplying their words they shall be heard.” Tune in the *Catholic Hour*, which is a half hour, which is really 15 minutes. In it you get about 100 ‘hail Marys’ in about 15 minutes.

Verse 8: “Now then, **do not** be like them; for your Father knows what things you have need of before you ask Him.” I've often wondered about that. Why then ask? *Because then, you ask according to His will, that's why!* God asks:

- Is anybody here hungry?
- Is anybody here starving?
- Is anybody here naked?
- Is anybody here without the Word of God?

Paul said to have ‘raiment and food and therewith be satisfied.’

- We all have that—don't we?
- Can God provide other things? *Yes!*

He says He'll provide above what we even think. Greater than we can even think, that it can't even enter into our mind. We don't need to be like the heathen. What are the heathen trying to do with their much speaking? *Impose their will upon God!*

Verse 9: “Therefore, you are to pray after this manner: ‘Our Father Who *is* in heaven, **hallowed be Your name.**’” That's the thing that's so important.

As Dwight Blevins very aptly brought out, when the two sons of Aaron—Nadab and Abihu—let the fire go out—which God said, ‘Don't let it go

out’—*they imposed **their** will* upon the will of God. They didn't go confess to their father that they let it go out, because they didn't want to get caught. So, they said, ‘We'll make our own fire and put it on it.’ What happened? *They were zapped with fire!*

I think that if they would have gone to Moses and said, ‘Oh, Moses, we've sinned a great sin. May God forgive us. We let the fire go out. Would you please plead with God to spare our lives? Would you please plead with God that He would again send the fire to start this?’ I think God would have. If He wouldn't have sent the fire to start it, He would have commanded Moses to do it.

Then God said that the reason He killed them was that anyone who comes to Him must acknowledge that He is Holy. This is a real key in answered prayer, that God is Holy, God is righteous, and God is good, and that whatever you do glorifies God! That's what we're doing here at the beginning this prayer. After that, we're to say:

Verse 10: “Your kingdom come; **Your will be done on earth**, as *it is* in heaven.”

- Is anyone going against the will of God in heaven? *No!*
- What happened when it was? *Satan was cast back down!*
- Is God's will going to be done on this earth? *Profoundly, yes! Without a doubt!*

We need to have God's will in our life. Just like Christ said, ‘Not My will, but Your will.’

Let's see what the will of God is. What is it that God requires of us? That's why the Apostle Paul said that you don't need to go up to heaven to bring Christ down. You don't need to go across the sea to bring Him over here. He said that you have it right here in the Word of God. It's near to you, in your very mouth. Which means that God provided His Word in a language you can understand.

Deuteronomy 10:12: “And now, Israel... [you can put your name there; I've got my name right above there] ...**what does the LORD your God require of you...**” God has some requirements. How are we going to do His will? If we're to pray His will be done, here's what His will is. He tells us.

“...**but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways...**” (v 12) Is there any way of God which is not right? Is not what we do called the ‘way of the Lord?’ *Yes!* Walk in *all* of His ways, not pick and choose which ones you want or agree with—*all of His ways.*

“...**and to love Him...** [God desires your love and He desires to love you more than anything else] ...**and to serve the LORD your God...**” (v 12).

- How?
- Whenever it's convenient?
- Anytime you feel the need? *No!*

“...with all your heart and with all your soul... [all of you] ...**To keep the commandments of the LORD, and His statutes which I command you today** for your good? Behold, the heaven and the heaven of heavens *belong* to the LORD your God, the earth also, with all that is in it. Only the LORD had a delight in your fathers to love them, and He chose their seed after them, you above all people, as *it is today*” (vs 12-15).

Think about God's calling for each one of us. I'm still amazed at this. I've said this many, many times, but it's true. God the Father, the Supreme Ruler of the whole universe, *personally*, called each one of you, *personally*, called each one of us and intervened in our lives.

That's why in order to be healed from all the problems and difficulties that are going on, we need to be reconnected to God the Father and Jesus Christ. When our fellowship is with Him and Christ, then we can fellowship with each other. When we do:

- it'll be proper
- it'll be spiritual
- it'll be in love
- it'll be in joy
- no politics
- no back-stabbing
- no wondering what's going on

Just the real Truth of God the way it ought to be. Here's New Testament doctrine. Christ is the One Who has to do this:

Verse 16: “Therefore, circumcise the foreskin of your heart, and be no longer stiff-necked,... [circumcision of Christ (Col. 2)] ...for the LORD your God *is* God of gods, and Lord of lords, a great God, the mighty and awesome God **Who does not respect persons...**” (vs 16-17).

