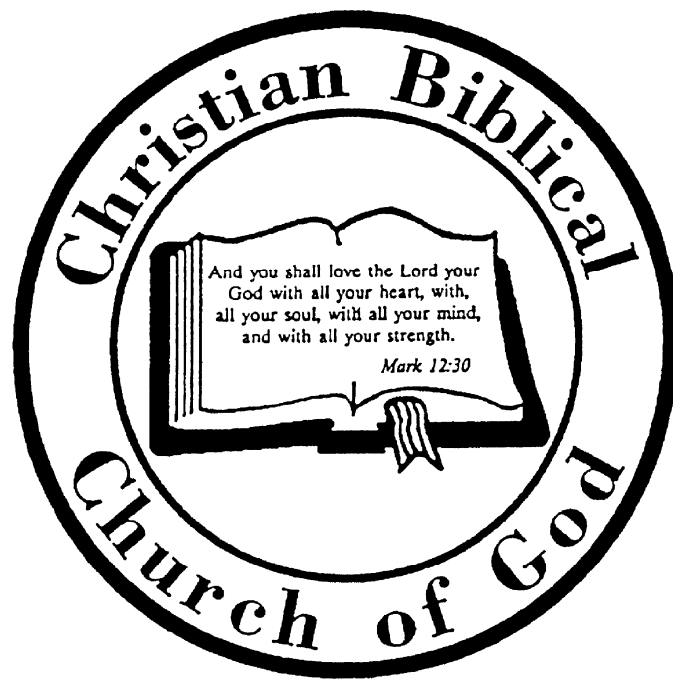


First Corinthians— an Epistle by the Apostle Paul



Transcript Book

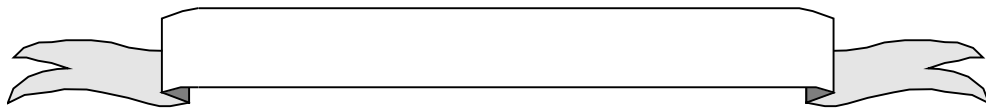
By Fred R. Coulter

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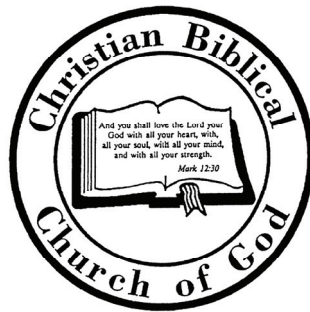
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1st Corinthians

Series of 17 sermons by Fred R. Coulter



Signature

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Compact Disc

[When included]

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1st Corinthians

Foreword

This series on Corinthians is a compilation of seventeen sermons by Fred Coulter that will help you to gain a better understanding of this epistle written by the apostle Paul. In many ways the Church of God is dealing with a very similar society and has many of the same problems that occurred there. The world today is filled with commerce, trade, various religions, troubles, travelers, people of many different races, daily interacting with other races and overwhelmingly beset with problems of a sexual nature.

The Apostle Paul preached the Gospel in Corinth, a large commercial city on the Paloponnese Peninsula of Greece. Because of so much commerce the city came to be known for its exceedingly debauched and degenerative lifestyle. Yet Jesus Christ had a number of people in Corinth that He wanted Paul to evangelize. Corinthians is a very corrective book, as many in the church were greatly influenced by the world they lived in.

Many Jews follow a tradition to this very day; the triennial cycle of reading the Old Testament in the synagogue, certain ones reading parts of the Law, the Prophets and the Writings each Sabbath. When Paul came preaching Christ, it set a great division among the people. What wonderful promises and blessings are established through Christ's life and resurrection and establishing His Holy Spirit in us.

The Apostle Paul also taught much about the resurrection in Corinthians. "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does corruption inherit incorruption. Behold I show you a mystery; we shall not all fall asleep, but we shall all be changed, in an instant, in a twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed..." (1 Cor. 15:50-57).

There is so much rich and profound truth in this study. We hope you will really drink in of the truths from these Epistles by Paul.

Special thanks goes to Bonnie Orswell, Laila Patterson and Nancy Spaller for producing the transcripts.

Epistle of First Corinthians I Background #1

Fred R. Coulter

If you have a map in the back of your Bible, turn to the map that shows the journeys of the Apostle Paul. The city of Corinth is a very interesting city. {referring to an enlarged map from an atlas}: The city of Corinth is a very interesting city. Here's Greece and it looks like an island, but it's not; it's connected by land. This land is called the Paloponnese Peninsula. You can see by looking at it that if you were going to go by sailboat—which they all did in those days—they were all sailboats or rowing boats—and come clear around under and back up it would take you many, many days for the journey.

During the height of Corinth's power—politically, economically and trade—they had ways of taking small boats overland—there are still the drag marks of them on the rocks—from one part of the sea to another part of the sea, and they could cut off about four days journey.

Through here then came all the trade going from Italy down to Greece, down to Alexandria and so forth, over to the Holy Land. It was a very highly traveled area.

What kind of cities do you always end up with in highly traveled areas; where people are coming and going and so forth? You end up with cities like San Francisco. San Francisco is a good example. If you want to think of Corinth, think of it pretty much like you would think of San Francisco—the whole scene of San Francisco. The word *to Corinthianize* meant to live a very debauched and degenerate life including all of the sexual overtones that that means.

Here was this city and I couldn't help but thinking, it's like anything else, you buy a new appliance, you bring it home, plug it in and turn it on and you work it, and then you say, 'I'd better read the manual.' So, I started going through this and wondered where Greece was, and I started about three pages after where Greece really was.

Brethren, I'm amazed at how many places there are on this earth; how many cities, towns and people! I was sitting there the other night and I was watching the news and I saw this globe and then I saw the Black Sea, the Caspian Sea and all the land that's there. When I was going through here I saw this map of the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea and there's over 300 miles across of a place that you never ever think of that's filled with cities, towns, roads and people. Then you go a little bit further and

here's the next map and a picture of the Caspian Sea and it runs clear across just before you come to China.

I thought: *What a vast earth this is and how many people are on it!* Then I just started going through the whole thing and just going through each one of these countries and by the time I got done with it, I thought to myself, *what a little, teeny blip on the face of the earth we are!* When you consider all that's in this; this is quite a thing, this Britannica Atlas.

Then I heard a statement made the other day that really astounded me. They're doing a little series on Antarctica, and they made the statement that no human being known has ever been born in Antarctica. I was absolutely amazed, and then start going through this, I thought: God's plan and His whole purpose and everything has got to be so absolutely magnificent. During the Feast I felt very inspired, especially on the Last Great Day. Even what we went through there and how good we felt on the Last Great Day cannot possibly even begin to scratch the surface of what God is going to do.

Now, let's get into 1-Corinthians through the book of Acts, so that we know what's happening. We will summarize chapter by chapter as we go along. I'm just going to mention some things:

The Church began after the ministry of Jesus Christ. It began on Pentecost, and remember the tremendous impact that Jesus had on His society. (note sermon series on John—*The World Has Gone After Him*). Then the tremendous preaching and events that took place on Pentecost began. Then there was the persecution that took place and they were all scattered abroad.

Acts 8:4: "Therefore, those who were scattered... [everyone except the apostles] ...passed through *everywhere*, preaching the Word of the Gospel." We know what Saul was going to do; we know that he was going to arrest people and take them. We know that he was knocked down on his way to Damascus to arrest the people who were following the way of Christ.

Acts 10—the unusual chapter of the introduction of the Gospel to the Gentiles by Peter.

Acts 11—we find something very basic to the understanding of what happened in the New Testament Church—which is going to help us understand what happened with the people in the

city of Corinth. I think in understanding what happened there, we're going to understand what is happening today. We're living in a society very much the same, filled with commerce, trade, travelers, people of all different race mixes, races, sex problems and so forth. The book of 1-Corinthians is not a very inspiring book in some ways; in some ways it is a very instructive book, and in other ways it's a very corrective book.

Acts 11:19: Now, those who had been scattered by the persecution that arose concerning Stephen... [what we read about in Acts 8] ...went through Phoenicia and Cyprus and Antioch, speaking the Word to no one except Jews only." Look to your maps and find where Antioch is.

Antioch is in what is called Syria then, or what we would call today northern Lebanon, which Syria even claims today as part of their ancient territory. As you go north from Antioch and westward, you will see the town of Tarsus, where the Apostle Paul was born. This helps us understand the background in Greek that Paul had.

He was born in an area where he was a Roman citizen and a 'free man,' as he was called. He spoke and wrote Greek. Antioch turned out to be the second leading church of all the churches in the New Testament. That was Paul's headquarters for most of the time that he was an apostle.

Verse 20: "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. And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number believed and turned to the Lord" (vs 20-21). We're dealing with very unusual circumstances—aren't we?

Verse 22: "Now, the report concerning them was heard in the ears of the Church that was in Jerusalem, and they sent out Barnabas to go as far as Antioch. When he arrived and saw the grace of God, he rejoiced; and he exhorted them all to cleave to the Lord with purpose of heart, for he was a good man, and was filled with the Holy Spirit and with faith. And a large multitude was added to the Lord" (vs 22-24). So, it became too much for Barnabas.

Verse 25: "Then Barnabas went to Tarsus to seek Saul... [It wasn't too far away, probably 3-4 day's journey at the most.] ...and after finding him, he brought him to Antioch..." (vs 25-26) It kind of makes you wonder about the Apostle Paul. Remember how he was called: he was knocked off the horse. God spoke to him and told him what was going to happen; declared that he would be blind for three days.

Ananias came and prayed over Paul, laid his hands on him, baptized him and he received the Holy Spirit. Paul went to Damascus and instead of

arresting people, he professed Christ. He had to be led out of the city down the wall in a basket. He went over to the Arabian desert and stayed there three years being taught by dreams and vision from Christ. He came back to Jerusalem and presented himself to the apostles and they said, 'Well, that's fine, we're glad to meet you, Paul,' and Paul didn't do anything from that time. He went on back to Tarsus and sat there in Tarsus and did nothing.

I don't know how many years was involved, but it was no small period of time. So, here comes Barnabas. How did Barnabas know where Saul was? *Apparently the apostles told him*, 'We're glad that all of this is done, and we believe what you've told us of it; however we don't know what we're going to do with you, so why don't you go home until we know what God is going to do.' I don't know why else. 'And when we're ready for you, we'll send for you and get you.' Barnabas knew where Paul was, so he went over and got him.

When Barnabas found Paul he brought him to Antioch, "...And it came to pass that for a whole year they assembled together with the Church and taught a great multitude..." (v 26). I want you to think about that one sentence; how much history has past. One year; 52 Sabbaths, all of the Holy Days, the Passover, the adding of people to the Church. A lot of things took place; a lot of things occurred in people's lives. As we sit here and think: What has happened to us in this last year? What was our year like? Here was a whole period of time covered by one sentence.

"...And in Antioch the disciples were first called Christians" (v 26). It doesn't say how long they stayed there. They could have been there beyond that year. It could have been more. Then there is a prophecy of the drought that would come. They decided to send relief to the brethren in Judea, so they sent it by the hand of Barnabas and Saul.

We know that James—the brother of John—was killed; Peter was put in prison; he was released; Herod was eaten up with worms. If you want to read something very interesting, read the account of the death of Herod in *Josephus*. He was out there speaking and was stricken with what appeared to be epilepsy and he foamed at the mouth. When they got him home, he was full of worms and it took three days for him to die. That's rather gruesome!

When you read some of the things that are here, you don't want to go against God! But there's one thing that ministers should never do: *subtly use that kind of thing to enhance their own authority against the people*. Remember, the administration of the church (old Worldwide) was changed into the 'government of God.' NO! The Government of God is in heaven! The Government of God is coming to

the earth. The Administration of the Church is on the earth now. Then Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem (Acts 12:25). Acts 13 is where Paul and Barnabas are ordained.

Acts 13:2: “And as they were ministering and fasting to the Lord, the Holy Spirit said, ‘Separate both Barnabas and Saul to Me for the work to which I have called them.’ And when they had fasted and prayed, they laid hands on them *and* sent *them* out. So then, after being sent out by the Holy Spirit, they went down to Seleucia, and from there they sailed away to Cyprus” (vs 2-4). Each place where they were going they were preaching. It doesn’t say what happened in Seleucia or Cyprus, until they came to this certain city.

Verse 5: “And when they came to Salamis, they preached the Word of God in the synagogues of the Jews....” Why would they preach to the “...synagogues of the Jews....”? *Because the New Testament shows that it’s ‘to the Jew first and then to the Gentile.’* Remember what the Pharisees said, ‘Behold, the world has gone after Him.’ Now here comes these Christians on down into the outlying synagogues. They are taking these synagogues and turning them into an uproarious split! We’re going to read some of the things that are going to happen because of what they’re doing and preaching.

You know that all the Jews heard of the things that went on in Jerusalem, because every Feast Jesus was there; He was spoken of. What if you were one of those that traveled up to Jerusalem during that Pentecost when the Holy Spirit came and the Church was formed and the people were baptized, but you weren’t. You had to get home and tend your business in Cyprus or Corinth or wherever it may be. You went to the synagogue every week and you heard about this that was going on. Everyone was talking: Did you hear this? I wonder what this is? And the miracles and the healings.

Here comes Paul and Barnabas walking into the synagogue. Not everyone can preach in the synagogue, unless he has the ‘badge of authority,’ being a Pharisee. Paul was very clever. He said, ‘I’m a Jew; I’m a Pharisee; I’m a Roman; I’m a free man.’ He used every one of these terms concerning himself.

Paul comes into the synagogue of the Jews, “...And they also had John *as* an assistant. And when they had gone through the island as far as Paphos, they found a certain sorcerer, a false prophet, a Jew whose name *was* Bar-Jesus” (vs 5-6). Bar-Jesus means *son of Jesus*. Jesus was a very common name. Some people—false prophets—have speculated that he went along and said that he was ‘the son of Jesus Who was the Christ.’ I don’t read that here.

Notice what he said when Saul was confronting him as he was turning the deputy away from the faith, v 9: “But Saul, who *was* also *called* Paul... [this is the first time he’s called Paul] ...being filled with *the* Holy Spirit, fixed his eyes on him, *and* said, ‘O full of all guile and all craftiness, *you* son of the devil *and* enemy of all righteousness... [he didn’t mince words] ...**will you not cease to pervert the straight ways of *the* Lord?** And now behold, *the* hand of the Lord is upon you, and you shall be blind, not seeing the sun for a season.’ And immediately a mist and darkness fell upon him, and he went about seeking someone to lead *him* by the hand. And after seeing what had happened, the proconsul believed, being astonished at the teaching of the Lord” (vs 9-12). Then they did some more traveling. John went back to Jerusalem, and they came all the way across and to another Antioch.

There is another Antioch, which is in Pisidia (v 14). Go back to your map. I know it’s a little strange. If you will look at what is called the country of Turkey today, come to the south shore, right in the middle, there’s a little indention in the coastline, go straight up from there about one-third of the way, you will see the city of Antioch in Pisidia. That was quite a little trip that they took.

Verse 14: “Now, after passing through from Perga, they came to Antioch of Pisidia; and they went into the synagogue on the Sabbath Day *and* sat down.... [Here’s the way it happened in all of the synagogues]: ...And after the reading of the Law and the Prophets...” (vs 14-15).

The Jews have a tradition to this very day: *the triennial cycle of reading the Bible*. That is to read in the synagogue through a cycle of three years all the Law and all the Prophets. If you have anything of Jewish readings and find about the triennial cycle, they will say, ‘On this Sabbath you read this much of the Law and this much of the Prophets and this much of the Writings.’ That’s what they were doing here.

“...the rulers of the synagogue said to them...” Notice how Christianity was preached; it was kind of little bit of subterfuge, because here they come marching into the synagogue, ‘Hello, who are you?’ *I’m Paul of Tarsus and this is Barnabas my companion and here’s John-Mark.* ‘Oh, wonderful, we can tell you’re Jews and here’s my Pharisee badge.’ So, they sit down and the ruler of the synagogue didn’t know what was coming. They were traveling; they didn’t give a hint as to what was going to happen.

“...‘Men, brethren... [fellow Jews. When a Jew speaks to another Jew as a brother, it is Jew to Jew; it is not brethren as we think of in the Church.]

...if you have a word of exhortation for the people, speak.' Then Paul stood up and, after beckoning with his hand, said, 'Men, Israelites, and those who fear God, listen *to me*' (vs 15-16). He really fell into it then. Oh boy, what trouble!

I'm going to cover most of the rest of this chapter, because this is the same type of sermon that he gave in every synagogue. I want you to understand that only one place—one synagogue in all of the New Testament—where the Apostle Paul preached, was said to be decent and orderly and more noble than the rest, and that was the Berean Jews. Here's what happened every time he went into the synagogue. Think of this from the point of view of what the Apostle Paul thought and did, and from the point of view of what the Jews did. We're going to see their reaction. They went to extreme measures!

Verse 16: "Then Paul stood up and, after beckoning with his hand, said, 'Men, Israelites, and those who fear God, listen *to me*.... [that's all the proselyte Greeks that were there] ...The God of this people Israel chose our fathers and exalted the people when they were sojourning in *the* land of Egypt...' (vs 16-17). Notice that every time that the Gospel is preached, where does it begin? *The fathers: Abraham, Isaac and Jacob*; and Israel in captivity in Egypt! There are people who call that the 'Torah Story.' That always relates the history and calling of Israel.

- Do we do that today in the Church of God? *Yes!*
- What begins our experience as a Christian? *Passover!*

“...and with a high arm brought them out of it. And *for* a period *of* about forty years, He put up with their manners in the desert” (vs 17-18). Does that one sentence summarize an awful lot? Talk about condensing a sermon down. That's all of Exodus, Numbers, Leviticus and Deuteronomy. WHAM! He's through it all right there!

Verse 19: "And after destroying seven nations in *the* land of Canaan, He gave their land to them by lot.... [that takes care of all the book of Joshua] ...And after these things, He gave *them* judges *for* about four hundred and fifty years, until Samuel the prophet” (vs 19-20). That takes care of all the book of Judges and 1st and 2nd Samuel.

Verse 21: "And then they asked for a king, and God gave them Saul, son of Cis, a man of *the* tribe of Benjamin, *for* forty years. And after removing him, He raised up David to be their king; to whom He also gave testimony, saying, 'I have found David, the *son* of Jesse, a man after My own heart, who will perform all My will.'" (vs 21-22). He

immediately went starting from the common ground right down to what everyone understood: *David the king!* Everyone understood the major prophecies to David. Do we, today, relate a lot of things in the Church concerning David in relationship to the Church? *Yes!*

Verse 23: "Of this man's seed has God according to *His* promise raised up to Israel a Savior Jesus." [they're short-circuiting a whole lot of history; about a thousand years of history.

(go to the next track)

Verse 24: "After John had first preached, before His coming, *the* baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel. And as John was fulfilling *his* course, he said, 'Whom do you suppose *that* I am? I am not *He*; but behold, *there is* one Who comes after me, of Whom I am not worthy to loose the sandals of His feet.'" (vs 24-25). That summarizes a good portion of Matthew, Mark and Luke.

Verse 26: "Men, brethren, sons of *the* race of Abraham... [now he's got them; this is very, very tremendous preaching] ...and those among you who fear God, to you the message of this salvation was sent; for those who were dwelling in Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they knew Him not, nor the voices of the prophets who are read every Sabbath, have themselves fulfilled *them* in condemning *Him*" (vs 26-27). That's a very interesting barb— isn't it? The Scriptures are read every Sabbath Day!

Verse 28: "And though no one found any cause *worthy* of death, they begged Pilate to execute Him. And when they had carried out all things that were written concerning Him, they took *Him* down from the tree *and* put *Him* in a tomb; but God raised Him from *the* dead. *And* He appeared for many days to those who had come up with Him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are His witnesses to the people. And we are announcing the Gospel to you..." (vs 28-32).

Here starts the real rift in the Church. Can you imagine—just stop and think about it—here's this nice little tranquil synagogue. They come in every Sabbath and they have this one read the Law; this one read the Prophets; this one give the prayer. The way they do in synagogues today, when it's all done they all go in the back and have cheese and wine, or maybe some other snacks and they talk and chat.

Here's this nice little synagogue and here comes in some travelers—strangers—way out in the middle of Pisidia in the town of Antioch, and here this fellow comes preaching. Notice what happens; it's something! I've never been in a church where anything like this happened, except I would have to say the tension I felt the day I resigned from Worldwide would be the closest thing I could ever come to what happened here.

“...—the promise made to the fathers—that God has fulfilled this to us, their children, having raised up Jesus; as it is also written in the second Psalm, ‘You are My Son; today have I begotten you.’ And *to confirm* that He raised Him from *the* dead, no more to return to corruption, He spoke in this manner: ‘I will give You the faithful mercies of David.’ Accordingly, he also says in another *place*, ‘You will not allow Your Holy One to see corruption.’ For David, after ministering to his own generation by the counsel of God, died, and was buried with his fathers, and saw corruption” (vs 32-36).

You might want to key in here Acts 2 where Peter said that ‘David is dead and buried and his sepulcher remains with us unto this day.’ Compare this sermon with what Peter preached and it was almost an identical sermon. The words a little different, but the basics are there.

Verse 37: “But the One Whom God raised up did not see corruption. Therefore, be it known to you, men *and* brethren... [now here comes the hammer]: ...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” (vs 37-39). He held the Law of Moses until the very last.

That, brethren, to the Jews in the synagogue was an absolutely crushing statement. There was no greater person than Moses in the Jews’ eyes until Jesus. Yet, how many follow Jesus? If you believed Moses and you didn’t believe Jesus, and someone comes in and says that you can be justified from your sins, which you couldn’t be justified by the Law of Moses. To many Jews this was a repudiation of the Law of Moses, which was not the case.

Verse 40: “Take heed, therefore, lest that which is spoken in the Prophets come upon you.” Now he gives a warning. Not only does he hit them over the head and tell them that the Law of Moses isn’t going to save them, now ‘you better pay attention or you’re going to get the curse of the Prophets on your neck.’

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.’ 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. 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” (vs 41-43). Here’s where the battle begins, and this sets the stage that happened in almost every city where the Apostle Paul went. Just

like the words of Jesus:

Verse 44: “And on the coming Sabbath...” You know the whole argument of this. What does this one point prove concerning the Sabbath/Sunday question and the preaching of the Gospel. Paul never taught them to keep Sunday, not even the Gentiles, because it was the *next Sabbath*.

“...almost the whole city was gathered together to hear the Word of God. 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” (vs 44-45).

That sounds a little bit like the same things that the Jews do today—right? Anyone who opposes them gets WWII records brought up. I question the validity of those records some 40 years later, and they’re only copies. You know what you can do with copy machines. You can make copies of things that are not really in existence and make it look like it’s a bona fide copy. The whole point I want to make is that the political and religious power that the Jews brought against Paul. We’re going to see that they used the governments to bring their pressure upon the Christians more than one time.

Verse 46: “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.’ Whoa! What a hot statement! Talk about the fist in the air. I don’t know what kind of argument was going on that Sabbath, but it wasn’t a quiet, pleasant, enjoyable, loving Sabbath. You would have to say that this was a ‘hassle’ church, rather than what we want: *a no hassle church*.

Verse 47: “‘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.’” And when the Gentiles heard *this*, they rejoiced; and they glorified the Word of the Lord... [here you have Jew against Gentile] ...and believed, as many as were appointed to eternal life. And the Word of the Lord was carried throughout the entire country” (vs 47-49). That one statement says an awful lot—*the whole region*! This thing was like an ongoing hornet’s nest. There were swarms, as you would liken it, from one queen to another queen establishing new hotbeds of activity.

Verse 50: “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.” They just came in and grabbed them, picked them up and shoved them unceremoniously out of town.

How would like to start going to a church

that began on this kind of basis? I mean, not knowing anything, maybe you can have the stomach for it, but I tell you, today I wouldn't have the stomach for it. Just going through and getting the background on this, I just couldn't help but think: My, my, how true that it is what Jesus said, and it's still true today. Here's what Jesus said concerning what would happen when He was preached:

Matthew 10:34: "Do not think that I have come to bring peace on the earth; I did not come to bring peace, but a sword." [That is sure what happened back there.] ...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*" (vs 34-46).

Wherever the Apostle Paul went, this is what happened. I imagine by the time the Apostle Paul came to the point that he was going to die, I imagine that he was literally worn out and had gone through every emotion possible to serve God, to serve the Church, to raise the congregations, to try and keep them in order. But I want you to really get the feel for what was happening.

So, they kicked them out of town, Acts 13:51: "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). There was something extra and special that was happening then in receiving the Holy Spirit to give them the courage to stand.

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... [now we have mob action] ...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" (vs 1-3). How long did they stay in Iconium? *I don't know!* But it says a long period of time. Could be six months; more than a year; less than a year. I don't know!

Verse 4: "But the multitude of the city was divided; and some were with the Jews, and some *were* with the apostles. And when an assault was *about to be* made by both the Gentiles and *the* Jews with their rulers to insult and stone them" (vs 4-5). Talk about a real precarious position. Ready to be stoned and chased out of town. No wonder God didn't tell Paul what was going to happen. He just said that he was going to preach to the Gentiles and the children of Israel and that he 'suffer many things for Me [Christ].' And he did!

Verse 6: "They became aware of it; so they fled to Lyconia, into the cities of Lystra and Derbe and the surrounding region. And there they preached the Gospel.... [here's quite a thing going on] ...Now, in Lystra, a certain man was sitting who had never walked; he was impotent in the feet, having been crippled from his mother's womb. This *man* heard Paul speaking; who, after looking intently at him, and seeing that he had faith to be healed, said with a loud voice, 'Stand upright on your feet.' And he leaped up and walked" (vs 6-10). These people we're not jaded with radio and television and all the things we have today.

Verse 11: "And when the multitude saw what Paul had done, they lifted up their voices in Lyconian, saying, 'The gods have become like men *and* have come down to us.'" You can imagine how excited they were. What an excitement this would be. Can you imagine if you were a Greek and you believed in all these gods and all of a sudden you really believed that the gods had come down to visit you personally!

Verse 12: "And Barnabas they called Zeus; and Paul, Hermes, because he was the principal speaker.... [they already named them] ...Then the priest of Zeus, who *officiated* before their city... [as you're going into the city] ...brought oxen and garlands to the gates, desiring to sacrifice with the multitudes. But when the apostles, Barnabas and Paul, heard *this*, they ripped their *own* garments *in disbelief*, and rushed into the multitude, shouting out and saying, 'Men, why are you doing these things? We also are men, with the same nature as you, and we have been preaching the Gospel to you, *so that* you will turn from these vanities....'" (vs 12-15). Quite different from what the Catholics do. They'd run in and say, 'Let's just change these things a little bit from pagan to Christian. Let's have a feast.' They didn't do that.

Paul said to turn from these vanities "...to the living God, Who made heaven and earth, and the sea, and all the things in them; who in the past generations allowed all peoples to go in their *own* ways... [he was really preaching] ...though, indeed, He did not leave Himself without witness, in doing good to us from heaven *by* giving rain and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness.' And *even* by saying these things, they could hardly keep the multitudes from sacrificing to them. Then Jews from Antioch and Iconium came there; and after persuading the multitudes..." (vs 15-19).

I want you to understand how perfidious—easily swayed by circumstantial things—that these people were; very emotional. Here the man was healed and they run out and say, 'Oh, the gods are wonderful; the gods are with us; this is a glorious day.' Paul could hardly do anything to get in there

and stop them from doing. The Jews come in there and talk and notice what happened: "...they stoned Paul and dragged *him* outside the city, supposing *that* he was dead" (v 19). You talk about going from the height of acceptance to the total rejection and despair of being stoned.

You know how really down you feel if you've had to deal with someone and you've done all you can do to deal with them and they reject you, and they turn you down cold flat and are absolutely rude to you and literally push you out of their presence. Imagine how the Apostle Paul felt! Not only did that happen to him, he was stoned, drug out of town and left for dead!

Verse 20: "But while the disciples were standing around him, he arose; and he went into the city *with them*...." God had to be with him to do that, to raise him up. You may consider some of this not necessary for the background coming into Corinth, but I want you to understand where the Apostle Paul is coming from when he gets to Corinth. Then we're going to understand why the book of 1st and 2nd Corinthians has been written the way that it's written.

"...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).

After reading all that and what happened, it makes it seem kind of not so fulfilling for us when we say that it's by *much tribulation* that we enter into the Kingdom of God. I know in just preparing and reading through and studying this and thinking about the things that we have gone through—which has been a certain amount of tribulation—it's nothing compared to what the Apostle Paul had to go through. And he could preach that with conviction!

I have never been stoned. My foot hurts when I knock it up the side of a table or something. I wonder what it was like to be stoned with stones and be left for dead. Black and blue and scabby all over! He must have been a strong guy, too. He wasn't like us. We couldn't take that. One stone and that would be it, we'd be out of it.

Verse 23: "And when they had chosen for themselves elders in every church, *and* had prayed with fasting, they committed them to the Lord, on Whom they had believed. And they passed through Pisidia *and* came to Pamphylia. And when they had spoken the Word in Perga, they came down to

Attalia; and from there they sailed to Antioch, where they had been committed to the grace of God for the work which they had fulfilled. And when they arrived, they gathered the Church together and declared all that God had done with them, and how He had opened a door of faith to the Gentiles. And they stayed there with the disciples *for* a long time" (vs 23-28). It doesn't tell us exactly how long, but it's a long time. I would like to know what the phrase 'a long time' means.

Acts 15—they had a dispute concerning circumcision and what parts of the law the Gentiles should keep. The Apostle James gave the sentence. This is the one that is supposed to be the great ministerial conference and confrontation. Paul and Barnabas took the letter from the apostles and went back to preach to the people that he had been with before. Acts 15:41: "And he passed through Syria and Cilicia, establishing the churches."

Acts 16:1: "He then arrived at Derbe and Lystra; and behold, there was a certain disciple named Timothy, son of a certain Jewish woman who believed, but *his* father *was* a Greek. He was recommended to *Paul* by the brethren in Lystra and Iconium, *and* Paul desired to take him with him; but because of the Jews in those places, he took him and circumcised him, for they all knew that his father was a Greek" (vs 1-3).

Even though they had the documentation saying that it wasn't necessary to be circumcised, Paul had him circumcised for the sake of the problem with him being half Jew and half Greek and preaching and so forth. All the churches were established. Acts 17 gets into when Paul came to Corinth, and we will see what kind of situation they had the Church.

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

Scriptural References:

- 1) Acts 8:4
- 2) Acts 11:19-26
- 3) Acts 13:2-6, 9-50
- 4) Matthew 10:34-46
- 5) Acts 13:51-52
- 6) Acts 14:1-28
- 7) Acts 15:41
- 8) Acts 16:1-3

Scriptures referenced, not quoted: Acts 10; 12:25; 2

Also referenced:

- Sermon Series: Gospel of John (specifically, *The World Has Gone After Him*)
- Book: *Josephus*

FRC:bo
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Epistle of First Corinthians II Background #2 & Chapter One

Fred R. Coulter

I want to go back to Acts 9 and let's cover a few things here. This is where the Apostle Paul was called on his way to actually arrest Christians and throw them in jail. Someone brought up how, in their mind they correlated all the suffering that Paul had to go through because of all the suffering that he brought upon the Church. I think in some ways there's truth in what was said there.

Acts 9:10—after Paul was in Damascus and couldn't see for three days: "Now there was in Damascus a certain disciple named Ananias. And the Lord said to him in a vision, 'Ananias.' And he said, 'Behold, I *am here*, Lord.' And the Lord *said* to him, 'Arise *and* go into the street which is called Straight, and inquire in *the* house of Judas for *one* named Saul from Tarsus; for behold, he is praying, and he has seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming and putting *his* hands on him, so that he may receive sight.' 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. 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 10-16).

The Apostle Paul's whole life was really one of suffering and sometimes people can read into that that all Christianity must be a suffering, deprived, miserable and lonely existence that Paul had. He really had a miserable existence. He was stoned, left for dead and came back into the same cities.

Acts 16:1—let's follow along with how Paul got to Greece: "He then arrived at Derbe and Lystra; and behold, there was a certain disciple named Timothy..." We covered how he had been circumcised.

Verse 8: "Now when they had passed by Mysia, they came to Troas." Troas is just on the northwestern shore of Turkey, just across from Greece.

Verse 9: "And a vision appeared to Paul during the night. A certain man of Macedonia... [the area of northern Greece] ...was standing, beseeching him and saying, 'Come over to Macedonia *and* help us.' And after he had seen the vision, we immediately sought to go into Macedonia, concluding that the Lord had called us to preach the

Gospel to them. Therefore, after sailing from Troas, we came with a straight course to Samothracia, and on the next day to Neapolis; and from there *we went* to Philippi, which is *the* primary city in *that* part of Macedonia, *and* a colony. And we stayed in this city *for* a number of days. Then on the [Sabbath] Day of the weeks we went outside the city by a river, where *it* was customary *for* prayer to be *made*; and after sitting down, we spoke to the women who were gathered together *there*" (vs 8-13).

It started out to be a really nice trip over there, but here, again, Paul gets right in the middle of it.

Verse 14: "And a certain woman who worshiped God was listening; *she* was named Lydia *and* was a seller of purple from *the* city of Thyatira; whose heart the Lord opened to receive the things spoken by Paul. And after she and her household were baptized, she besought *us*, saying, 'If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come to my house *and* lodge *there*.' And she constrained us. Now it came to pass that as we were going to prayer, a certain damsel who had a spirit of Python met us; *and* she brought her masters much gain by divining.... [foretelling of fortunes] ...She followed Paul and us *and* cried out, saying..." (vs 14-17). This would really get irritating. Here she comes yelling, shouting—not weeping.

"...These men are servants of the Most High God, and are preaching to us *the* way of salvation." (v 17). I want you to think about this for a minute, because when we understand what this woman was possessed of, then we have a situation much like Jesus had when He went into some of the synagogues; there were people possessed of demons, and the demons said that this was the Son of the Most High.

Here Paul gets it now, this woman is chasing him around. Have you ever had someone just 'dog' you, just bug you, never leave you alone? Here's this gal possessed of a divination and she was following him around shouting, "...These men are servants of the Most High God..." Talk about publicity. Here's this demon—crazy-type looking woman:

Verse 18: "Now she did this for many days. Then Paul, being grieved... [frustrated] ...turned to the spirit and said, 'I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her.' And it came out the same hour. 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” (vs 18-19). This is really quite an event. I’ve never had anything like this happen to me. You run out there and here comes a mob and they grab you and take you down to the marketplace.

Verse 20: “And they brought them to the captains, saying, ‘These men, who are Jews... [here it starts] ...are greatly troubling our city, And are preaching customs that are not lawful for us, as Romans, to receive or to practice.’ Then a multitude rose up against them, and the captains tore off their garments, *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” (vs 20-23). They hadn’t done a thing! They’re grabbed, beaten and thrown in prison.

Verse 24: “After receiving this command, he threw them into the inner prison and secured their feet with stocks.” Talk about uncomfortable! I don’t know if they were sitting with their feet in the stocks. A stock is like a big pair of wooden foot-cuffs that you put on your feet and you lock it down. I don’t know if they had their hands in it, but I’ve seen some of these that they’ve shown in movies, which are accurate portrayals of what they used to have, and they had them where you put the hands and the feet in the stock. I think they used to have them where they had the head, the feet and the hands in the stock. You’d need a chiropractor after that! That would really do you in.

Verse 25: “But about midnight, Paul and Silas were praying and singing praises to God...” Think about their attitude; most people would think: ‘Oh, God, why am I suffering all this? Why am I in here? Why did it happen to me?’ *But they didn’t!*

“...and the prisoners were listening to them; and suddenly there was a great earthquake... [God answered the prayer; talk about an answer to prayer, that was really it] ...so *great* that the foundations of the prison were shaken; and immediately all the doors opened, and the bonds of all were loosed” (vs 25-26). All the stocks just popped open!

Verse 27: “When the jailer awoke from his sleep and saw the doors of the prison open, he drew a sword and was about to kill himself, supposing *that* the prisoners had escaped, but Paul called out with a loud voice, saying, ‘Do not harm yourself; for we are all here.’ And after asking for lights, he rushed in and fell down trembling before Paul and Silas” (vs 27-29). It doesn’t take long for God to turn the tables; completely turn the tables!

Verse 30: “And when he had brought them out, he said, ‘Sirs, what must I do, that I may be saved?’” You talk about a complete conversion, between an earthquake and a crumbling down of a

prison.

Verse 31: “Then they said, ‘Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved, you and your household.’ And they spoke the Word of the Lord to him, and to all those in his house. And he took them in that hour of the night, and washed *their* wounds; and he and all his *household* were immediately baptized” (vs 31-33). That is a fantastic account here of what happened with the Apostle Paul.

Verse 34: “Then he brought them into his house *and* laid out a table *for them*; and he rejoiced with all *his* household, who had believed in God. Now when day came, the captains sent the sergeants, saying, ‘Let those men go.’ And the jailer reported these words to Paul, *saying*, ‘The captains have sent *word* to let you go. Now then, *you may* go out and depart in peace.’ But Paul said to them, ‘After publicly beating us, who are Romans, without condemnation, and casting *us* into prison, do they *think* now *to* secretly thrust us out? No, indeed, but let them come in person *and* bring us out.’ 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 34-40).

Acts 17:1: “And after journeying... [south] ...through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where *there* was a synagogue of the Jews.” Here again Paul goes into the synagogue of the Jews.

Verse 2: “And as was the custom with Paul, he went in to them and for three Sabbaths reasoned with them from the Scriptures, expounding and demonstrating that it was necessary for Christ to suffer and to rise from *the* dead, and *testifying*, ‘This Jesus, Whom I am proclaiming to you, is the Christ.’ Now, some of them were convinced, and joined themselves to Paul and Silas, including a great multitude of devout Greeks, and of the chief women not a few. But the unbelieving Jews became envious and took to *them* certain evil men of the baser sort; and when they had gathered a huge crowd, they set the city in an uproar; and they assaulted the house of Jason, looking for *Paul and Silas*, to bring them out to the people. And when they did not find them, they dragged Jason and certain brethren before the city magistrates, crying out, ‘Those who have set the whole world in confusion have come here also...’” (vs 2-7). This is referring back to the same kind of attitude that was taking place where the Jews said of Jesus: ‘Behold, the world is going after Him.’ Here they’re *turning the world upside down!*

“...whom Jason has received; and these all do *what is* contrary to the decrees of Caesar, saying *that* there is another king, Jesus.’ And they caused *great* agitation among the people and the city magistrates, who heard these things. But after taking security from Jason and the rest, they let them go. Then the brethren immediately sent away by night to Berea both Paul and Silas, who, when they arrived, went into the synagogue of the Jews. Now, these were more noble than those in Thessalonica, *for* they received the Word with all readiness of mind *and* examined the Scriptures daily *to see* if these things were so” (vs 7-11). These are Jews in the synagogue doing this.

The very first book that the Apostle Paul wrote was to the Thessalonians. Apparently it was a pretty heavily Jewish church. Then many of them believed and so forth.

Then Paul came down to Athens and encountered certain ones of the philosophers and so forth. He was telling them about this new doctrine, about Jesus and the resurrection. They said, ‘Okay, we’ll all come back together and hear this new thing.

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**’”—devoted to demon worship. That tells you all about their gods and what kind of religion they had. These people are wrapped up in this demonism and psyche and they had all the things that we have today: crystal ball gazing, foretelling the future, cards. They had one thing in their religions: they would sacrifice a chicken or some other kind of animal and then they would look at the liver and how the liver was configured was foretelling of the future.

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.’ 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, *for* He gives to all life and breath and all things” (vs 23-25). It must have been a pretty powerful sermon, standing up there and preaching out to all these Greeks.