He doesn't regard the will of men, only if your will is His will. Then when you really become converted. ‘We don't want our will. Our will is always been a disaster, *but the will of God.*’

“...nor take a bribe” (v 17). What are you going to give God? Balaam tried that, ‘Oh, God, let me go. Oh, God, I have this money.’

Verse 18: “He executes justice for the fatherless and widow, and loves the stranger in giving him food and clothing. Therefore, **love the stranger**, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt. You shall **fear the LORD your God. You shall serve Him, and you shall hold fast to Him, and swear by His name**” (vs 18-20). Just input all of the New Testament spiritual applications to this.

Verse 21: “**He is your praise...** [not yourself] ...and **He is your God...** [not your corporation] ...Who has done for you these great and awesome things which your eyes have seen. Your fathers went down into Egypt with seventy persons. And now the LORD your God has made you as the stars of the heavens for multitude” (vs 21-22).

Deuteronomy 11:1: “Therefore, you shall love the LORD your God, and keep His charge...” Wasn't Abraham commended for that? *Yes!*

I had a conversation with a man the other day and he said, ‘Well, there wasn't anything written down or codified before the giving of the Law.’ I said, ‘You mean to tell me that God didn't have anything written down for 2500 years from the creation.’ He said, ‘Yep!’ I said, ‘No, you're wrong, Gen. 26:5.’ I had him get his Bible and he read it.

Genesis 26:5: “Because Abraham obeyed My voice and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws.” I said, ‘We can be guaranteed that they were written down. We can be guaranteed that Abraham taught his household the way of the Lord.’

- Did he not have a big household? *Yeah, he had 300 men that were warriors!*
- So, he had a lot of people with him.
- Do you not think that there were not disputes?
 - Do you not think that there were things that had to be done?

Furthermore, when He reveals the Sabbath, ‘How long refuse you to keep My laws and My commandments?’ (Exo. 16).

- They had to be known—didn't they? *Yes!*
- What did He say when Jethro came and said, ‘Moses, what are you doing sitting here killing yourself all day?’

He says, ‘The people come to me and I have to make judgments for them and let them know the Law of God.’

- How's he going to let them know the Law of God?
- Was Moses born with it implanted in his brain? *No! It was written down!*

They now can see many of the things that were structured there right after the giving of the Ten Commandments, also were in patterns, which go back in time. The Law of God has always been there. That's why He's repeating, here, the same thing.

Deuteronomy 11:1: “Therefore, you shall love the LORD your God, and keep His charge and His statutes and His judgments and His commandments **always.**”

Verse 8: “Therefore, you shall keep all the commandments which I command you this day, so **that you may be strong**... [strength of character, strength of ability, strength which comes from God; it makes you strong] ...and go in and possess the land...”

Verse 13: “And it will be, if you will hearken diligently to My commandments which I command you today, to love the LORD your God and to serve Him with all your heart and with all your soul,”

Verse 16: “Take heed to yourselves that your heart may not be deceived... [by your own will] ...and you turn aside and serve other gods, and worship them.” Isn’t that something?

Verse 22: “For if you shall diligently keep all these commandments which I command you to do—to **love the LORD your God**...” That’s what God wants more than anything else.

I’ll tell you one thing that’s missing with the people of God: They have never experienced the love of God. They have never been taught the love of God, at least those in our church experience, that we know of.

- God wants you to know that
- God wants you to experience that love
- God wants you to know that He loves you as He loved Christ
- you are to experience that love
- God wants you to
- that’ll happened when your praying
- that’ll happen when you’re studying
- that’ll happen when you let God’s will become your will and you come to the point of saying, ‘God, I just don’t know what to do. I don’t know how to do it.’

Then, you’re at the right place.

Luke 14—I’ll tell you what it says: Jesus said that if anyone comes to Me and does not hate his:

- father
- mother
- brother
- sister
- land
- children
- wife
- his own life also

He cannot be My disciple. You cannot let the will of other people or your own will interfere, or you can’t be His disciple.

When you take up your cross and bear it, whatever it may be, because there are trials—a lot of

people said, ‘Tithing doesn’t pay. God hasn’t blessed me. All I’ve had are trials.’ They have to learn that maybe your trial is a blessing. Then, maybe other blessings will come.

If you’re holding God to *your will*, that ‘I have done this because You have commanded and You **must** bless me.’ Is God going to bless you? *No! It won’t happen!* When you come to the point of Luke 14, you completely let your will be the will of God. What is He going to do to you?

Let’s come to Eph. 1. *This is profound! This really gets me all excited! This is tremendous!*

Ephesians 1:3: “Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly *things* with Christ.” Though we’re not in heavenly places, yet, but having the Spirit of God is a heavenly thing.