Verse 26: “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 26-28). That’s really a tremendous Scripture. If you really think about it and just bring that all to bear. “...**for in Him we live and move and have our being**...” When the Spirit of Christ gives the *spirit of man* that is the light that lights every man. God has not left all people out here totally unequipped to find God.

The first time I ever heard about the pygmies was when they showed a movie down in Pasadena about the pygmies and they believed in the great God Who made heaven and earth; they had no idolatry; they did not believe in committing adultery—which is so prevalent in Africa—and they kept to themselves. I thought to myself of this Scripture, right here. Here are those pygmies out there in the middle of the jungle. They don’t know anything. No one has gone out there and taught them anything. But they at least discovered that much about God.

I do not know what you would consider the blessings for them, whether to live in a jungle with their kind of existence is any more cursed or blessed than to live in the jungle of the city like we do. I’m not prepared to say; I haven’t been there. But God made it possible, and the Apostle Paul says for **in Him we live and move and have our being!**

Verse 29: “Therefore, since **we are the offspring of God**, 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.” That covers pretty much everything as far as idolatry goes. Notice how he started out to tell them about their idolatry.

1. Paul said, ‘I perceive you’re very devoted to your demons.’ Of course, to them that was not a derogatory term. That was just spirit to them.
2. ‘I also see that you have a dedication to the unknown God and this is the One Whom I’m going to preach to you.’

He didn’t come in there with the troops to destroy the idols. He didn’t come in and tell them ‘you ought to know better than to make these idols.’ They didn’t know any better. How did he present that to them? *He said*

3. ‘Listen, God has made every human being in His image, made all nations of one blood; gave them all their inheritance that they should seek God!’

I don’t care who you are or where you are, you cannot have too many opponents to that statement. What you say after that is another thing.

4. God is not made of those things of gold or

silver or whatever.

Verse 30: “For *although* God has indeed overlooked the times of this ignorance, **He now commands all men everywhere to repent.**”

5. So then, here comes the message of repentance!

I thought this was very interesting the way that he went through and presented this. When we get to 1-Corinthians you’re going to see the way that the Apostle Paul structured the letter. That is, I think, very significant. He uses the same type of approach to everyone.

First he starts out with God, and we’re made in God’s image, and we all need to be drawn to God, then he starts after the problem. That’s exactly what he did here.

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.**’.... [now they’re hearing something brand new] ...And after hearing *about the* resurrection of *the* dead, some mocked; but some said, ‘We will hear you again concerning this *matter.*’ And so Paul went out from among them. But certain ones *who* believed joined themselves to him, among whom also *were* Dionysius the Areopagite, and a woman named Damaris, and others with them” (vs 31-34).

Paul leaves Athens and he comes to Corinth. We finally arrive at Corinth.

Acts 18:1: “Now after these things, Paul departed from Athens *and* came to Corinth; and *there* he found a certain Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, who had recently come from Italy with Priscilla his wife (because Claudius had ordered all the Jews out of Rome). *And* he came to their *house*” (vs 1-2).

Jews, by their very nature, business sense and their political sense, have a very tremendous political sense and business sense that other people don’t have. This puts them into situations where periodically they go through terrible persecutions. They literally do, wherever they are they get everything by the neck and pretty soon the only way you can get rid of them is to pull Hitlerian tactics on them. This is what they did here.

I had an occasion to talk to a man who was a bona fide Nazi in Germany. He told me, with tears in his eyes, that when Hitler came to power he made it wonderful. Germany was in terrible shape, it was awful. Hitler came and eliminated unemployment, sent all the women back home to take care of the children—they couldn’t hold a job outside of the home. He carted off all the Jews; carted off all the

homosexuals and got rid of all the prostitutes and cleaned everything up. He says it was beautiful! He says, ‘I don’t know what happened to him later.’

There would be a lot of people today who would support that kind of thing right here. You get this age thing going much longer and you get all of this stopping of God in communications and schools. They’re going to the same thing. A Hitler will arise! It’s a shame. Here we can see much of the same thing happened here.

Aquila and Priscilla came over to Corinth, v 3: “And because he was of the same trade, he dwelt with them and worked; for they were tent makers by trade.” Not just as we think of working with canvas, but they were also leather-workers and made belts, coats and things like that.

Verse 4: “And he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath...” Paul faithfully went to the synagogue. I don’t know how long it took for his reputation to follow him to the different synagogues, but he sure ripped apart those synagogues between the Jewish religion and Christianity.

“...and persuaded *both* Jews and Greeks. Now, when Silas and Timothy came down from Macedonia, Paul was stirred in his spirit *and* was earnestly testifying to the Jews *that* Jesus *was* the Christ” (vs 4-5). He was there three Sabbaths and didn’t mention a word about Jesus. When the other two came, he now had his reinforcements and then he testified that Jesus was the Christ.

Verse 6: “But when they set themselves in opposition and were blaspheming, *Paul* shook *his* garments *and* said to them...” Think about this for a minute. He grabbed hold of his clothes and just shook them right there in the synagogue!

“...‘Your blood *be* upon your own heads. I am pure *of it*. From this time forward I will go to the Gentiles.’.... [That’s so painful to a Jew!] ...And after departing from there, he went into *the* house of a certain one named Justus, who worshiped God, whose house adjoined the synagogue.” (vs 6-7). They had a common wall and right next to it was his house.

Verse 8: “But Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed in the Lord with his whole house; and many of the Corinthians who heard believed and were baptized.” You talk about insults of insults! Right next to the synagogue; that’s where they had their services!

Verse 9: “And the Lord said to Paul in a vision in *the* night, ‘Do not be afraid...’” I imagine so. Everywhere he went what happened? *They would arrest him or stone him, put him in prison!* Would God speak to us in the same way today? *If it became*

necessary to do so, I would say, yes, God would! I've made up my own mind that if there ever comes a time for need of another minister I'm not going to run out and lay hands on anybody until literally the Lord tells me. I'm just not going to do it. Not to say that there isn't a need or whatever. But after the experience I've gone through I'm just going to say, 'God, make it real evident if You're speaking to me, or show me clearly.'

This was in a vision, so this would have to be a little more than a dream. I don't know if he was awake or asleep, but the whole essence of it is that at this point Paul needed some encouragement. He really had it rough, and God said, "...Do not be afraid, but speak and do not be silent.'" (v 9)

I have had dreams that have come true. I cannot say it was a dream where God spoke and said thus and such. I know people who have had reasonable dreams, but I've also run across people who are influenced by demons and they have dreams, too, and they say 'these are from the Lord.' I don't lay a lot of stock into that sort of thing. I know that the Bible shows that it does happen, but it doesn't show that it's happening all the time. Yet, we have this contrasted with what we read in Acts 16 about the woman who had the 'spirit of divinations.' There's a distinct difference here.

But I am sure that there are dreams that we dream that come true. I've also had some dreams that were weird, because your mind is going full speed in neutral—there's no direction—and all these things come sputtering forth. I would have to say that there are times when there will be dreams that will come true, and there will be times when you will be thinking on a problem so much that you'll actually find the solution in a dream. That happens. I remember one time before I was in the Church—having nothing to do concerning the Church of God—I was working on an accounting problem for my Accounting class. I couldn't get the answer and I went to bed thinking on it, and as soon as I woke in the morning I said, 'That's it!' I found the problem and I answered the question and I got the thing corrected. There are things like that.

There are people who are inventors who work on things, who just think on things. All of a sudden it will be kind of like this ad where this guy is driving down a desert road and all of a sudden, BING! 'What if...'

There are times when you really have your mind on something, mental things will take place, but it doesn't necessarily mean that it's a great sign from God. Even though I say that I'm not going to make another man a minister unless I virtually hear it from God, that doesn't mean that I'm going out and seeking these kinds of things. I'm trying to

cover a lot of bases here with it, because there are many different niches into what some of these things could be. If I were the Apostle Paul I would be inclined to watch for my way of escape out of there and watch all the Jews and all these hostile people.

Verse 10: "...For I am with you; and no one shall set upon you to mistreat you because I have many people in this city.' And he remained *there* for a year and six months, teaching the Word of God among them. Now, when Gallio was proconsul of Achaia, the Jews rose up against Paul with one accord and led him to the judgment seat" (vs 10-12).

I'll tell you exactly how you can find out how the Jews will do that today. Get up and make some public statement that is defamatory against Jews and you will have the JDL banging on your doorstep, burning down your car, disrupting your credit, disrupting your place of business—it won't take long. That's exactly what they were doing here. So, they were making insurrection with one accord against Paul.

Verse 13: "Saying, 'This *man* is persuading men to worship God contrary to the law.'" That's quite a statement—isn't it? Notice what Jesus said. We'll see that Jesus was teaching the same thing.

John 4:19: "The woman said to Him, 'Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet. Our fathers worshiped in this mountain, but you say that the place where it is obligatory to worship is in Jerusalem'" (vs 19-20). Remember, this was the woman from Samaria. One of the suburbs of Samaria was Shiloh. What was at Shiloh? *The tabernacle was at Shiloh!* That's why later in the history of the Jews, when some of them wanted to change something or do something, then they would say, 'It was over here first.' Like she said first, 'This is Jacob's well. We go way back to the patriarchs. We're greater than the Jews.'

Verse 20: "Our fathers worshiped in this mountain, but you say that the place where it is obligatory to worship is in Jerusalem." Even Jesus was teaching contrary to what the Jewish law would say; *not contrary to God!*

Verse 21: "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. We know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour is coming, and now is, when **the true worshipers shall worship the Father in Spirit and in Truth**; 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 21-24).

Then we find out exactly what was going on

here when they claimed that He was teaching contrary to the law. He wasn't preaching contrary to the Law, not the Law of God. He was preaching contrary to the laws of the Jews.

Acts 18:14: "And when Paul was about to open *his* mouth, Gallio said to the Jews, 'Now then, if it were a matter of some injustice, or wicked criminality, O Jews, according to reason, I should put up with you; but on the other hand, if it be a question about a message and names and a law of your own, you see *to it* yourselves; for I have no desire to be a judge of these things.' And he drove them from the judgment seat. Then all the Greeks laid hold on Sosthenes, the ruler of the synagogue, *and beat him* before the judgment seat. But none of these things mattered to Gallio" (vs 14-16). He just turned his back and walked away and let Sosthenes beat him.

Verse 18: "And after Paul had remained *there* many days, he took leave of the brethren *and* sailed away to Syria, and with him Priscilla and Aquila. *Now Paul* had shorn *his* head in Cenchrea because he had *made* a vow. And he came to Ephesus, and left them there; but he himself went into the synagogue *and* reasoned with the Jews" (vs 18-19). You talk about a miserable ministry that Paul had! Can you imagine that every Sabbath you're going to go somewhere and walk into a synagogue of the Jews and come in, and you being a Jew, knowing you're a Jew—you can wear your Pharisee things—and get up there and go through this whole thing again.

Verse 20: "And when they asked *him* to remain with them for a longer time, he did not consent, but took leave of them, saying, 'I must by all means keep the Feast that is coming at Jerusalem... [almost every commentary I've ever seen on this, places this just before the Feast of Tabernacles in 52_{A.D.}] ...but I will return again to you, God willing.' And he sailed from Ephesus. And after landing at Caesarea, he went up *to Jerusalem* and visited the Church; *then* he went down to Antioch" (vs 20-22). That's one of those verses that's a lot of summary and tells you nothing of what went on in between.

Verse 23: "And when he had stayed *there* some time, he left *and* went through the country of the Galatians and the Phrygians in order, establishing all the disciples. Now, a certain Jew named Apollos, an Alexandrian by birth, an eloquent man who was skilled in the Scriptures, came to Ephesus. He had been instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in spirit, he spoke and taught accurately the things concerning the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John. And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue. And after hearing him,

Aquila and Priscilla took him and expounded the way of God to him more perfectly" (vs 23-26). Here Aquila and Priscilla—husband and wife—expounded to him. Aquila was not doing public speaking, but he sure knew the Scripture and could tell someone in private what to do. That's what they did.

Verse 27: "And when he was determined to travel to Achaia, the brethren wrote to the disciples, exhorting *them* to welcome him; *and* after arriving, he greatly helped those who had believed through grace, for he powerfully refuted the Jews publicly, showing by the Scriptures *that* Jesus was the Christ" (vs 27-28).

(go to the next track)

1-Corinthians 1:7: "So that you do not lack *even* one *spiritual* gift while you are awaiting the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ." How that in 1-Thess. 4, the Apostle Paul said that 'we which are alive and remain.'

In 1-Corinthians 15:50: "Now, this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit *the* Kingdom of God, nor does corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I show you a mystery: we shall not all fall asleep, but we shall all be changed, in an instant, in *the* twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for *the* trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed" (vs 50-51). We shall not all 'sleep'; in other words, being changed at the return of Jesus Christ does not depend upon your being dead, if you're alive.

Verse 50:52: "In a moment, in *the* twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for *the* trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and **we...** [he's including himself] ...shall be changed." We will see that in some places he uses the word *we*—talking about Paul and Timothy and Apollos, and the other apostles. When he's talking about you, he's talking to the congregation.

1-Corinthians 1:6: "According as the **testimony of Christ** was confirmed **in you**." There's something that God has done *in you* that is the testimony of Christ. It's more than what it says there when he says the testimony of Christ is the *spirit of prophecy*.

Just to give you a little hint on that: to prophesy does not necessarily mean to be just foretelling events. That also means inspired preaching.

Verse 7: "So that you do not lack *even* one *spiritual* gift while you are awaiting the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ, will also strengthen you to *the* end *that you may be* unimpeachable in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ" (vs 7-8). Immediately he points

them to God—to God the Father and Jesus Christ—and the return of Christ and the Day of the Lord.

Verse 9: “God *is* faithful, by Whom you were called **into the fellowship** of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord.” That’s a very important thing to be “...called into *the* fellowship.” The fellowship of God continues always.

When I was studying for this—the testimony of Christ—that was really exciting going through and understanding what God has done. It just helped me realize about being confirmed in Christ. Every day we’re confirmed in Christ. Some of the things that we’re going to learn in 1-Corinthians is going to be just really fantastic because of the Spirit of God. It’s very important for us to be blameless in the Day of the Lord, because that assures our salvation.

1-John 1 talks about this fellowship that we have. This is why one of the problems that comes with a carnal spirited fellowship is that it becomes purely social. We’re going to see that’s part of the problem they had here with the fellowship of Christ.

1-John 1:1: “That which was from *the* beginning, that which we have heard, that which we have seen with our own eyes, that which we observed for ourselves and our own hands handled, concerning the Word of life.” John is talking from an experiential point of view. He literally did this! We, in this case, refers to all the apostles.

Verse 2: “(And the life was manifested, and we have seen, and are **bearing witness**... [to testify; to bring assurance] ...and are reporting to you the eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested to us); that which we have seen and have heard we are reporting to you in order **that you also may have fellowship with us**... [interesting statement] ...for the fellowship—indeed, **our fellowship**—... [all combined now] ...*is* with the Father and with His own Son Jesus Christ” (vs 2-3). That’s where true fellowship really is, and really needs to be, so that there be no party spirit kind of fellowship. That’s why when we get together—and it is with the Spirit of God—that we can all have that wonderful fellowship.

The first day of the Feast of Tabernacles, to me that was evident. It was really wonderful! Everyone was there, and everything was fine and beautiful and right. Why? *Because we are focusing in on God and the purpose of God!*

That’s what the Apostle Paul did. Notice how God inspires every one of these to be written. Here’s the letter by the Apostle Paul: the first thing he points them right to God:

- to God the Father
- to Jesus Christ

- to the return of our Lord
- to the testimony of our Christ
- to knowledge and utterance

And all of those things for the Church, *that we may have fellowship!* Notice how John writes here, same thing:

Verse 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. These things we are also writing to you, so that your joy may be completely full. And this is the message that we have heard from Him and are declaring to you: that God is light, and there is no darkness at all in Him. **If we proclaim that we have fellowship with Him, but we are walking in the darkness, we are lying to ourselves, and we are not practicing the Truth.**” However, if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, **then we have fellowship with one another...**” (vs 3-7). All of us combined and with God the Father and Jesus Christ. And that makes it wonderful! After experiencing that kind of fellowship you don’t want that to change.

If we’re having that fellowship, we are being confirmed *in Christ* that we may be *blameless* “...and the blood of Jesus Christ, His own Son, cleanses us from all sin” (v 7). That’s how we’re confirmed in it, and with God’s grace over us all the time. That is so good, brethren! That is so marvelous! I don’t know if I can emphasize it enough.

I think too many times, myself included, we go plowing along each week and we get into the things that we need to do each day and BAM! our human nature comes out. But ***God is really for us, and God covers us with His grace!*** That’s what the Apostle Paul is talking about here: *grace that is given to you by Jesus Christ* so that we can be blameless, so that we can be before God in that relationship.

Verse 8: “If we say that we do not have sin, we are deceiving ourselves, and the Truth is not in us. If we confess our own sins, He is faithful and righteous, to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His Word is not in us” (vs 8-10). That fellowship *of*...

1-Corinthians 1:9: “God *is* faithful, by Whom you were called **into the fellowship**...”—not unto; unto brings you up to a point: *I will bring you unto the city limits*. But if I say, ‘I am going to bring you into town, you’re not going to be left off at the city limits.

If we can understand this with the

fellowship, *we are brought into that fellowship* "...of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord.... [to me that makes a whole lot of difference, and it has a lot more meaning] ...Now, I exhort you, brethren... [I earnestly entreat you] ...by the name... [through the authority] ...of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing..." (vs 9-10). Doesn't take him long to get into the beginning of the problems—does it?

"...and *that* there be no divisions among you..." (v 10). If you all speak the same thing, that doesn't mean that you all march like good little soldiers. Obviously, God has allowed differences and things like this, but concerning Christ, that *we all speak the same thing!*

"...rather, *that* you be knit together in the same mind... [Philip. 2:5—let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus—that's the mind we are to have] ...and in the same judgment" (v 11). There are certain judgments that they had to make.

Verse 11: "For my brethren, it has been declared to me concerning you, by those of *the house* of Chloe, that there are contentions among you." We have all gone through contentions—haven't we? *Yes, we have!*

The thing that I look back and see on this situation where the Apostle Paul is, almost every church he started, started on a contentious basis. It really did! Fighting among the Jews and the Gentiles.

Verse 12: "Now this I say, since everyone among you says, 'I am of Paul'; or, 'I *am* of Apollos'; or, 'I *am* of Cephas'; or 'I *am* of Christ.'"

I even heard of a letter written by a man who said that you ought to follow this man, and he said, 'Some of these splinter groups have left *the Church* and they say to follow Christ.' I thought to myself, yeah, that's right! Isn't that what the Apostle Paul said here: *follow Christ!*

1-Corinthians 11:1—which is kind a summary of all their problems: "Be imitators of me, exactly as I also *am* of Christ." We are to follow Christ. But could there be those who are of the contentious spirit who say, 'I'm only going to follow Christ,' when Paul was truly their apostle and minister sent to them. Some said, 'You've got to follow Paul.' Then Cephus came and he preached and some said, 'I like Cephus, I'm going to follow him; I've got all my notes on his sermon and I'm going to live by that.' Then here comes Apollos and Apollos could speak eloquently; wonderful speaker.

So then, Paul asked a question, 1-Corinthians 1:13: "Has Christ been divided?... [NO! Christ is not divided! But the problems lie with

people.] ...Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized into the name of Paul? I thank God that I did not baptize any of you, except Crispus and Gaius, lest someone should say that I baptized *new converts* into my *own* name" (vs 13-15). That one statement tells you how much gossip was going around in that little church.

He even had to guard himself and said, 'lest someone says I baptized in my own name.' I would not have wanted to pastor the Church at Corinth. I tell you, I've gone through every one of these things in my experience as a minister. You do get very defensive like the Apostle Paul did. That's a very defensive statement—isn't it? 'I'm glad I didn't baptize any of you.'

Verse 16: "But I also baptized the household of Stephanas; as for any others, I do not know if I baptized anyone else.... [That in itself is still defensive—isn't it?] ...For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the Gospel—not with *the* wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ be made void" (vs 16-17). He's getting in there and preaching Christ.

Verse 18: "For to those who are perishing, the preaching of the cross is foolishness; but to us who are being saved, it is the power of God." That's going to tie in with the testimony of Christ. And it is sure true that when you start basing everything that you have on the Word of God.

This card-carrying Roman Catholic talk show doesn't believe that the Word of God *is* the Word of God. It would be foolishness to call in. They ran a survey and about 5% of the people read their Bible regularly. Those who are 'Christians.' We're an unusual group, brethren. True Christians are unusual! And to put our faith in a Bible, in a book, that everyone *knows* is not the Word of God is stupid. That's the way the world looks at it. Just like the sanctimonious Mormons. They say 'We believe the Bible insofar as it is accurately translated. Which part is not accurately translated? *Oh, we determine that! Besides, we have extra dreams and vision!*

I talked to a guy who is not a Mormon, but he said that he has the 'Second Book of Revelation' which is really ten books and it's 10,000 pages, and it tells all about the life of Christ and everything. Then at the end he says, 'You know, we believe in the Bible, too. But this is really kind of outdated for today.' We end up with the same kind of foolishness—right?

Verse 18: "For to those who are perishing, the preaching of the cross is foolishness; but to us who are being saved, it is the power of God." I want to affirm something to all of you, brethren: The more that you really study the Bible and internally study it

back and forth, the more it proves itself and the more of the power of God that you derive from it with the Spirit of Christ in your mind. I'm sure that you've all experienced that.

Verse 19. "For it is written, 'I will destroy the wisdom of the wise... [All you have to do is just read the newspaper. That's what God is doing. All these smart people are so stupid that they believe we came from monkeys.] ... and I will nullify the understanding of those who understand.' Where *is* the wise? Where *is* the scribe? Where *is* the disputer of this age? Did not God make foolish the wisdom of this world?" (vs 19-20). {note: Rom. 1:17-20—in wisdom 'the wise' chose not to know God. }

Isn't it something how the more educated some people get, the less that they believe in God? The hardest group of people to convert would be all the professors at Stanford, or Harvard, or Cambridge. Can you imagine if you had to preach to a group like that? We call them 'eggheads,' too; they're hardboiled!

Verse 21: "For since in the wisdom of God the world through *its own* wisdom did not know God... [there's the verse that ties right in with Rom. 1] ...it pleased God to save those who believe through the foolishness of preaching." There's a spiritual power that takes place there.

Verse 22: "For *the Jews* require a sign... [or they have a riot to get rid of you] ...and *the Greeks* seek after wisdom; but we proclaim Christ crucified.... [that has to do with the testimony of Christ] ...To *the Jews* it is a cause of offense, and to the Greeks *it is* foolishness; but to those who are called—both Jews and Greeks—Christ *is* God's power and God's wisdom" (vs 22-24).

What is the most important thing in your life? *To have the power of God, through God's Holy Spirit, to be in that fellowship with Jesus Christ!* That's more important than all the knowledge, all of the technology, everything that is in the world. If you don't know how to live your life before God, you can be the smartest person in the world and you're stupid! It's just the way it is. That's what Paul is saying here. That we have, with the wisdom of God, knowledge, understanding. As we walk toward the Light, as we are under the grace of God; I tell you, brethren, I can just feel these things in my life! And I'm sure you have, too; you've experienced that.

Verse 25: "Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God... [that is *IF* God has any weakness] ...is stronger than men. 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, so that He might put to shame those who are wise; and God has chosen the weak things of the world so that He might put to shame the strong things. And the lowborn 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. But you are of Him in Christ Jesus, Who was made to us wisdom from God—even righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption; so that, as it is written, 'The one who glories, let him glory in *the* Lord.'" (vs 25-31).

Next time we'll expand some of these things we covered here just so we get the whole story flow of the chapter.

What has this whole civilization based its knowledge on? *The Greeks!* Where did the Greeks get it? *From Babylon!* When Alexander the Great went there, he brought all that back and Grecianized all of the Babylonians.

When I was first learning about the Truth, I was going to the College of San Mateo. I had already made application for going to the University of San Francisco; that is a Catholic institution. I had no connection with the Catholics and I didn't know anything about that.

I could barely stand it! I had to study philosophy and what's the first thing? *Aristotle, Socrates and that philosophy is to explain the existence of things without God from these pagan philosophers,* and yet, that's the whole basis for the Catholic Church. I sat there cross-eyed and brain-scrambled, because I couldn't make head nor tails out of it.

Every class it bothered me, here was the crucifix right up on the wall. The first time I went to Pasadena at Ambassador College, I wasn't going to believe anything—nothing!—until they gave me a tour and showed me the classroom, and the first thing I did was look up to see if there was a crucifix. If there would have been a crucifix I would have left instantly!

The fellow who took me on the tour—Paul Kroll—remembers it to this day, because he says, 'You didn't say a word, you didn't smile, you just looked around and kind of shook your head. When I showed you the classroom you looked up there and the only thing you said was *okay.*' Then I smiled and was more open.

I tell you, I had to take Philosophy-I up here at the University of San Francisco and I couldn't take it. Of course, I was reading about no idols, no statues, no pictures, and guess what they had everywhere? *Idols and statues!* Then the article

came out in the *Plain Truth* about religious workers that walk around and love the greetings in the marketplace and salute. So, here are the priests out there in the morning reading their little missal and saying their prayers as they're going to class and here come the students and they 'ummm.'

It was really getting to me; really eating me up. Then I had to go down to the office and I walked in the office and here's this nun and another nun and a huge picture supposedly of Jesus with this petulant look and crown of thorns on His head and He had one drop of blood coming down and one tear coming out of His eye.

I said, 'That's it! I can't take it anymore!' So, I withdrew immediately! Here are these 'wise'; these 'great,' but it's foolishness! Their philosophy was based on *there is no God!* Yet, that was the mainstay of the Catholic Church. That's when it really dawned on me what the Catholic Church really, really was!

Shortly after that I got the book *The Two Babylons!* That did it!

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

Scriptural References:

- 1) Acts 9:10-16
- 2) Acts 16:1, 8-40
- 3) Acts 17:1-11, 22-34
- 4) Acts 18:1-13
- 5) John 4:19-24
- 6) Acts 18:14-28
- 7) 1 Corinthians 1:7
- 8) 1 Corinthians 15:50-52
- 9) 1 Corinthians 1:6-9
- 10) 1 John 1:1-10
- 11) 1 Corinthians 1:9-12
- 12) 1 Corinthians 11:1
- 13) 1 Corinthians 1:13-31

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- 1 Thessalonians 4
- Philippians 2:5
- Romans 1:17-20

Also referenced: Book:

The Two Babylons by Alexander Hislop

FRC:bo
Transcribed: 2-18-13

Epistle of First Corinthians III The Testimony of God & the Testimony of Jesus Christ

Fred R. Coulter

I'll just review a little bit of 1-Cor.; 1-Corinthians 1:1: "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, called by *the* will of God..." It's important to understand that, because there were others going around saying that they were also apostles.

We'll see when we get to 2-Cor. there are false apostles, false Christs, and then when we're all done I want to show what happened to Paul's churches and the ministry. I think you'll be astounded. He makes one statement in 2-Tim. That all the churches in Asia 'left him.' It ended up with only Paul, Mark and Luke—that was it out of all that he did. We have seen how that when Paul came in to start the churches, he started in the synagogues and literally split the synagogues down the middle. The Jews hated him. Here he's trying to reinforce and emphasize that he is a *called apostle* of Jesus Christ.

"...by the will of God... [It wasn't that he set himself up for it. Obviously, knowing his history and so forth.] ...and Sosthenes *our* brother to the **Church of God...**" (vs 1-2)—'ekklesia'—*called*—'kletos'—*out ones*; so the 'kle' part has the same meaning. That's why it is the *assembly of called out ones*. That's what *the Church* means. That's why it has been said that a church is not a building. Church is, and constitutes, the group of people that God has called. Remember what Jesus said, 'Wherever two or three are gathered in my name there I am in the midst of you.' That's very comforting to know.

I think going down through the history of the Church, we're going to find that there were many, many little groups, like we are here; just a little group. Not the great preponderance of political power that we see today.

"...and it has the same that is in Corinth, *the* called saints who **have been sanctified** in Christ Jesus..." (vs 1-2). That's what makes a person a saint—made Holy. The saints should really be called 'the Holy ones.'

Paul is saying he is a called apostle of God, then he's saying to the Church, the group of selected called Holy ones in Corinth. That makes a great deal of difference when you understand how God views us, how God looks at us. If we keep in mind how God looks at us that way, then we can also deal with each other on a much better level if we always keep that in mind. Therefore, from a ministerial point of view, church members do not become a political base for a minister to exercise power over. These are not *his* people, this is not *the ministers'* church.

These are *God's people* and the minister is *the steward*. He's given the responsibility, but these are *God's people*; they're *called of God*!

What did Jesus say about coming to the Father? 'No man can come to Me except the Father draw him.' Then He also said, 'No man can come to the Father except through Me.' When we understand that the group of the called out ones are those that God has called, and we keep that in mind, everything is a whole lot better— isn't it? We don't put it on the human level and the human terms. We put it in the terms that God has put it; and keep that in mind that *they are of God*!

When there are problems within the Church—there are going to be problems and difficulties come along—Paul is saying '*you are called out saints*' or '*called out Holy ones*.'

"...together with all those in every place who are calling on the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours... [notice how he starts out here; he always emphasizes first]: ...Grace..." (vs 2-3). What is the grace of God? *The umbrella like relationship that we have with God—which covers our entire life—*

- through which flows the love of God to us through His Holy Spirit
- back to God through His Holy Spirit
- out to the brethren through His Holy Spirit

The grace of God puts us into what kind of relationship with God? *Blameless*! Why do we need the grace of God? Does that mean through the grace of God that we can come to God at any time? *Yes! That is true!*

Under the Old Covenant it was an arms-length religion and only the high priest could come into the Holy Place once a year. Just to follow up on that, let's go to Hebrews 10 and let's see that very thing, which is a very, very important, dynamic and powerful thing for us to understand.

- if we have God's Holy Spirit—*which we do*
- if we are called of God—*which we are*
- if God loves us—*which He does*
- if God is there ready to forgive our sin if we confess them—*which He is*

Then we have the access to God *anytime*! That is a tremendous and fantastic privilege that only those who are called of God have. Other people can reach

God, but they don't have that instant contact like we do because of the grace of God.

Hebrews 10:17—it's talking about the New Covenant: "'And their sins and lawlessness I will not remember ever again.' Now, where remission of these *is*, *it is* no longer *necessary to offer* sacrifices for sin" (vs 17-18). You don't have to go offer it, comparing it with animal sacrifices.

Verse 4: "Because *it is* impossible *for the* blood of bulls and goats to take away sins."

Verse 19: "Therefore, brethren, having confidence to enter into the *true* Holiest by the blood of Jesus.... [At any time! That's what the grace of God does for us as well as forgiving our sins. We have that relationship, that access, God's Spirit. It's really fantastic, it's tremendous.] ...having confidence to enter into the *true* Holiest by the blood of Jesus." That's not some Holy Place on earth. That's not the Holy of Holies in a temple. ***That is the Holiest place in the temple in heaven at the throne of God!*** That's a wonderful thing!

Next time you get all down or depressed—which you probably will just because of human nature—remember this right here: *that you have instant access*. We have instant access to God at anytime, anyplace, anywhere! That is absolutely a marvelous thing!

Verse 20: "By a new and living way, which He consecrated for us through the veil (that is, His flesh), and *having* a great High Priest over the house of God, let us approach *God* with a true heart, with full conviction of faith, our hearts having been purified from a wicked conscience, and our bodies having been washed with pure water. Let us hold fast **without wavering** to the hope *that* we profess..." (vs 20-23). Going back and forth; firm, solid.

It's drawing an analogy that our heart has been converted. That's another way of saying our heart has been converted so that we don't have an evil conscience.

Verse 23: "Let us hold fast without wavering *to the hope that* we profess, for He Who promised *is* faithful; and let us be concerned about one another, and *be* stirring up *one another* unto love and good works" (vs 23-24).

Too many times brethren provoke each other to fight and cause problems. We can provoke each other to love and good works if we always remember that *God is the One Who has called*. That way then, you can put the nice shield of God around us and that gives us the assurance.

Verse 25: "not forsaking the assembling of

ourselves together, even as some *are* accustomed to do; but rather, encouraging *one another*, and all *the* more as you see the day drawing near."

1-Corinthians 1:3: "Grace and peace..." This peace is in reference to no longer being at war with God through wicked works in your mind. When WWII came to an end there was a great celebration and there was peace. When there is peace with one sinner who repents there is 'rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents' because there is peace with God.

When you are on peace terms with God—which you are through Jesus Christ—and living in God's grace, you have that continuous access to God; always, continuously. That is a tremendous thing. If you are not at peace, but you're at war with God—with a carnal mind and the enmity listed in Rom 8—is the same root word as *enemy*. It's spelled in English the same way: 'enmity'; 'enemy'; 'enemies.'

"...*be* to you from God our Father and *the* Lord Jesus Christ. I thank my God always concerning you, for the grace of God that has been given to you **in**... [Greek: 'en'—*within*] ...Christ Jesus... [obviously, as long as you are with Christ] ...and that you have been *spiritually enriched in Him*... [*within*] (notice the things you are enriched in): ...in everything, in all discourse... [speaking] ...and knowledge... [that's one of the things we're to grow in—we are to grow in the **grace and the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ**] ...according as the **testimony of Christ** was confirmed in you" (vs 3-6).

We're going to cover today about the *testimony of Christ*. What is the *testimony of Christ*.

Verse 7: "So that you do not lack *even* one *spiritual* gift while you are awaiting the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ."

When we get through with 1-Cor. 2 we're going to talk a little bit more about the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ. I'll try and cover the doctrine that a lot of the Protestants have about the rapture. This word *testimony* is the same word for the book of *Revelation*.

Verse 8: "Who will also strengthen you to the end *that you may be* unimpeachable in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God *is* faithful, by Whom you were called into *the* fellowship of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord" (vs 8-9).

Let's cover about the *testimony of God and Jesus Christ*. This thought carries forward into 1-Cor. 2; there's an interesting thing that is here.

1-Corinthians 2:1: "And I, brethren, when I came to you, did not come with superiority of speech

or wisdom, in proclaiming **the testimony of God** to you.”

It says over here in 1-Corinthians 1:6: “...the **testimony of Christ** was confirmed **in** you.”

- What is the *testimony of God*?
- What is the *testimony of Jesus Christ*?

First of all, let's understand what a *testimony* is. A testimony—or to witness—is *to verify in front of*. When you have a courtroom you call *witnesses* and they *testify* and they verify what was said or what was done. There is a *testimony of God the Father*. There is a *testimony of Jesus Christ* confirmed *in us—within! Within US!*—which is important to understand.

What was Testified of God the Father?

We'll go back to a very basic Scripture. What is the greatest *testimony of God the Father*? It's a very basic Scripture, but this is the *testimony of God the Father* and we will see there's another *testimony of God the Father*—more parts to it.

John 3:16: “For God so loved the world... [that's a testimony to God. **God loves the world!** He is testifying this that God does love the world.] (How does God love the world?): ...that He gave His only begotten Son, so that everyone who believes in Him 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 the testimony of God.

Wherever Paul preached and he testified of the Gospel, that's what he testified. He went to Mars Hill and said, ‘I bring to you God Who created the heavens and the earth. Then he gave the sermon. Then God the Father talks about His Son Jesus Christ Whom He raised from the death. He gave the *testimony of God!*

Matthew 17—here's also another testimony of God the Father. In this case recorded in God the Father's very own words. He did not speak this Himself, because Jesus said of God the Father, ‘No man has seen God at any time or heard His voice.’ *No one!* So, these are the words of God the Father conveyed to us by what is called *hear a voice*.

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, and His garments became white as the light. Then behold, there appeared to them Moses and Elijah talking with Him. 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... [here is the verbal testimony of God the Father]: ...‘This is My Son, the Beloved, in Whom I delight. Listen to Him!’” (vs 1-5). That is the *testimony of God!* These are His own words! The *testimony of God the Father* is what He Himself did in sending Jesus Christ for our redemption.

2-Corinthians 5:18: “And all things *are* from God, Who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given to us the ministry of reconciliation; which *is*, that **God was in Christ**, reconciling *the* world to Himself...” (vs 18-19). Note John 14. Remember when Philip came and said, ‘Show us the Father.’ Jesus said, ‘Do you believe that I am in the Father and the Father in Me?’ This is part of the *testimony of God* that **God the Father through His Holy Spirit was in Christ**.

“...not imputing their trespasses to them; and He has entrusted to us *this* message of reconciliation. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ; *and* God, as it were, is exhorting *you* through us....” (vs 19-20). What does an ambassador do? *He represents!* How does he represent? *Brings the message or the words of the one he is representing!* He does not represent himself. A true ambassador *does not* represent himself.

If you're an ambassador of a king, you say, ‘I come in the name of the king, and the king says...’ If he's questioned and someone responds and says to the ambassador, ‘What do you think?’ His answer should be, ‘I am here to bring you the message of the king, not what I think.’

That's how ambassadors for Christ should be. What should they speak? It's referring to whom? *To the ministers!* What should they speak? *The words of Christ!* Then you can tie in many, many Scriptures that go along with that.

“...We beseech *you* on behalf of Christ...” (v 20). That's pretty powerful statement— isn't it? That is a *powerful statement when you look at it!* The only way you can handle it is that you must speak the words of God. Otherwise you take the prerogative being in God's place.

I could put it this way: brethren, God is beseeching you through me. I'm not saying that is the case. I hope it is. I truly believe it is. As a minister what am I to do? *Convey to you the words of God!* That clarifies a whole lot of things—doesn't it?

““...We beseech *you* on behalf of Christ, ‘Be reconciled to God.’ For He made Him Who

knew no sin *to be* sin for us, so that we might become *the* righteousness of God in Him” (vs 20-21). That one section of Scriptures is so absolutely powerful. I’m convinced we have a whole lot more to learn in that. It keeps everything in perspective.

If there’s one thing you’ve got to say of the Apostle Paul, he never lost perspective of God. He never did. In the long run it cost him, because he didn’t please people. Remember what he wrote the Galatians? *If I please men I won’t please God!*

This is part of the testimony of God the Father. That ***God the Father was in Christ Jesus, reconciling the world to Himself!*** That will be according to God’s plan and time-schedule. It’s not yet done, obviously.

Here’s another part of God the Father to us, 1-John 3. As you can see, many of these Scriptures are some that we have gone over in the past. What it’s put into that perspective is *the testimony of God*.

- What did God give us?
- What is the basis of His testimony?
- *His whole Word, that is true!*
- What is the testimony that God has given to us, personally?
- *Those things that come directly from God the Father!*

I’m sure that there are others we can bring in, but these are the key things that I found to be of paramount importance.

1-John 3:1: “Behold! What *glorious* love the Father has given to us, that we should be called the children of God!.... [That’s part of the *testimony* or the *witness* of God ***within us!***] ...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” (vs 1-3).

Here’s one other *testimony of God the Father*. A testimony is close to the promises of God. But there are also testimonies that if you don’t repent you’re going to die. That’s a testimony, too.

Revelation 21:7: “The one who overcomes shall inherit all things; and **I will be his God, and he shall be My son.**” God has testified that that’s what will be!

What is the Testimony of Jesus Christ?

There is a difference between the testimony of God the Father and the testimony of Jesus Christ. We have it defined for us:

Revelation 19:10: “And I [John] 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.**’” That’s part of it, not all of it—the *spirit of prophecy*, meaning the *understanding of prophecy*. Especially in this case, you’re getting down to the end.

- Where does that *spirit of prophecy* come from? *Jesus Christ!*
- When a person prophesys, what do they do? *You speak for Christ!*

There are going to be two witnesses. The word for ‘witness’ and ‘testify’ are the same. If you testify, you witness—same Greek word. So, the two witnesses are going to be *witnessing* for God. That’s going to be powerful. And whoever the two witnesses are, that’s going to be pretty powerful. That’s going to be awfully heady stuff. They’re going to have to really be put through the meat-grinder, so to speak, in order to be used of God.