Verse 4: “According as He has **personally chosen us** for Himself...” God the Father selected you. That’s why it is a damnable sin to leverage and merchandise the brethren to your own will and your own things. That should never, never be.

“...before *the* foundation of *the* world... [God had His plan] ...in order that we might **Holy and blameless before Him in love**... [that’s what grace is all about] ...having predestinated us for **sonship**...” (vs 4-5). It’s not an adoption. Adoption is when you have children not of your own seed. ***We have the seed of God the Father!*** We are His own children.

“...to Himself through Jesus Christ, according to the **good pleasure of His own will**” (v 5). Is there anything that God will not do for those He calls! This is ‘according to the good pleasure of His own will.

The eye has not seen and the ear has not heard, neither has entered into the mind of man the things that God has prepared for those who love Him (1-Cor. 2) Tremendous! Profound!

Verse 6: “To *the* praise of *the* glory of His grace, wherein He has made us objects of *His* grace in the Beloved *Son*... [Christ in us, the hope of glory] ...in Whom we have redemption through His blood, *even* the remission of sins, according to the riches of His grace, which He has made to abound toward us in all wisdom and intelligence; **having made known to us the mystery of His own will**...” (vs 6-9).

Isn’t that a tremendous gift and blessing to know the ‘secret/mystery of the will of God?’ *That’s something!* That He loved you so much that He would reveal that to you.

I imagine that when the Apostle Paul had that revealed to him, which he talks about in Eph. 3,

he was beside himself and to have to write this, notice:

“...according to His good pleasure, which He purposed in Himself” (v 9). That’s what God wants to give you.

Let’s see what God wants because He tells us how we are then going to fulfill Matthew 5:48: “Therefore, you shall be perfect, even as your Father Who *is* in heaven is perfect.” That’s what God is doing with us now.

Ephesians 4:11: “And He gave some as apostles, and some prophets...” We’ve heard this a jillion times misapplied. These are functions, not offices, functions.

“...and some evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers... [focus on the overall goal] ...for the **perfecting of the saints...**” (vs 11-12). To *‘be perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect.’* The perfection we’re going to see is the love of God.

“...for the work of the ministry, for the edifying... [uplifting, encouraging, inspiring] ...of the Body of Christ; until we all come into the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, **unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ**” (vs 12-13). *What a goal! That is amazing! What a goal!*

He gives a warning, v 14: “So that we no longer be children, **tossed and carried about with every wind of doctrine by the sleight of men...** [their will being superimposed upon the will of God] **...in cunning craftiness**, with a view to the systematizing of the error... [to tell you fairytales] ...but holding the Truth in love, may in all things grow up into Him Who is the Head, *even Christ*” (vs 14-15).

Let’s see how we are to accomplish this. We can accomplish this, brethren. God has called us to serve, rule and reign with Christ. He’s given us bodies that are made in His image. He’s given us minds that are similar to His mind. Yes, we have carnal nature and *the law of sin and death* in us, but with the Spirit of God in us and Christ in us, **then** we can become perfect, as He is. Not by our works, not because we run, not because of who we are. *No!*

After we’re told to do all of these things, Colossians 3:14: “**And above all these things put on love...**” This is the most important thing that there is, above everything else that you do. Put *in* love. It says charity in the old *King James*, but the Greek is ‘agape’—*love*.

“...which is the bond of perfection... [the perfect, complete will of God] ...And let the peace of God rule in your hearts... [not fear, but the love of God, the peace of God] ...to which you were

called into one body, and be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom...” (vs 14-16). This is the point we need to come to in our lives, brethren. We need to let the Word of God be in our mind:

- know the Word of God
- understand the Word of God
- think with the Word of God

Let Christ rule in our hearts that way. Then, we’re not going to be deceived. *No! No way!*

Verse 17: “And *in* everything—whatever you do in word or in deed—**do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him.**”

Let’s come to 1-John. There’s quite a few Scriptures here that we need to cover.

1-John 2:3: “And by this *standard* we know...” God wants us to have the conviction and knowledge of *knowing* that we know. It’s one thing to know something, but it’s something else to **know that you know**.

“...that we know Him... [Christ] **...if** we keep His commandments. The one who says, ‘I know Him,’ and does not keep His commandments... [because he’s superimposing his will over the will of God] ...is a liar, and the Truth... [the Word of God] ...is not in him. On the other hand, *if* anyone is keeping His Word, truly in this one **the love of God is being perfected**.... [It is a process that you grow into] ...By this *means* we know that we are in Him.... [What is this going to do for us?] ...Anyone who claims to dwell in Him is obligating himself also to walk even as He Himself walked” (vs 3-6). That’s what it’s going to do for us.