Remember what God did to Moses to make Him fit to lead the children of Israel? *Sent him out to Sinai for 40 years to lead a group of sheep around!* I don’t know what’s going to happen to the two witnesses, but in order to be the ‘two olive trees’ alongside the candlestick, they’re going to have to be really put through it.

Here’s a testimony and you prophesy against them; this is why we have to have it *in us!* 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... [We read what they did to the Apostle Paul.] ...and you shall also be brought before governors and kings for My sake, **for a witness** to them and to the Gentiles” (vs 16-18).

If the testimony of Christ is the *spirit of prophecy*—which it is—when people are brought—for what they believe—to the magistrates, we’re to take out our little notes, have our little notebook handy, have our little speech all ready. NO!

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.” That is the clearest spirit of prophecy you could ever have. In that instant, **God** will give that to you to prophesy against them. There’s also the aspect of the *spirit of prophecy*.

Understanding prophecies that are written in the Bible, but here this kind of prophesying is the *speaking* kind of prophecy—the *spirit of prophecy!*

Verse 20: “For it is not you who speak, but

the Spirit of your Father that speaks **in you.**" I guess many times we go around and we have all these mental boxing contests in our mind: if I were this; if I were that. That is not what God wants you to say. That's why you have to be close to God. That's why you have to have the Spirit of God and have it *in you* and working so that if and when that time ever comes, God will inspire you.

It happened in a little way with my wife. She went down to the shopping mall in Salinas. All she did was to go down and do some shopping. Someone came up behind her whom we knew years ago, and now she's in the Assemblies of Yahweh. My wife gave her a testimony you wouldn't believe. This other woman tried to push Yahwehism down my wife's throat and she just laid it out, let her have it. She did such a good job, you couldn't believe it! She didn't have her typed sheet with her Yahweh speech. You have to have in the mind with God's Spirit.

Revelation 12:17: "Then the dragon was furious with the woman and went to make war with the rest of her seed, **who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.**"

1-Corinthians 1:6: "According as the testimony of Christ was confirmed **in you.**" What is the *spirit of prophecy* but Jesus *in us*?

Revelation 1:5: "And from Jesus Christ, the faithful **Witness...**" *To testify, witness, or witness unto being a martyr*—'marturia' is the verb form, and 'maturion' is the testimony noun form.

Jesus is the *faithful and true witness*! So, if we have the witness of Jesus Christ in us, or the testimony of Christ in us, it's going to be faithful and it's going to be of Christ.

Verse 9: "I, John, who *am* also your brother and joint partaker in the tribulation and in the kingdom and endurance of Jesus Christ, was on the island that *is* called Patmos because of the Word of God and the **testimony of Jesus Christ.**" You've heard it said by people, 'We've heard His testimony.' If you have the *testimony of Christ*, that means you *testify about Christ*.

Revelation 3:14: "And to the angel of the church of *the* Laodiceans, write: These things says the Amen, the faithful and true Witness [martyr], the Beginner of the creation of God." Jesus was the Beginning, the Firstborn from the dead of those who enter into the Kingdom of God through the resurrection. We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus. So, He's the beginning of the creation of God for those who are resurrected.

Since Jesus was the martyr, since Jesus was the sacrifice, part of the testimony of Jesus Christ is:

Romans 8:3: "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." That is part of the *testimony of Jesus Christ*. He *conquered* sin!

John 16:33: "These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you shall have tribulation. But be courageous! I have overcome the world." That's part of the testimony of Jesus Christ. He *conquered* sin!

We're talking about the death of Christ as Jesus' own testimony. That was quite a testimony, that God came to the earth in the flesh and was that sacrifice for all human beings. Hebrews 9 is talking about when Moses instituted the first covenant in what is called *a testament*! A testament is the *written testimony*. We have the New Covenant—which is the *New Testament*—which is the *testimony of Jesus*.

Hebrews 9:20: "Saying, 'This *is* the blood of the covenant that God has ordained for you.' And in the same manner, he sprinkled with blood the tabernacle, too, and all the vessels of service. Now almost all things are purified with blood according to the law, and without *the* shedding of blood there is no remission *of sins*. Therefore, *it was* indeed obligatory *for* the patterns of the heavenly things to be purified with *the blood* of these *animals*'" (vs 20-23). What were the things that were in heaven? *The tabernacle was patterned after the things that were in heaven!*

"...but *the* things in heaven themselves with superior sacrifices than these" (v 23)—that is the sacrifices of the blood of bulls and goats.

(go to the next track)

Verse 24: "For Christ has not entered into the Holy places made by *human* hands... [one that is made on the earth] ...*which are mere* copies... [pattern or figure] ...of the true... [which are in heaven] ...rather, *He has entered* into heaven itself, now to appear... [that's part of the testimony of Jesus] ...in the presence of God for us." Think about that, and let that sink in! That is a magnificent verse. ***Jesus is appearing before God on our behalf!***

Verse 25: "Not that he should offer Himself many times, even as the high priest enters into the Holy of Holies year by year with *the* blood of others; for then it would have been necessary for Him to suffer many times since *the* foundation of *the* world. But now, once and for all, in *the* consummation of the ages, He has been manifested for *the* purpose of removing sin through His sacrifice *of Himself*" (vs 25-26). That's part of the *testimony of Jesus Christ*, ***the sacrifice of Himself!***

Let's see how that becomes a part of us.

Remember, it is the *testimony of Christ* that was confirmed *in us!* Here is how that is applied to us that we bear it in us. We have the Spirit of God, and Rom. 6:3 explains the whole process, that we bear that within us through the operation of baptism.

Roman 6:3: “Or are you ignorant that we, as many as were baptized into Christ Jesus, were baptized **into His death?**” That helps us grasp much more of the significance of our calling. The death of Jesus Christ has been applied to us.

Verse 4: “Therefore, we were buried with Him through the baptism **into the death...**” That’s a tremendous statement, brethren. We can read this and, oh yes, that’s nice, that’s lovely, this symbolism of the whole thing is great and marvelous. But let’s look at the literal application that Christ gives to us.

We are buried with Him by baptism “...into 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. For if we have been conjoined together in the likeness of His death, so also shall we be *in the likeness of His* resurrection” (vs 4-5). Notice how many of these Scriptures that talk about the death of Christ and then the resurrection all the way through. That’s part of the *testimony that is in us!*

Verse 6: “Knowing this, that our old man was co-crucified with *Him* in order that the body of sin might be destroyed, so that we might no longer be enslaved to sin.” All of that is part of the testimony of Jesus Christ.

Colossian 1:27: “To whom God did will to make known what *is* the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.” That is also part of the testimony of Christ: ***Christ is in you!***

I can truly say that all the years I’ve been a minister, I have studied these Scriptures an awful lot. But I tell you, the impact of this is just really been coming to me about the fact of Christ *in us!* It helps so much more, especially knowing the grace of God and understanding. It helps so much more.

The more that we grasp this, and the more that we understand it—I won’t say it’s easier to overcome; in a sense it is—from the point of view that once we realize that it’s Christ *in us*, and we ask God to do the things *in us*—we have our part to add to it—but before to overcome was something like this: ‘God, *help me* to overcome.’ And the greatest effort was on *our part* in overcoming. Rather, ***Christ in me*** will overcome. There’s a vast difference. One I’m relying on myself and saying, ‘God help me.’ The other one, I’m relying on Christ and drawing on that power of God, “...which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.”

1-Timothy 2:4: “Who desires all men to be saved and to come to *the* knowledge of *the* Truth.” It kind of sounds like God is going to force those to be saved who don’t want to be saved. But in the Greek it means *Who desires; Who wishes* that all men be saved.

Verse 5: “For there *is* one God, and one Mediator between God and men—the man Christ Jesus, Who gave Himself *as* a ransom for all, **the testimony of which is to be preached** in its appointed times” (vs 5-6). Again, that is *the testimony* that He gave Himself as a ransom.

1-John 5—here is how all of this works together. There is a witness of the Holy Spirit, or a testimony. Remember, Jesus said, ‘I will send the Holy Spirit and it will testify of Me. It will testify of things to come.’

1-John 5:6 puts it all together: “This is He Who came by water and blood—Jesus the Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that **bears witness...** [testimony] ...because the Spirit is the Truth” (vs 6-7). Verse 7 is the one that was added by the Catholics about the 9th Century A.D.

Verse 8: “For there are three that bear witness... [to bring testimony] ...on the earth: the Spirit, and the water, and the blood; and these three *witness* unto the one *Truth*.” What are they agreeing to? *The sacrifice of Jesus Christ! The death of Jesus for the forgiveness of sin!*

Verse 9: “If we accept the witness of men, the witness of God is superior. For this is the witness of God, which He has witnessed concerning His Son.... [We already read of that testimony—didn’t we?] ... The one who believes in the Son of God has the witness in himself...” (vs 9-10). Of course, we know that belief is because you are converted, you have God’s Spirit, because you truly believe it the very core of your being.

“...the one who does not believe God has made Him a liar because he has not believed in the witness... [record] ...that God has witnessed concerning His Son. And this is the witness: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. The one who has the Son has *eternal* life; the one who does not have the Son of God does not have *eternal* life. These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God in order that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may *continue* to believe in the name of the Son of God” (vs 10-13). That’s part of the *witness and testimony of Jesus Christ*.

Here’s another part of the witness and testimony of Jesus Christ, John 7:4—when he was going up to the Feast of Tabernacles and His

disciples said ‘You go on up’ and “...reveal Yourself to the world.’ For neither did His brothers believe in Him. Therefore, Jesus said to them, ‘My time has not yet come, but your time is always ready. The world cannot hate you; but it hates Me because I testify concerning it...’” (vs 4-7). That’s part of the *testimony of Jesus Christ*:

- part of it is the *spirit of prophecy*
- part of it is the *testimony confirmed in us* of the sacrifice of Christ, the death and the resurrection
- part of it is the testimony “.....that its... [the world] ...works are evil” (v 7).

In other words, this world is wicked! If a person is going to preach the Gospel, what are they going to preach? If they’re going to preach and be inspired, they must preach:

1. *Christ crucified*
—that’s what Paul said—
2. *reconciliation*
3. *conversion*
4. *a warning to the world*

That’s all part of the *testimony of Christ*. There’s one other thing that the testimony of Christ does for us.

Romans 8:14: “For as many as are led by the Spirit of God... [It’s the Spirit of God that testifies, because the Spirit is Truth (1-John 5:9)] ...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.’ The **Spirit itself bears witness**... [that’s the same word as testifies] ...**conjointly with our own spirit, testifying that we are the children of God**” (vs 14-16). That’s what the *testimony of Jesus Christ* is and how it works!

I haven’t told you anything really new—have I? But we have learned something out of the Bible from an entirely different perspective of something that we knew about already. This helps clarify it even more in my mind. I’m finding the more that I’m brought back—each one of these things brings me back to some of the basic Scriptures in the Bible—to them, the more that I learn out of them. To me, that’s just absolutely thrilling!

When I went through and studied this, and when I really understood this and went through it, it was just like there was a surge of power in my mind. It wasn’t any great, fantastic thing, but there was just this surge of power and joy in my mind that I know has got have come from God’s Holy Spirit in understanding this one thing. Forgive me for being a little excited about it. That really was fantastic in going through it, and I’m sure there are many, many more things we can tie in with it.

I want to cover just one other aspect here in 1-Corinthians 1:18: “For to those who are perishing, the preaching of the cross is foolishness; but to us **who are being saved**... [the process of salvation] ...it is the power of God.” There are three parts to salvation:

1. *have been saved*
2. *are being saved*
3. *shall be saved*

Ephesians 2—*have been saved*. That’s why many of the Baptists believe that ‘once saved, always saved’—past tense. You are saved, which **they believe** means:

- yes, I accept Jesus
- yes, I give the sinner’s prayer
- yes, I ask Jesus to come into my heart
- yes, I am saved
- yes, I am born again

That’s just a summary of what the Protestants believe. If you do that, you can never be lost, because you *have been saved*. Ephesians 2—vs 1-3 talks about how that Satan is the ‘prince of the power of the air’ and we’ve all been ‘children of disobedience.’

Ephesians 2:4: “But God, Who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in *our* trespasses, has made *us* alive together with Christ. (**For you have been saved** by grace.)” (vs 4-5). In this particular sense it means in the past tense, an accomplished fact.

But, what have you been saved from?—past tense accomplished fact. *Satan the devil and this world!* That’s what you have been saved *from!* We still have our human nature—don’t we? We still **are being** saved.

Verse 6: “And He has raised *us* up together and has caused *us* to sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the ages that *are* coming He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For **by grace you have been saved** through faith, and this *especially* is not of your own selves; *it is* the gift of God, not of works, so that no one may boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto *the* good works that God ordained beforehand in order that we might walk in them” (vs 6-10).

- We have been saved *from Satan*
- We have been saved *from the world*

Have we been saved from our human nature? **We are being** saved from our human nature **IF** we remain in the faith. We **shall be saved** at the resurrection.

1-Corinthians 15:1: “Now I am declaring to you, brethren, the *same* Gospel that I proclaimed to you, which you also received, *and* in which you **are now standing**.... [The Gospel was preached and you are standing in that Gospel] ...by which you **are also being** saved... [Obviously through Christ!] ...**if** you are holding fast *the* words that I proclaimed to you; otherwise you have believed in vain” (vs 1-2). That talks about the salvation and you **shall be saved**.

- we have been saved
- we are being saved
- we shall be saved

I hope it's helpful for you when we study verse-by-verse and get right and follow it right through and take each of these little sub-topics.

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...” (vs 26-27). Just for your information: *called* and *chosen* come from the same verb.

“...**God has chosen the foolish things of the world**, so that He might put to shame those who are wise... [If you've ever wondered why God has called you, here's the answer] ...and **God has chosen the weak things of the world** 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” (vs 27-28). That's really going to be quite a challenge—isn't it? That's going to be quite a thing! Talk about turning the world upside down. When Jesus returns, He's going to turn this world upside down and give to us the reins of the Kingdom of God! That's all contained there in that statement.

Verse 29: “**So that no flesh might glory in His presence**.... [No one is going to say how great they are to God!] ...But you are of Him **in** Christ Jesus... [you are *in* Christ Jesus] (here is what God has done for us through Christ): ...Who was made to us **wisdom**... [If you know the Word of God, you're wiser than the wisest men on earth.] ...from God—even **righteousness**...” (vs 29-30). We all know the righteousness of God; that we are given the righteousness of Jesus Christ *in us*! He has made our righteousness. The more I think on that, the more astounding that is. Talk about a *free gift* that is astounding!

“...and **sanctification**, and **redemption**” (v 30). Redemption means *to buy back again*. We're all sold under sin. When you redeem, you buy back. God is the only One Who can buy us back. We have

been paid for by Jesus Christ.

Verse 31: “So that, as it is written, ‘The one who glories, let him glory in *the* Lord.’”—rather than boasting on how good he or she is; just glory in the Lord.

I talked to someone on the phone and he brought up where do all of these things come from anyway. They all come from God! Let's just thank God and rejoice in what God has done and how God is doing it. That is the whole key of unlocking the Bible and understanding God's Word: ***completely trust and rely in God, and it will be there!***

Next time we will have a short subtopic on *redemption*, and then we will get into 1-Cor. 2, and then the revelation of Christ. Not just the book of Revelation, but there is a revealing of Christ to us that God does, which is really very inspiring in itself.

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

Scriptural References:

- 1) 1-Corinthians 1:1-3
- 2) Hebrews 10:17-18, 4, 19-25
- 3) 1 Corinthians 1:3-9
- 4) 1 Corinthians 2:1
- 5) 1 Corinthians 1:6
- 6) John 3:16-17
- 7) Matthew 17:1-5
- 8) 2 Corinthians 5:18-21
- 9) 1 John 3:1-3
- 10) Revelation 21:7
- 11) Revelation 19:10
- 12) Matthew 10:16-20
- 13) Revelation 2:17
- 14) 1 Corinthians 1:6
- 15) Revelation 1:5, 9
- 16) Revelation 3:14
- 17) Romans 8:3
- 18) John 16:33
- 19) Hebrews 9:20-26
- 20) Romans 6:3-6
- 21) Colossians 1:27
- 22) 1 Timothy 2:4-6
- 23) 1 John 5:6-13
- 24) John 7:4-7
- 25) Romans 8:14-16
- 26) 1 Corinthians 1:18
- 27) Ephesians 2:4-10
- 28) 1 Corinthians 15:1-2
- 29) 1 Corinthians 1:26-31

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- 2 Timothy
- John 14
- Ephesians 2:1-3

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Transcribed: 2-18-13

Epistle of First Corinthians IV Chapter Two—Redemption

Fred R. Coulter

I want to finish up with this one section concerning *redemption*, 1-Corinthians 1:30: “But you are of Him in Christ Jesus, Who was made to us wisdom from God—even **righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.**”

As far as *wisdom* goes, let me refer you to the book of Proverbs, chapters 1-8. It talks an awful lot about wisdom and instruction and things like that. That’s part of the Word of God.

What is the wisest thing we can do, which will be counted foolishness by people in the world? *Follow God!* Absolutely the wisest thing we can do, literally! In a literal day-to-day sense. How do we apply that? *By following God!* That’s the wisest thing in the world we can do.

When I heard some of the arguments about unclean meats—just to give you an example—they sounded pretty good; the first time you hear them. They sound reasonable and logical. But when I really found out that that’s what God wants us to do—fine!

I would come to work, cooking over at Sandy’s Kitchen—right behind Stanford University. This was before I was baptized and just at the time I was trying to prove all of these things, I would make a bacon and tomato sandwich, everyday. I was a good boy and fried it crisp and done! But when I found out I shouldn’t eat it, I didn’t touch it. Do you know what I discovered, by accident, later on? *I wasn’t burping all night!* When I would eat that bacon, lettuce and tomato sandwich—you can’t tell by the taste—I would burp all night through the eight hours I’d be working. One simple little thing!

Same thing with all of the commandments of God. That brings us more wisdom, more understanding than going to school and studying forever and ever—*just following God’s way!*

I want to cover a little bit about redemption. Psa. 103 is a wonderful Psalm, especially if you find yourself a little bit discouraged, a little bit down and needing some encouragement. Psalm 103:1: “Bless the LORD, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His Holy name.” There’s one thing about David—this is why he was a ‘man after God’s heart’—it was with his whole being, everything in him.

Verse 2: “Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits; Who forgives all your iniquities, Who heals all your diseases, Who **redeems your life from destruction...**” (vs 2-4).

What is the ultimate destruction that we are redeemed from? *Obviously, ‘the wages of sin is death’—the Lake of Fire!* I don’t know how many times we have been saved from different things that have come along just because of God’s intervention in our lives.

“...Who crowns you with loving kindness and tender mercies” (v 4). There it is, God is the One Who redeems us. You can’t have any redemption in man. Man is not going to redeem you, save you or help you spiritually. Someone may come along and pull you out of a burning car or something like that—save your life temporarily. But only God can redeem you! Especially when you understand that redemption means to be bought back—to *redeem*; to *buy again* or to *reclaim*.

When Adam and Eve sinned, all humanity was sold to sin—all humanity from that time. Then God had a responsibility to redeem human beings from sin—to buy us back again. That’s what redemption is all about.

Psalm 34 is another good Psalm. When you go back and restudy this, just read the whole Psalm. Psalm 34:22: “The LORD **redeems the soul** of His servants; and none of them who take refuge in Him shall be condemned.”

Verse 4: “I sought the LORD, and He answered me, and **delivered me from all** my fears.” That’s something to really think on. If you have fears, doubts or things that come along to cause you problems or difficulties, *God can deliver you from all your fears.* It doesn’t say

- *part of them*
- *the worst ones*
- *the major ones*
- *the minor ones*

It says **all** your fears!

Verse 5: “They looked to Him and were radiant; 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). Talk about a redemption that is really terrific—*all troubles!*

Verse 7: “The angel of the LORD encamps around those who fear Him and delivers them. O taste and see that the LORD is good...” (vs 7-8). This means that it is the way of obedience and living that becomes a very part of your being like eating. You have to taste the Word of God. That doesn’t mean start munching on it, but you have *taste the*

Word of God! How do you taste the Word of God and God's way? *By doing what God has said!* That's how you taste it.

"...and see that the LORD is good; blessed is the man who takes refuge in Him. O fear the LORD, all you saints, for there is nothing lacking to those who fear Him. The young lions do lack and suffer hunger, but those who seek the LORD shall not lack any good thing" (vs 8-10). There's another promise.

The media has been on a crash thing: 'Let's take care of the homeless and the poor,' and things like that. But no one has yet told them what the real problem is. They don't understand the cause of it, because they don't want to submit to God. They don't want to admit that you cannot run a society without moral character, as defined by the commandments of God. All of this homelessness and lack of place is because *people have chosen* to commit adultery, fornication, divorce and all of these things come along and causes an awful lot of it.

The Bible says that God will not let the righteous person go hungry or naked. If they do, then it's for a short period of time, or it's for a matter of a witness or correction for their own problems and difficulties that they have. It has to be one of those.

What needs to be with all these women with all these children and the men who promulgated them, there should not be divorce. Then there would be responsibility—right? Sooner or later it's going to all come back on them. Sure we need to take care of the needy; yes, we need to take care of the homeless; but how do you stop it? Every report you hear says that it's worse this year than the year before. Why? *Because the people have no moral character!*

Let's get into the New Testament and let's see what it was that we are purchased with or redeemed with. This helps us also appreciate and understand about Jesus Christ even more—Acts 20. Here the Apostle Paul is saying goodbye to these people knowing that he won't see them again. He called for all the elders and came down from Miletus from Ephesus. He rehearsed what he had been doing and then gives them a warning.

Acts 20:28: "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...**" In part 3 we talked a little bit about what it is that keeps everything at the proper level:

1. we're called of God
2. all the people that God has called belong to God

Here again the Apostle Paul is saying much the same thing: "...feed the Church of God, **which He purchased with His own blood...** [there's the price that was paid] ...For I know this: that after my departure 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. Watch, therefore, remembering that *for* three years I ceased not to admonish each one night and day with tears. And now **I commit you, brethren, to God and to the Word of His grace, which is able to build you up and to give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified**" (vs 28-32). Very interesting! Sit down and think that verse through, and take it word for word—that is a very revealing verse.

"...I commit you, brethren, to God... [instead of just men] ...and to the Word of His grace... [that's why grace is very important] ...which is able to build you up... [grace and the Word of God builds a person up] ...and to give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified" (v 32)—that's all the saints. If we have the Spirit of God, we are called Holy. This verse tells an awful lot. This how they are able to do v 28—to take heed to themselves to feed the Church and take care of the people and not take it all to themselves.

Colossians 1:14: "In Whom we have redemption through His own blood, *even* the remission of sins." That's how our sins are forgiven. Note:

- Eph. 1:7—talks about how we are *redeemed* with the blood of Christ
- 1-Pet. 1:18-19

Those talk about being redeemed with the precious blood of the Lamb of God—Jesus Christ—*not* with silver and gold.

Isn't it amazing how things got turned around? I remember hearing sermons in the past where that in order to have a right heart you had to give. The more you gave the better your heart was. That is redemption by silver and gold. Again, measuring things by physical things. ***You don't accomplish spiritual goals by physical things!*** I even remember the time when the ministers were instructed to tell the people: *you give even if you have to go on welfare*. I said that to one person once, and then I realized how wrong that was! I never said it to anyone again.

But they actually said, 'You give first, second, third [tithe] and a building fund and all these sort of thing, even if you have to go on welfare and food stamps, you give to the Church, that's more important.' That means that salvation is purchased! ***Redemption is purchased with the blood of Christ!*** There is nothing else that's going to redeem you!

- What if you were totally poor?
- What if you lived in a society where you didn't deal in money?
- Then what do you do?
- '*We won't preach to them because they can't give any money.*' **NO!**

Now let's go to 1-Corinthians and we'll go all the way through chapter two. 1-Corinthians 2:1: "And I, brethren, when I came to you, did not come with superiority of speech or wisdom, in proclaiming the testimony of God to you. For I decided not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified" (vs 1-2). I want us to just catch the theme all the way through the Apostle Paul's writings and all the way through the book of 1-Corinthians, how he always comes back to *Jesus Christ and Him crucified*, and comes back to *redemption* and *to trust in God!*

Verse 3: "And I was in weakness and in fear and in much trembling *when* I was with you; and my message and my preaching *was* not in persuasive words of human wisdom; rather, ***it was in demonstration of the Spirit and of power***" (vs 3-4). What happens when you hear someone who is speaking with God's Spirit inspiring them? *It has a certain penetration and entrance into your mind in a very powerful way, that no other kind of speaking does.*

Just to look at Hitler speak is very repulsive, but he was able, through that power, to just delude all the Germans into what they were doing.

Just imagine, here's the Apostle Paul—apparently he was not too tall; he had this eye disease where he didn't look very becoming—and he comes into this sophisticated society of Corinth and he doesn't speak the wisdom of men; he doesn't speak eloquently, but he preaches in a demonstration of the Spirit and power *Jesus Christ crucified!*

Verse 5: "So that your faith might not be in *the* wisdom of men, but in *the* power of God." Notice who he keeps pointing the people to follow: ***Christ and God—always!***

Verse 6: "Now **we**... [when it refers to *we* it is to himself and Timothy and Titus, and to those ministers in the Church there in Corinth] ...speak wisdom among the *spiritually* mature..."—'teleiois'; the only perfection we have is—we can have perfection in this life—

- by following God
- by letting the Holy Spirit lead us
- by letting Christ be perfect through us

Christ in us is perfection! That's what he's referring to.

"...however, *it is* not *the* wisdom of this

world..." (v 6). I've heard ministers mix in psychology into the Word of God and it—I have heard it so many times—it doesn't work! Who said there is 'no such thing as a Christian psychologist,' because you can't mix the two? *Jimmy Swaggart said that!* Every once in a while he says something that's correct.

"...nor of the rulers of this world, who are coming to nothing. Rather, we... [the ministers of God, in particularly the Apostle Paul] ...speak *the* wisdom of God in a mystery..." (vs 6-7). Like any mystery, there is a simple solution; same way with the mystery of God. That's based upon repentance, faith, and love. That's how you understand, and that unlocks the mystery. People can search the earth—North Pole to the South Pole—looking for the 'fountain of youth' and never find it. It's in the mystery!

"...even the hidden *wisdom* that God foreordained before the ages **unto our glory**" (v 7). That's quite a statement—isn't it? We'll cover a little bit about the glory that is going to be revealed in us.

Verse 8: "Which not one of the rulers of this world has known... [they didn't understand it] ...[for if they had known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory]." That statement is one of these impossible contradictions. Jesus had to die because of sin, but Paul is also saying that it is impossible for human beings to know, to understand anything about God's way by *their own* rule, by *their own* wisdom, by *their own* education.

(go to the next track)

Verse 9—here is the key verse, beginning the key section: "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 that God has prepared for those who love Him.*'" That is a profound and fantastic statement. Can we think of another verse that ties right in with that, which God has for those that love Him?

Romans 8:28: "And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to *His* purpose." Here again, it's all based on love.

Notice how the Apostle Paul is setting the stage for 1-Cor. 3, because chapters 3-5—especially chapter 5—are not what you would call *pleasant*, but necessary. Notice what he's doing: he's pointing

- to Christ
- to the redemption
- to the salvation
- to the righteousness
- to the perfection

- to the crucifixion
- to the love of God

—all of those! Those are things that give us the strength to be able to really go forward in Christ. It is hard to take!

It's kind of like when Job was sitting there—and I still haven't got it pictured in my mind what it was like for him to be covered in boils from head to toe. So bad that he had to break a pot and take a potsherd and scrape those things. The flies were buzzing around, and throwing dust in the air, and his three friends were sitting around and telling him, 'Job, you know, God doesn't do this to someone who doesn't sin.'

Job says, 'You blockheads, I haven't sinned!' They had all these long diatribes. When you're in a situation like that—I know, I've gone through my troubles and someone always reminds me—which is true—and sometimes it's almost as hard as what I just described with Job and his three friends sitting there. They always say, 'All things work together for good for those who are called and loved by God.' That is absolutely true! It never fails! Everything works together for good—always, *always* does—IF you love God!"

God has prepared something for us, that you can't see except in your mind's eye, as God's Spirit reveals them to you; that you have not heard about unless you hear the Words of God. 1-Corinthians 2:9 "...**neither have entered into the heart of man, the things that God has prepared for those who love Him.**" That is a whole key pivotal verse, right there.

Verse 10: "But God has revealed *them* to us by His Spirit..." Who are the 'us'? The 'us' refers back to the 'we.' He's talking in a ministerial sense. Granted, that has to be tempered with something that is very important to understand. That is if there is a minister who is not sent of God, he is not going to teach this right here, because it hasn't been revealed—he can't think of it—to him.

That's another way you can tell the difference between a wolf and sheep. Another way of putting it is this: The Bible says that *it is sufficient for the disciple to be as the teacher*. But what happens when the disciples—the learners—know more than the teacher? I know of cases where that has happened. I know of cases where church members knew more, understood more than the one who is supposed to be the minister to teach them. See what a contradiction this brings in.

Then I've seen those who know less, turn around and use these Scriptures in a way that bears down upon people in oppression.

When you go through this whole thing, the

Apostle Paul—even though he says *we* and *us*—is not bearing down in oppression at all. But he's making it clear that "...God has revealed *them* to **us**..." for teaching to you!

"...by His Spirit, for the Spirit searches all things—even the deep things of God" (v 10). Let's tie this in with the Holy Spirit. I want you to see the parallel of how this fits in. We're going to talk about the things that God is going to do for us, 'which the eye has not seen, the ear has not heard, neither has it entered into the heart of man what God has prepared for *those who love Him*.'

John 14:23: "Jesus answered and said to him, 'If anyone loves Me... [Here we have love, then we'll tie it in with the Spirit and learning. All of those things go hand-in-hand.] ...he will keep My Word; 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. I have spoken these things to you while I am yet present with you. But *when* the Comforter *comes*, *even* the Holy Spirit...." (vs 23-26).

Notice that we talked about, first, *loving God*, then the Holy Spirit. See how it follows; one follows the other. Isn't that pattern amazing?

"...which the Father will send in My name... [What will it do?] ...that one shall **teach you all things**, and shall **bring to your remembrance everything** that I have told you" (v 26).

1-Corinthians 2:10: "But **God has revealed them to us**... [What has God revealed? *The things that He is preparing for those that love Him!*] (And it is): ...by His Spirit, for the Spirit searches all things—even the deep things of God." In order for this to be understood, ***you've got to love God***, and then ***you have to yield to His Holy Spirit***, then ***these things will be revealed!*** There's nothing you can do!

I have a couple of commentaries that I check on once in a while to see what different ones have studied on. I very seldom use very much of it for any basis for sermons, because most of them have studied the Bible all their lives and a good number of them are atheists.

Can you imagine trying to understand God's Word but you don't believe in God and you're an atheist and you think His Word is no good? 'Why should I study the Bible? *It's stupid!*' Therefore, they don't learn a thing! God's Spirit is activated by *if you love God*, then the Holy Spirit will reveal these things. Yes, 'the deep things of God!'

I think, since we've been together as a group, God has helped us understand more and

more. All the glory goes to God! We can't take it! I can't take anything and say, 'Oh, yes...' The only thing I can say is, 'What took you so long?—as far as my part goes. It's keyed in with

- love *first*
- then the Holy Spirit teaching and searching

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." It has to come from God!

I've seen people that have left the Church—ministers—and when they turn their back on God they lose all understanding of everything that they have. It's gone! Not all at once, but it goes step-by-step. I've seen the same thing happen when they've tried to retain a semblance of being ministers, but bring in their own kooky unbiblical theories and things and try to fit those into what people should do and believe. I've seen that! That's the key to remember, brethren.

Is that the *unpardonable sin*? *If they continue in that attitude unto death it could very well be!* I don't know how some of these people are going to react when all of these things start happening. If there's any hope for them to repent, we'll see when we get to 1-Cor. 3, there may be some hope for them. Christ doesn't lose them. How do you explain the Scripture that 'He loses not one'? Christ does not lose them. If you lose your salvation, *you've lost it yourself*, because Christ is there to do everything to ensure that you will. Christ hasn't lost, it's the individual who has lost; he gives it up.

It has to do with the attitude. If a person rejects God completely, in a malicious way, God is going warn them! He's going to bring it to their attention! No one is going to mock God. At each turn they have a chance to repent. It depends on their attitude and their repentance.

Verse 12: "Now, we have not received the **spirit of the world...**" This is the exact same word 'pneuma' for Holy Spirit. This word 'pneuma' is spirit. There is a spirit of this world. And, of course, that does not come from God.

"...but the Spirit that *is* of God, so that **we might know** the things graciously given to us by God" (v 12). Again, how do we know? *By revelation through the Spirit, which then is based upon loving God!* That's the only way it's going to come. No other way. It's not a matter of brains, because he said, Hey, look, God didn't call many wise.' It's not a matter of title, who you are, because it says that God 'hasn't called many noble.'

God has called the *foolish!* That's us! But

we can know the things of God. Just think about that for a minute! Think what an absolute contradiction that this is going to be for the world! Those people like us—wherever God's people are—are the ones who are going to *know!* It just reminds me of these astronomers, the more they look out in the universe, the more they're baffled. They don't understand anything except numbers and mathematics and things like this. I don't know when one of them is going to stand up and proclaim that *God* had to create all of this.

Even through all their work, and some of them have the most fantastic minds in the world, they still haven't found God! That's amazing—isn't it! I mean, that's amazing! What's going to happen, in their own vanity—when it's really fully known—it's going to be kind of like looking to us with the attitude: How did *you* know? *Well, it doesn't come from human wisdom, it comes God!*

Verse 12: "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; which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but **in words taught by the Holy Spirit...**" (vs 12-13). That whole section ties right back in there exactly what we read in John 14.

"...in order to communicate spiritual things by spiritual means. But the **natural** man..." (v 13-14). The Greek word for *soul* is 'psuche' from which we have the word psychologist, psyche. This word *natural* is 'phusikos'—which comes from the word 'psuche.' This helps us understand there's a difference between the body and the soul and the spirit. But it also tells us that the *natural man* with just the spirit of man in him, he cannot receive the things of the Spirit of God. *He cannot! It's impossible!* How many people are just natural carnal people out there, what do they rely on? *Psyches and all this sort of thing!*

"...the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand *them* because **they are spiritually discerned**" (v 14). There's no other way to understand it! "...they are spiritually discerned."

The best way I can explain that to you—and I'm sure you've experienced this: You're wanting to follow God; you're wanting to do what is right; you're studying His Word, and something happens in your mind. All of a sudden it makes sense! That's God's Spirit working with your mind to reveal to you what that means through spiritual means. It's not something that can be done just in a classroom where it is rote—a, b, c, d! It can't be done. It is *spiritually discerned!*

Verse 15: "However, the one who is spiritual

discerns all things, but he himself is discerned by no one.... [That obviously has to do with *no man in the world.*] ...For who has known *the* mind of *the* Lord? Who shall instruct Him? But **we** have *the* mind of Christ” (vs 15-16). The ‘we’ refers back to the ministry. In this case the Church was new.

Remember some of the things that the Apostle Paul told them to do? Philippians 2:5: “Let this mind be in you, which *was* also in Christ Jesus.” That’s what they are to grow into when Paul says that *we have the mind of Christ.*

Now let me just show you where we get the ‘we.’ 1-Corinthians 3:1: “And, I, brethren, was not able to speak to you as to those who are spiritual... [they hadn’t grown up into Christ, yet] ...but as to those who are carnal—even as to babes in Christ. I gave you milk to drink, and not meat; for you were not yet able *to receive spiritual meat*; and neither are you able now, for you are still carnal” (vs 1-3).

There are a lot of people who try to build good organizations with good things of human nature. I was talking with some men and one man says, ‘I’m not particularly religious. Those Mormons, though, those are good people. They don’t allow any of their people to go on welfare.’ I said, ‘I beg to differ with you. I used to pastor a church in Salt Lake City, and they had all their second wives on AIDC—and there are a lot of them. They’re listed as widows.’ But the way they get away with it, and they don’t have to report it, is that Mormons all work in the government. This is straight scoop from the inside.

They have more women in Utah who are not at the poverty level, that you would find in the ghettos, who have children drawing Aid for Dependent Children and getting food stamps. That guy I was talking to said, ‘You’re talking falsely.’ *No I’m not! It was even on TV about the polygamists down in northern Arizona.* ‘No, that’s not right.’

Good example of *carnal goodness.* ‘I believe this is right, I believe this is good...’ I just backed off and said, ‘Whatever.’ The Mormons probably take better care of their own than many churches. I just could not resist. It really taught me a lesson: You cannot come with the Truth up against ‘carnal goodness.’ Witness Christmas.

If you stood in front of the stores and said, ‘Christmas is evil and wretched and rotten and no good, and against God, and Christ was never born then. All you people out here buying this are covetous, lustful, sinners and wretched.’ Whoa! They’d call the National Guard out! ‘And furthermore, I can prove it in the Bible.’ Then when you get them calmed down and talk in a rational way, they say, ‘Well, look at all the good it does.

The children have a nice time. The families get together. Everybody has a lot of fun. It’s nice.’

And they have all kinds of ‘good’ things that they do: feed the poor, get the people off the street. They have all their charities that they have. Christmas caroling. Even the Seventh Day Adventists bought the argument: We don’t do Christmas like the pagans. We only do it as a *family* thing.’ Well, what about bringing the tree in the house? ‘Well, what’s wrong with bringing a tree in the house.’ You see how human carnal goodness and reasoning comes into it.

This is why the Church at Corinth was suffering so much. Instead of looking to Christ and loving Christ and loving God, they were looking to men and their own carnal goodness. After all, one said, ‘If I can speak in a tongue, I must be righteous.’ Another said, ‘I have had visions and revelations.’ Another says, ‘I can sing a song.’ (you can read that in 1-Cor. 12, 14). That’s why the love chapter is there (1-Cor. 13). Paul said, ‘I will show you a more excellent way.’ Not with all this ‘human goodness’ and rah-rah and everything.

That’s how you build organizations. That’s how you build carnal things. When you start building a church that way, what happens? *Then you end up with all of the carnal problems that they had in this church!* I think this is why God preserved the letters to the Corinthians, so that we could understand that. I think we can be able to understand this a little bit more now that we understand what we do about human nature.

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

Scriptural References:

- 1) 1 Corinthians 1:30
- 2) Psalm 103:1-4
- 3) Psalm 34:22, 4-10
- 4) Acts 20:28-32
- 5) Colossians 1:14
- 6) 1 Corinthians 2:1-9
- 7) Romans 8:28
- 8) 1 Corinthians 2:9-10
- 9) John 14:23-26
- 10) 1 Corinthians 2:10-16
- 11) Philippians 2:5
- 12) 1 Corinthians 3:1-3

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Proverbs 1-8
- Ephesians 1:7
- 1 Peter 1:18-19
- 1 Corinthians 12-14

FRC:bo
Transcribed: 2-3-13

Epistle of First Corinthians V God's Holy Spirit; Spirit in Man; Spirit of Satan

Fred R. Coulter

Let's continue on in 1-Cor. 2, and what I want to do is cover and expound a little bit more of this particular section concerning God's Spirit and God's Spirit revealing things to us.

1-Corinthians 2:10: "But God has **revealed them to us by His Spirit...**" The 'us' in this case refers to the Apostle Paul and the ministers. Someone will surely say that God isn't going to reveal it to church members. That's not the case! God will reveal it to church members, and this is not in any way meant to be a ministerial noose around church members. 'How dare you say or do anything because you'll be against the ministry.' We're talking about God's Spirit has revealed things to us!