This is how; this is the complete and perfect will of God for us, what God wants us to do.

1-John 4:16: “And we have known and have believed the love that God has toward us....” When you understand truly what John 3:16 means and what Christ did, you will know that love.

“...God is love, and the one who dwells in love is dwelling in God, and God in him. By this *spiritual indwelling*, **the love of God is perfected within us**... [it is perfected] ...so that we may have **confidence** in the day of judgment...” (vs 16 17). We don’t have to worry:

- boldness
- confidence
- faith
- strength

“...because even as He is, so also are we in this world.... [brethren, I pray may we be like He

was] ...There is no fear in the love of God..." (vs 17-18). That's why Christ is scattering and destroying the Churches of God with His judgment because they were run on fear and not love. Men were superimposing their will over the will of God. There is no fear in love. That's what God wants you to grow into:

- to loving Him
- to desiring Him
- to desire His way

"...rather, perfect love casts out fear because fear has torment..." (v 18). All of us have feared. It is bad. I'll tell you what, you go through some of these trials and you go to bed at night:

- you don't know which end is up
- you don't know right from left
- you don't know up from down
- you toss and turn
- you're fearful
- you're full of torment

That's what a lot of people right now are going through. A lot of brethren are and they don't know where to go. Why? *Because they've had the will of men superimposed over upon them and cut off from the love of God!* They need to know these things.

"...**And the one who fears has not been made perfect in the love of God**" (v 18). *No!* You can never grow up in Christ. *Never!*

Verse 19: "We love Him because He loved us first. If anyone says, 'I love God,' and hates his brother, he is a liar. For if he does not love his brother whom he has seen, how is he able to love God Whom he has not seen?" (vs 19-20).

I'll tell you, if you want something that will really correct you... I know I did when I read this and just looked at my life and all the things that I was doing. I said, 'Yep. I was saying that I love God but I hate this person, I hate that person and I hate the other person. Those whom I should not hate, those whom I should love. How can I say I love God.' What you need to do is this; put anyone there:

- father/mother
- brother/sister
- husband/wife

If you truly hate them in your heart, how can the love of God be in you? So then, what you have to do is you have to ask God to give you **His** love to understand.

If they're so evil that you have to get away from them, get away from them so that you're not partakers of their sins. The greatest love you can show them is by not participating in their sins and

the will that they're superimposing on the will of God.

Verse 21: "And this *is* the commandment *that* we have from Him: that **the one who loves God should also love his brother.**"

1-John 2:15: "Do not love the world, nor the things *that are* in the world.... [they're all the will of men] ...If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him because everything that *is* in the world—the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pretentious pride of physical life—... [all the will of men] ...is not from the Father, but is from the world. **And the world and its lust is passing away...** [The lust, or the will or the desire thereof.] **...but the one who does the will of God abides forever**" (vs 15-17).

That's why the will of God is what we need to follow, brethren!

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible In Its Original Order, A Faithful Version* by Fred R. Coulter.

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- 1) John 17:20-26
- 2) 1-Peter 1:14-16
- 3) Matthew 5:48
- 4) Roman 9:16
- 5) Deuteronomy 1:37-45
- 6) John 14:21, 23-24
- 7) Matthew 7:21-23
- 8) Romans 7:15-25
- 9) Romans 8:2
- 10) Psalm 2:1-12
- 11) Galatians 3:1-4
- 12) Hebrews 10:7-10
- 13) John 1:13-14
- 14) John 4:34
- 15) John 17:4
- 16) John 5:17-20, 30
- 17) John 6:38-40
- 18) Luke 22:41-44
- 19) Psalm 12:6-8
- 20) John 17:17
- 21) Psalm 18:30-35
- 22) Psalm 19:7-9
- 23) Psalm 119:127-128
- 24) Matthew 6:9, 7-10
- 25) Deuteronomy 10:12-22
- 26) Deuteronomy 11:1
- 27) Genesis 26:5
- 28) Deuteronomy 11:1, 8, 13, 16, 22
- 29) Ephesians 1:3-9
- 30) Matthew 5:48
- 31) Ephesians 4:11-15
- 32) Colossians 3:14-17
- 33) 1-John 2:3-6
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- Revelation 3:8
- Genesis 4
- Exodus 19
- Acts 5:32
- Colossians 2
- Exodus 16
- Luke 14
- 1 Corinthians 2
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- John 3:16

Also referenced:

Book: *The Other End of the World* by Roger Rusk

Epic poems:

- *The Odyssey* by Homer
- *The Iliad* by Homer

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