"...for the Spirit searches all things—even the deep things of God. 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" (vs 10-11).

I tell you, after seeing all these political things going on, I am so glad that we understand God's Word and have His Spirit to understand. We don't fully understand what it's going to be like when we rule in the Kingdom of God, but I tell you we can learn an awful lot by seeing the mistakes that these people are making so that we know that that's not going to be in the Kingdom of God. It won't be that way!

Verse 12: "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; which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in *words* taught by *the* Holy Spirit *in order to* communicate spiritual things by spiritual *means*" (vs 12-13).

The Holy Spirit of God

Let's understand about the Spirit of God. I have probably about two inches of articles on the Holy Spirit that we could get into, but I'm not going to do a long thing on the Spirit of God.

The Spirit of God is the Power of God—not a trinity. Not a third person in the Godhead. Let's see where it's talking about the Spirit of God. Isn't it interesting, as you follow through on this, Gen. 1:1 reveals God, and v 2 reveals the Spirit of God.

Genesis 1:1: "In *the* beginning **God** created the heavens and the earth. And the earth was without

form and void, and darkness *was* upon the face of the deep, and the **Spirit of God moved** upon the face of the waters.... [hovered or moved. What happened then? *God spoke and the Spirit of God performed it!* That was the power, the actuating power to do it.] ...And God said, 'Let there be light.' And there was light." (vs 1-3)—and so forth.

We're going to see how the Holy Spirit is the *power of God!* Luke 1—this is talking about the time when Mary was to be conceived by the Holy Spirit. Luke 1:35: "And the angel answered *and* said to her, '*The Holy Spirit...*'"

Unfortunately, the *King James* has 'ghost.' All the Pentecostals make a big thing out 'ghost.' It's sad, there are so many things that could be done with radio and television, but it's awfully hard to get the Truth out on those media. Every once in a while on Sunday I flip through and see some of these preachers and ministers that are there it's just something else; it's incredible! They are all part of the world, and they're allowing more and more of the Pentecostals on—"baptism of the Holy Ghost." They go on and on about the 'Holy Ghost.'

The Greek word for *Spirit* is 'pneuma' and the Greek word for *Holy* is 'hagios'; and 'pneuma' is the word that is used by the *King James* translators for 'ghost.' It should be *Spirit*.

Verse 35: "*The Holy Spirit shall come upon you, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow you...*" Very simple deductive argument: IF the Holy Spirit were a person: Who was the Father of Jesus Christ? God the Father? *or* the Holy Spirit? *It would be the Holy Spirit IF it were a person!* Since we know that is not true and God the Father is the Father; the Holy Spirit then is the *power* by which God does things, and it says so right here:

"...*the power of the Highest shall overshadow you...*" (v 35)—showing that it is the *power of God!*

Luke 3:22: "And the Holy Spirit descended upon Him in a bodily form like a dove..."—upon Christ.

- Why did it do that?
- Does this mean that the Holy Spirit is a dove?
- Does this mean that the Holy Spirit has a body form?

There would people who would read that and say so;

claim that the Holy Spirit has a bodily shape. How can it be a person in a dove? We'll take them in their own reasoning.

What it really says is 'if the Holy Spirit descended—which it did—in a bodily shape—which it did—that tells us that most of the time it's not in a bodily shape; and like a dove, came upon Christ.

- Why did it do that?
- Why did the Holy Spirit manifest itself in this particular fashion, in a bodily form like a dove when it came upon Jesus Christ?
- *So the ones around could see it!*
- Who was told He would see it?
- *John the Baptist!*

The reason it did was not because it was a dove, or not because it has a body, but because God said how John would be able to identify Who the Messiah was. Very simple!

If the Holy Spirit is supposed to be a person, and it is also supposed to be a dove, how on earth then can it be a fire? Those are hard questions people haven't asked. *It is the power of God!*

Luke 4:1 "And Jesus, filled with *the* Holy Spirit..." If it's fire, then Jesus had to be full of fire—right? If it's a dove, then He had to eat all kinds of doves—right? If it's a person, then Christ was possessed—right? All of those you would have to say 'NO' because it is the *power of God!* Can a person be filled with the *power of God?* *Yes!* That's what it's talking about.

Luke 8:43_[corrected]—here's how the Holy Spirit works: "And a woman who had been *afflicted* with a flow of blood for twelve years, *and* had spent her whole living on physicians, *but* could not be cured by anyone, came behind *Him* and touched the border of His garment; and immediately the flow of her blood stopped. And Jesus said, 'Who touched Me?'.... [just the border of His garment] ...And as everyone began to deny *it*, Peter and those with Him said, 'Master, the multitudes are thronging and pressing You, and You ask, "Who touched Me?"' But Jesus said, 'Someone touched Me, because I know *that power* went out from Me'" (vs 43-46). The Greek word for *power* is 'dunamis.' We have the English word *dynamite* that comes from this Greek word 'dunamis.' This means *it was power*.

Let's look at the Greek word for 'the power of the Highest will come upon you' (Luke 1:35)—the word for power is 'dunamis'—which means *power* or *force*. The other word for power is 'exousia'—which means the *power of authority*, the right to do something, the authority to do something. You may have 'exousia'—authority to do

something; but if you do not have 'dunamis' you don't have the *power* to do it. You may have authority from the state to build a house on this location, but you have to remove this huge rock first. If you don't have the *power*—the 'dunamis'—to get rid of this rock, you're not going to be able to exercise your *authority*—'exousia'—to put the house there.

So, when Jesus said in Luke 8:46: "But Jesus said, 'Someone touched Me, because **I know that power** went out from Me.'" Did a dove go out of Him? *No!* Did another person go out of Him? *No!* It was *power*—the power of the Holy Spirit. That's how He did everything that He did.

By this time the woman was scared to death, but probably thrilled to life, v 47: "Then the woman, seeing that her *act* was not concealed, came trembling; and after falling down in front of Him before all the people, she declared for what cause she had touched Him, and how she had immediately been healed. And He said to her, 'Be of good courage, daughter; your faith has healed you. Go in peace'" (vs 47-48). Sometimes when it looks like correction is going to come, maybe there's going to be a blessing that's going to come.

This woman was probably scared to death—in that terminology—just saying, 'I don't want to bother Him. If I can just get up to Him and just touch His garment, I'll be healed.' Jesus did this, not to correct anybody, but to confound even His disciples that He knew when things were done and the *power came from Him!*

That's really something— isn't it? The closest I can come to really comprehending this is what we call static electricity. I think twice I've kissed my wife with static electricity and boy we both got zapped on our lips.

In this section of 1-Cor. 2 we're going to see that there is a combination of three things:

1. the Spirit of God
2. the spirit of man
3. the spirit of Satan

Titus 3:5—here again, we're going to be talking about the Holy Spirit as the *power of God*: "Not by works of righteousness which we practiced... [for salvation] ...but according to His mercy He saved us, through *the* washing of regeneration... [baptism] ...and *the* renewing of *the* Holy Spirit, which He richly poured out upon us through Jesus Christ our Savior" (vs 5-6). Once again showing that it is the *power of God*. He sheds it upon us! I have yet to see a person shed. It won't happen. It is a commodity that God gives us—a spiritual commodity.

2-Timothy 1:6: “For this reason, I admonish you to stir up the **gift of God**...” The Holy Spirit is a gift; Jesus called it a *gift of God*. You cannot buy it. Remember what happened when Simon Magus tried to buy it? Peter said, ‘You cannot buy the *gift of God* with money.’

“...that is in you by the laying on of my hands.... [It’s something that comes with the laying on of hands.] ...For God has not given us a spirit of fear... [there is a *spirit of fear* and we’ll see who that comes from] ...but of power, and of love, and of sound-mindedness” (vs 6-7). That’s what the Holy Spirit is supposed to do for us—give us these things.

1-Peter 1:12: “To whom **it was revealed** that, not for themselves, but to us they were ministering these things, 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.”

One other verse in the book of Acts, and this will tie in concerning how God reveals things to us. Acts 5:29—this is when the apostles were preaching and the priests told them not to preach in His name, do not fill Jerusalem with this weird thing that they’re doing.

Acts 5:29: “But Peter and the apostles answered *and* said, ‘We are obligated to obey God rather than men. 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 29-32). So, the Holy Spirit can only be given when a person is obeying God.

- You cannot buy it!
- You cannot merchandize it!

It’s a power that comes from God and you have to be obedient and loving God and submissive to God to receive and to keep the Holy Spirit.

The Spirit of Man

It says, ‘What things knows a man save the spirit of man that is in him.’ There will be some people who may be confused that the soul is the same as the spirit. It’s not!

1-Thessalonians 5:23: “Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you wholly; and may your entire **spirit and soul and body** be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.” It’s showing that there is:

- *the body*—the ‘corpus nephesh’
- *the soul*—the physical life of the body
- *the spirit*—also part of the life, but it is mostly the intellect and motivating power in the mind to give you conscious thought

James 2:26: “For as the body without *the* spirit is dead...” If you don’t have the spirit, the body is dead! Can they keep a dead person alive, even though the spirit may not be there? *They can keep them alive for a while by keeping the physical soul in the blood!* That’s where the power of physical life is, in the blood. They can keep the body a vegetable existence, even though it is dead.

That’s what they did with this woman who was four months pregnant and she had a brain tumor and she died. She was dead! But they kept her physical body alive for 12 weeks or so, and the baby was born. That’s a difference between body and soul and spirit.

The spirit in man gives us the knowledge of the things of human beings. That’s what we think with. That’s what activates the physical part of our brain to make it think. Much like a computer. The computer will be able to think and memorize and do things if it has a program and electricity. Just like with our physical brain—liken that to a computer—education is to a program that you put into a computer, but it isn’t going to do any good unless you have the electricity—or the spirit of man—to make it work; so we’ll work.

You hear many times about people who have a spiritual quality about them. Sometimes it may be a little more than just human spirit. Is it the Spirit of God? *or* the spirit of Satan? How can you know? *You will know them by their fruits!*

Job 32:1: “And these three men ceased to answer Job, because he *was* righteous in his own eyes.... [even more righteous than God] ...Then was kindled the anger of Elihu the son of Barachel the Buzite, of the family of Ram. His wrath burned against Job, because he had justified himself rather than God. Also his wrath was kindled against his three friends, because they had found no answer, and *yet*, had condemned Job” (vs 1-3).

At the end of this is Elihu did not have a sacrifice offered for him on his behalf. But Job had to have one for himself, and one for his three friends, but not Elihu.

Verse 4: “Now Elihu had waited to speak to Job, because they *were* older than he in days. When Elihu saw that there *was* no answer in the mouth of these three men, then his wrath was kindled. 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.”.... [supposed to—right?] ...But there is a spirit in man and the inspiration of the Almighty gives them understanding. Great men are not *always* wise; neither do the aged understand justice” (vs 4-9). It is *how* you think, not the fact that you *can* think.

That’s what’s so important. That’s why whenever you’re discussing something about the Bible, it is *how* you arrive at your conclusion. Always remember this: ***Always begin with what you know, what is clear! That is easy to understand! Then you take the next step and make sure that it verifies back and forth!*** There are two major kinds of reasoning and decisions making:

1. **deductive reasoning**—goes upon proven facts that you know and you move to the next step and then you double check back where you came from and ask: Does it still hold up?

In other words, does A always equal B. If you go to C, does C equal A and B, and so forth. Example:

- God is good—which He is
- God is love—which He is
- God’s laws are right and good—which they are

Therefore, *the laws of God are good for us*. That’s deductive reasoning.

2. **inductive reasoning**—by parallel or analogy.

You have to prove the existence of God by deductive and inductive reasoning—both.

Here is inductive reasoning: You come to work one morning and you see there’s a hole in the glass and it’s jagged. You walk up to the door and you move it and it’s open. So, you walk inside and you find that all of the desk drawers have been pilfered, everything turned upside down. You find that there are muddy footprints, money is gone, many valuables out of the office are missing—the computer, typewriter—and you *conclude* from what you observe that a thief had broken and stolen these things. But you do not have absolute proof because you haven’t seen him. That is *inductive reasoning*.

This is the whole thing that they have with a lot of these murder mysteries and things on television. You can change that a little bit.

When the investigation of this thing is finished, you find out that a thief was not there, rather it was really the boss and he had been stealing money and embezzling it from the company and he had a girlfriend on the side and was in trouble. So, he had to make it appear that a thief was there, but it

wasn’t the kind of thief that you thought it was. That’s where inductive reasoning breaks down when it comes to proving absolute things.

That’s where people get themselves in trouble in reasoning with the Bible—when they use inductive reasoning rather than deductive reasoning. They come to the wrong conclusions.

It is the *spirit in man* that gives us the mental ability, “...and the inspiration of the Almighty gives them understanding” (v 8). We’re going to see that this is very, very important concerning how God reveals things to us. We’re also going to see that this is very important concerning what God is going to reveal and not reveal and that a person does not necessarily have to be converted to have something of God revealed to them by His Spirit. God will reveal certain things.

Genesis 41—this is the account of where the Pharaoh had the dream and he couldn’t understand the dream. Have you ever had a time when you’ve been working on a problem, or thinking on something, or something has just been bothering you?

Genesis 41:8: “And it came to pass in the morning that his spirit was troubled, and he sent and called for all the magicians of Egypt, and all the wise men. And Pharaoh told them his dream, but *there was none who could interpret them to Pharaoh.*”

- Did God inspire the dream? *Yes, he did!*
- Was Pharaoh converted? *No, he wasn’t!*

Notice what happened when he didn’t get this resolved in his mind: “...his spirit was troubled...” Whenever you have something that is bothering you or that you’re thinking on, that you cannot get resolved, what happens? *You can’t sleep! You can’t think of anything else! Your mind is obsessed with it!*

That’s what happened here. The intellectual spiritual power of your mind is so intent on solving that, that *your spirit is troubled*. When someone goes wacky, what happens? *Everything gets short-circuited!* They can’t reason correctly and the spirit tries to work, but it doesn’t. And there is such a thing as demon-possession.

Of course, there are a lot of people who see demons behind everything: there’s a smoking demon, there’s a drinking demon, there’s a speed demon, and they go around and rebuke demons everywhere. That’s part of the Pentecostal thing, which keeps them locked into their own demonism.

Numbers 11:16: “And the LORD said to Moses, ‘Gather to Me seventy men of the elders of Israel, whom you know to be the elders of the people, and the officers over them. And bring them

to the tabernacle of the congregation so that they may stand there with you. And I will come down and talk with you there. And I will take of the Spirit, which *is* upon you, and will put *it* upon them... [Here God is adding an extra amount of His Holy Spirit to be with these men] ...and they shall bear the burden of the people with you so that you do not bear *it* yourself alone” (vs 16-17).

Again, how the Holy Spirit is interacting and working with someone who is not necessarily converted. Moses was, but certainly some of the elders weren't. Remember the man who did all of the gold work and carvings for the tabernacle—listed in the book of Genesis? He had a *spirit of wisdom* from God to do that.

Psalms 32:2: “Blessed is the man to whom the LORD does not impute iniquity and **in whose spirit** there is no guile.” That's quite an interesting little verse— isn't it? Maybe this will help us understand about what can happen to the spirit of a person. It's given to you for intellect and reasoning—right? But what happens when it's used for deceitfulness so much and so long something happens to it that it cannot function correctly. It's called *guile* here.

You've heard of people who have told lies so long that they can't tell the truth even when the truth is better. Something's wrong in the mind. And until they repent and they are healed of God, guess what? *They're in trouble with God!*

Psalms 51:10: “Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.... [In other words, make right, anew] ...Cast me not away from Your presence, and take not Your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, and let *Your* free spirit uphold me” (vs 10-12). There again, the interaction of God's Spirit with the spirit of man.

Proverbs 16:18: “Pride *goes* before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall.” It's talking about how this spirit of man can be perverted and twisted.

Verse 32: “He who is slow to anger *is* better than the mighty, and he who rules his spirit is better than he who takes a city.” It's something you have to rule and control.

What happens when it becomes all haughty and perverse. There's such a thing as a perverse spirit. It talks about it here in the book of Proverbs.

Proverbs 18:14: “The spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity, but a broken spirit who can bear?” It can become wounded. People can become hurt. The spirit can become wounded to the point that it's almost impossible for them to recover out of

it.

You've heard of ‘breaking the spirit’ of people. Break the spirit of your children; break the spirit of an animal. It really is, it's never the same. If you break the spirit of a horse, it's never the same. It is worthless; it is no good. Same way if you break the spirit of a person. You can do that. They call that ‘brainwashing.’ You can actually ‘break the spirit.’ That means that you put such a strain on the mind, in the spirit, that it becomes perverted, twisted, incapable of working properly. They need to be healed. So, you can actually destroy a person, ruin their spirit—break their spirit.

There's such a thing as a ‘bitter spirit.’ Not just an attitude. What gives the attitude? *How you use your spirit!* This also shows that you, in your own free moral agency, are responsible for what you do to this spirit that you have. If you have authority over others, you're also responsible for what you do to others that have that spirit.

We're going to talk a little bit about one of the things that I was concerned about when I was in Worldwide (Church of God). It was said, ‘The Catholics may be all wrong in everything, but they have the right form of government from the top down.’ *They don't have the right form of government!* They do not! What happens is when you read about the Churches there in Rev. 2 & 3? *They all have their problems!* What was instilled in the Church was not a spirit of love, but a *spirit of fear*, which preyed upon the carnalities of the people. They were never able to go any further.

(go to the next track)

The Spirit of Satan/Spirit of the World

1-Corinthians 2:12: “Now, we have not received the **spirit of the world**, but the Spirit that is of God...”

I was listening to a talk show and this woman called in and she says, ‘I love Christmas. I love everything about it. It makes me feel so good. I get all these gifts and I do all of these things.’ There's a perfect example of a person is caught up in the spirit of this world. The word for *spirit* is ‘pneuma.’

Who is the god of this world? *Satan!* Let's see how the spirit of this world—and I imagine that there were people saying, ‘Oh, Baal is wonderful!’ You know they would!

2-Corinthians 4:1: “Therefore, having this ministry, according as we have received mercy, we are not fainthearted. For we have personally renounced the hidden things of dishonest gain, not walking in *cunning* craftiness, nor handling the Word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the

Truth, we are commending ourselves to every man's conscience before God. But if our Gospel is hidden, it is hidden to those who are perishing; in whom **the god of this world has blinded the minds** of those who do not believe..." (vs 1-4).

The spirit of this world comes from Satan the devil who is the 'god of this world,' who is able to do something with the minds of people; and he does it by **spiritual power**. Plus nowadays he has everything else to go along with that.

"...lest the light of the Gospel of the glory of Christ, Who is *the* image of God, should shine unto them" (v 4).

Let's just carry this one step further. Satan does not have to do it by possession—I'm not talking about Satan possession. Satan possession is something else.

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, according to the prince of the power of the air...**" The Greek here is not 'dunamis'; in this particular case it is *authority*.

Satan has certain powers, but they are limited. He has certain powers to do certain things, but he cannot be everywhere all at once. He can only be in one place at one time. But he has powers that reach out beyond him, but not clear around the whole world. He's called "...the prince of the power of the air..."

"...the spirit... ['pneuma'—called *the spirit of the world*] ...that is now working within the children of disobedience" (v 2). Can there be people who are not Satan-possessed, but are nevertheless spiritually controlled by Satan? In tune with him? *Yes! Yes, indeed, there can be!* Especially those who are dedicated to his worship.

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, and were by nature *the* children of wrath, even as the rest of *the world*."

That's not to say that everyone who does not have the Spirit of God necessarily has the spirit of Satan. We know that every human being has the spirit of man that is in them, which God has given. That is the little bit of light that lights all men. That comes from God. What you do then with that is what we're talking about here: *the spirit of the world, the spirit of the prince of the power of the air*.

Let's see how he does this, Ephesians 6:10: "Finally, my brethren, be strong in *the* Lord, and in the might of His strength. Put on the whole armor of

God so that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil, because we are not wrestling against flesh and blood, but against principalities *and* against powers, against the world rulers of the darkness of this age, against the spiritual *power* of wickedness in high *places*" (vs 10-12). Is it any wonder that international politics, by nature, are deceitful? There it is right there!

That's why when Herbert Armstrong went to the various world leaders on the basis that he did, he wasn't preaching the Gospel; he was not! He was going to visit them on *their* terms, and what happened? *It got all involved in lust, deceit, sin and downfall!* That's what you're up against.

Verse 16: "Besides all *these*, take up the shield of the faith, with which you will have the power to quench all the **fiery darts** of the wicked one." That's how Satan works. You could actually translate 'fiery darts' from the Greek as *fiery missiles of passion*. So, it's not constant, it comes like throwing darts.

We have this cute little thing in the world showing cupids and when someone is in love, what happens? They're supposed to have a bow and arrow and shoot you with love. Well, it's not little cupid dolls sending the little arrows. We have seen:

- the spirit of the power of the air
- the spirit of the world
- the spirit of fear

When you use the tactics of Satan within the Church of God, you're going to have the results of Satan's work. We're to fear God, but should we all run around in trepidation and fear of ministers and be fearful of authority. This is what happened—*isn't it?* That is a device of Satan the devil.

When I first heard this thing where it was said that the Catholics have it right because they have government from the top down. I thought to myself, why does the Church of God have to use the devices of Satan to do the work of God. It didn't make any sense to me. That's when I woke up to what was really the true facts in it.

Romans 8:14: 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...**" *The spirit of bondage* is the attitude of sin. It is also a *spirit of fear*.

When you take and you control people with fear, you're using a device of Satan the devil, which is going to result in the same problems and difficulties that you find with other organizations that use that. It won't work! God being merciful may not let the effects come out completely, as it would

with Satan, but just that tactic of using it isn't right.

- Why should we be fearful?
- What is it that all great people in the world must do?
- *They must isolate themselves so people don't get to know them!*

You do this by mystique, you do it by fear—many different ways. I go back and look what happened in Worldwide—this is the first time I've talked about it in a long time, so please forgive me. We're supposed to learn lessons from what we've gone through, so I'll just mention it here. ***When the spirit of fear of authority is used, it is generally used to cover up the sins of the hierarchy***—nine times out of ten! 'How dare you question...'

First of all, they need to be above reproach and not be involved in those things. So, there doesn't have to be that kind of *fear*. There doesn't have to be that at all. I'm glad that we don't have any of it here. Fear can be a substitute for faith. *You do things out of fear rather than out of faith!*

If you have faith, God is going to do it; He *will* do it! And He will do it in ways that many times you won't even think. Many times you won't even know. He'll provide for us, with faith, in a way that we don't expect. That is terrific! That's all a part of faith.

We're going to see that all of these things work together with the next thing that we find, that works together with this automatically.

1-Corinthians 2:10: "But God has **revealed** them... [we're going to talk about how God makes it possible for us to know things] ...to us by His Spirit, for the Spirit searches all things—even the deep things of God." The word for *reveal* comes from the Greek 'apokalupto'—verb, and the noun form is 'apokalupsis'—which is *manifestation, revelation, coming, appearing*. The verb form is to *reveal, to show, to manifest, or to make known*.

- How does God do it?
- Is it possible for God to reveal something to someone who is not even in the Church?
- Who is not even being called of God?

Romans 1:17: "For therein *the* righteousness of God is revealed from faith unto faith, according as it is written: 'The just shall live by faith.'" That's how the revelation is going to take place. It is a *revealing!*

Verse 18: "Indeed, *the* wrath of God is revealed from heaven upon all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the Truth in unrighteousness." God reveals certain things. He can

reveal it to people not in the Church. He can reveal His anger. That's what He's doing here:

Verse 19: "Because that which may be known of God is manifest... [*revealed*] ...among them, 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..." (vs 19-20).

God has *revealed* that He is Creator, by the things that He has made. It's so astounding; it's almost beyond belief the things that God has revealed concerning His creation. Yet, men turn around and they just completely reject God. But He has revealed it to them. In other words, to reveal to a carnal-minded person, what do you do? *You present physical evidence!* You have the physical evidence of the earth; that's quite a revealing—isn't it? *Yes, it is!* It is there—physical evidence. It is there!

Verse 20: "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.**"

Let's carry this one step further. Let's see how the Spirit of God can reveal things to those who are not converted, yet. In this particular place the disciples were not yet converted.

John 14:17: "*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...** [When we first talked about the Spirit of God, how it hovers (Gen. 1), God's Spirit can *with* someone] ...and shall be **within** you." God can reveal things to people with His Spirit being *with* them. When it becomes *in them*, then they have the sonship, which comes from God. God can reveal those things.

Let's see how this works; we'll see what Jesus said, Matthew 16:13: "Now after coming into the parts of Caesarea Philippi, Jesus questioned His disciples, saying, 'Whom do men declare Me, the Son of man, to be?' And they said, 'Some *say* John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; and others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets.' He said to them, 'But you, whom do you declare Me to be?' Then Simon Peter answered *and* said, 'You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.' And Jesus answered *and* said to him, 'Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jona [son of John], **for flesh and blood did not reveal it to you, but My Father, Who is in heaven**'" (vs 13-17).

So, the Spirit of God being *with* Peter—not *in* him—worked upon his mind and revealed this to him, that Jesus was, indeed, the Son of God.

I can't tell you how many times I've had this

happen to me, when God was calling me, before I was baptized. Different things, out of the Bible, being able to see things clearly for the first time. Like having the shades lifted. I'm sure that's happened to you!

Matthew 11:25—this ties right in with the whole theme of 1-Cor., about the foolishness of God is greater than the wisdom of this world: “At that time Jesus answered and said, ‘I praise You, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and intelligent, and **have revealed them to babes.**’” Remember, it's the Spirit of God that reveals these things to us.

Verse 26: “‘Yes, Father, for it was well pleasing in Your sight *to do* this. All things were delivered to Me by My Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father; neither does anyone know the Father except the Son, and the one to whom the Son personally chooses to reveal *Him*’” (vs 26-27). Has to be a supernatural Divine revelation for you to understand about Jesus Christ.

I think if we really get this in mind and really appreciate what God has done, how much more we can love God, thank God, love each other and be the way that we ought to be with each other.

As we continue on with 1-Cor. we're going to see that the Apostle Paul had some pretty hard things to say to them. He was making it abundantly clear of

- how much God loved them
- how much God did to reveal these things to them

Very, very important!

It's like anything else in human endeavor or that you do. The first time is fantastic! After that it becomes routine. Spiritually speaking we run all the way—if you go through all the churches—from the Church at Ephesus down to the Church at Laodicea, and by the time you come down to Laodicea, it's just routine.

But, if we do like the Apostle Paul told Timothy, ‘to *stir up the Spirit that is in you*’; rekindle those things and realize that this has come from God. It says right here, v 25: “At that time Jesus answered and said, ‘I praise You, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and intelligent, and have revealed them to babes.’” ***God has revealed these things to us!***

That is a tremendous thing to think on! This is tremendous thing to really think on: ***To understand that the God Who has made everything that there is, has reached down into my life—into***

your life—and has given us of His Holy Spirit, and has given us of His Son that we can understand!

That is absolutely marvelous! The words fail me to express it correctly! I hope that with God's Spirit I can express it a little more correctly when we continue on next time.

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

Scriptural References:

- 1) 1 Corinthians 2:10-13
- 2) Genesis 1:1-3
- 3) Luke 1:35
- 4) Luke 3:22
- 5) Luke 4:1
- 6) Luke 8:43-48
- 7) Titus 3:5-6
- 8) 2 Timothy 1:6-7
- 9) 1 Peter 1:12
- 10) Acts 5:29-32
- 11) 1 Thessalonians 5:23
- 12) James 2:26
- 13) Job 32:1-8
- 14) Genesis 41:8
- 15) Numbers 11:16-17
- 16) Psalm 32:2
- 17) Psalm 51:10-12
- 18) Proverbs 16:18, 32
- 19) Proverbs 18:14
- 20) 1 Corinthians 2:12
- 21) 2 Corinthians 4:1-4
- 22) Ephesians 2:1-3
- 23) Ephesians 6:10-12, 16
- 24) Romans 8:14-15
- 25) 1 Corinthians 2:10
- 26) Romans 1:17-20
- 27) John 14:17
- 28) Matthew 16:13-17
- 29) Matthew 11:25-27, 25

Scriptures referenced, not quoted: Revelation 2; 3

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Transcribed: 3-3-13

Epistle of First Corinthians VI

How God Reveals

Fred R. Coulter

Let's just review again, beginning right here in 1-Corinthians 2:9. There are some very important things we need to understand, and that is *no one* is going to understand about God unless God *reveals* it to them.

There was a panel of very learned men talking about God, theorizing about God, but they weren't able to understand about God. There is what is called in the world *theology*. Theology is the scientific study of God. Why is it that the theologians in the main are atheists? Or agnostics? Here's the reason:

1-Corinthians 2:9: "But according as it is written, 'The eye has not seen... [Remember what Jesus said concerning God the Father: 'No one has seen God at anytime or heard His voice.'] ...nor the ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God has prepared for those who love Him.'" There again, we need to key this loving God right in with understanding the Word of God. That is the very key important thing.

That's why scientists can study but they'll never find God. That is why religions can preach and never understand God. *Loving God requires a whole lot more than just having a feeling in your heart*, an emotional thing that you might have toward another person. It's entirely different. The requirement that God lays upon us, once He calls us, is that we have to love God with all our heart, mind, soul and being; and that we have to *follow Christ* under all circumstances.

Luke 14:26: "If anyone comes to Me and does not hate... [loves God more in comparison to] ...his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brothers and sisters, and, in addition, his own life also, he cannot be My disciple. And whoever does not carry his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple" (vs 26-27).

1-Corinthians 2:10: "But God has revealed *them* to us by His Spirit..." Whatever knowledge you have; whatever revelation you have concerning God; however you understand God from the Bible, has to be *revealed*!

I'll guarantee you, you can go to a dictionary and you can find every word that is in this Bible listed in the dictionary. But you won't find God *revealed* in the dictionary. It is not just printed words alone that is going to do it. It is what happens when God's Spirit works with our mind, when God *reveals* these things to us. We're going to find out how that works today.

Verse 10: "But God has revealed *them* to us by His Spirit, for the Spirit searches all things—even the deep things of God." We need to get to the point of understanding the *deep things of God*. Too many times we go back to the basics, and with a group like we have here we are able to delve into the Bible and really understand things.

I know a minister who had a stack of sermon notes and he told me, frankly, 'What I learned in college I know more than any lay member wherever I go. If I stay in a church area four to five years I can just use these same notes over and over again.' Sure enough that's what he did! Well, he never progressed to the point of leading the congregation in God's Word to understand the *deep things* of God.

Therefore, that's why we never understood about grace, never understood about human nature, never understood about the nature of Jesus Christ when He was here on the earth, because that is a *deep* and *profound* thing that God has done. It is only *with God's Spirit* that we're going to be able to understand the *deep things* of God. We'll see how God starts with us and then works with us all the way through.

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"—unless it is revealed! Let's think about the incongruity of it all.

- Can a man discover something that God does not know?
- Shall the thing that is made say to the Maker, what are You doing?

or

- I will tell you how to do it!

Just visualize it this way: the example in Jer. 18—where God told Jeremiah to go down to the potters house and watch him make a pot. If it isn't the way he wants it, he re-lumps it into another one, or makes another one. Can you imagine making a pot that the pot will talk to you and say, 'What are you doing? I don't like what you're doing.' *No way!* That's why *no man* knows the things of God.

This is why when it comes down to so many different religions and things there are so many different kinds, types, and varieties of religions, and also types, kinds and varieties of Christianity.

Today I read in the paper—every Saturday morning they have the religion and living section. It

was the leading theological story for the year: The pope is taking the central power back to himself, and then it was listing every one of the things that was done: feeding the poor and doing this and that. There was only one article worthwhile reading, which a Protestant said, 'The Maryian—Mary—theology of the Catholics was completely wrong.'

Outside of that it was all just physical, carnal do-good. Yet, people are impressed by that because they do not understand that people are not deceived by the apparent evil, but they are deceived by the apparent 'good.' I thought that was interesting, especially since we're going through this. *No man knows!*

Let's see how this is done, v 12: "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." God wants us to know.

Hebrews 5:8: "Although He was a Son, *yet* He learned obedience from the things that He suffered; and having been perfected, He became *the* Author of eternal salvation to all those who obey Him, after He had been designated by God *as* High Priest according to the order of Melchisedec; concerning Whom we *have* much to say and hard to explain... [that's what Peter wrote of the Apostle Paul; some of his things were hard to understand] ...since you have become dull of in hearing. For truly, by this time you ought to be teachers, *but instead* you need to have *someone* teach you again what *are* the beginning principles of the oracles of God, and have become those in need of milk, and not of solid food" (vs 8-12).

This was the whole problem in the Church in Corinth. They began looking at the carnal good and began following the carnal good and thinking that that was righteousness and spirituality. Paul had to tell them that 'you are carnal and have need of milk' (1-Cor. 3) —can't even get them off the milk.

How is it that God *reveals* things to us? This becomes very important. This is basic, but I'm leading up to something:

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, 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."

{Note sermon series: *Gospel of John* and the *Epistles of John*}

I want to emphasize the 'with' and what

happens when God's Spirit is *with* you vs being *in* you. We know that when you are baptized and have had hands laid on you, the Holy Spirit is *in* you.

- How long will God's Spirit be *with* a person?
- What will it do?

We can add many basic Scriptures:

- None can come to the Father except by Me
- None can come to Me except the Father draw him

Here we have *with* you.

Example: The first time I ever read the Bible with any understanding was quite by accident. I'd been with my mom in this restaurant in Vista, California, working to build up the restaurant, because my aunt and mother went into business down there and I owed my mother some money. We just worked our fingers to the bone and one of the things we had was the Christian Businessman's Association who would come in every Saturday morning and have their breakfast. Sure enough they lean on you quite heavy and 'won't you come to church.'

I thought, yeah, maybe that would be good for business if I went to church. So, I went to church a couple of times and every time I went to church I got totally turned off. I forget what kind of church it was, but they had this big cross right up front, and I didn't think anything of it. But these men were leaning on me to 'join' their group; 'be born again.'

They invited me out to one of their prayer meetings one time and you get around in a circle and all pray and everybody was boo-hooing and crying. I was so absolutely turned off; I couldn't believe it!

So anyway, this one night after getting off work about two in the morning—about an 18 hour shift—I came home and was so tired that I couldn't go to sleep. We had a Bible so I dusted off the dust and opened the Bible and I turn to Exo. 20—just automatically opened there. I read there where it says, 'I am the Lord your God, you shall have no other gods before Me.' Then it says 'you shall not make any graven image of any likeness of anything that's in heaven above, that on the earth beneath, or that in the water under the earth and you shall not bow yourself to serve them, for I the Lord your God am a jealous God.'

I closed the Bible and I said, 'Hooray, I don't have to go to any church I know of.' I look back at that point and I remember it and I, in my own mind, believe that's when God's Spirit began to be *with* me. It wasn't until about a year and a half afterward that God really began dealing with me to

call me. But I am convinced, because of that, that when a person reads the Bible really wanting understanding and a simple thing comes along that they understand and they accept, that God's Spirit will be *with* them.

- It doesn't mean they're called, yet.
- It doesn't mean they're converted, yet.

There's an activity that goes on that we don't know anything about. Again, I just want to review what happened when Elijah said, 'Oh, God, I'm all alone and I am the only one.' God said, 'There are 7,000 who have not bowed their knee to Baal.' What was the requirement? *It didn't say that they kept His commandments totally! It didn't say that they were really trying to follow God with all their heart!* It said, 'They haven't bowed their knee to Baal.'

Same thing here; let's take and apply this, Revelation 4:5: "And proceeding from the throne were lightnings and thunders and voices; and seven lamps of fire, **which are the seven Spirits of God...**"

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 these do when they go forth in all the earth?

Zechariah 4:10—here's a reference in the Old Testament to the same thing: "...These **seven are the eyes of the LORD** which run to and fro through the whole earth." It's something spiritual that happens. I want to emphasize this very clearly.

2-Chronicles 15:1 "And the Spirit of God came upon Azariah the son of Oded.... [Azariah was one of the prophets]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.... [John 4:22-24—that God seeks those who worship Him in spirit and in Truth.] ...But if you forsake Him, He will forsake you.'" (vs 1-2).

2 Chronicles 16:9: "For **the eyes of the LORD...** [the seven] ...run to and fro in all the whole earth to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart *is* perfect toward Him...."

Now, I have to tell you another little incident that happened. I was 10-years-old at the time. I hadn't had too many religious experiences growing up, and we just moved on a farm and I was doing all the work. We had a team of horses and the first year we were there I learned how to use them. We had a big hay rake, with these big tongs that come down

and there's a seat in the middle and the axle is about 15-feet wide and the wheels are way out on the end. You rake up the mowed hay and you put in windrows, then you come along later and shock it.

I hired out to do my first job with a team of horses and the rake. I tootled down to the neighbors, and on this part of the road there are big grove of fir and cedar trees and it open up into a field. I was out there and started raking up this hay and putting it into windrows. Something freaked the horses and they just went wild and they started taking off and I couldn't do anything! Not a thing!

I'd been attending the Vacation Bible School that week and it made a little impression on me, so as these horses started running away, I got scared—I mean, really scared to death—because I could have fallen off of it, I could have been trampled under foot. As the horses left the field and started down the driveway and into where this grove of trees were, I prayed! I asked God to help me! All of a sudden it came to my mind something from my tumbling class. So, I let go of the reins of the horses and I got behind the seat and held onto the seat and I dropped off the back of the rake and put my hands down and went into a frontward roll and I wasn't hurt at all.

I got up and I remember *thanking God*. I started running after the horses and they went charging up past the place and my mom looked out and saw the horses going on down the road and she went out there and saw a piece of a broken log and thought it was my leg or arm and she was scared to death. The horses ran clear out to the main highway, ran across the road and came to a telephone pole and one horse ran on one side of it and the other horse ran on the other side and BAM! they came to an abrupt halt. I imagine those horses' mouths were sore after that!

But, I look back at just a couple of things like that in my life and I have to be convinced that God will hear and answer prayers like that. That doesn't mean that I'm some great and special person and God has been dealing with me and 'I was born to this job' or anything like that. NO!

But God's Spirit goes through the whole earth "...to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart *is* perfect toward Him...." That means that they're really asking God in sincerity. That's why you will hear people say, 'I prayed to God and I was delivered.'

Now, let's carry this another step further. Let's see how this works, Matthew 16:13: "Now after coming into the parts of Caesarea Philippi, Jesus questioned His disciples, saying, 'Whom do men declare Me, the Son of man, to be?' And they said, 'Some *say* John the Baptist...' (vs 13-14).

My wife gave me a little article of the organization called AIM (Accuracy In Media). You read so many of these things in the media today: ‘an undisclosed source’; ‘a reliable undisclosed source’; a reliable inside source who doesn’t want to be named.’ That’s how they get a lot of scuttlebutt out and a lot of inaccuracies. They never go back and correct them. But here’s human nature working the same way today.

“...‘Some say John the Baptist...’” Was that true? *No!* What happened when they came and asked John, ‘Who are you?’ He said, ‘Well, I’m not the Christ, I’m not *that Prophet*, I’m not Elijah.’ Jesus said, ‘He was Elijah.’

“...‘and others, Elijah; and others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets.’ He [Jesus] said to them, ‘But you, whom do you declare Me to be?’ Then Simon Peter answered *and* said, ‘You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.’ And Jesus answered *and* said to him, ‘Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jona, **for flesh and blood did not reveal it to you, but My Father, Who is in heaven**’” (vs 14-17).

We read in John 14 how God’s Spirit was *with* them. It revealed things to them while the Spirit was *with* them. The Father revealed it to Peter. Let’s see further how this works. What this really does is it helps us to be more grateful and thankful for God’s way, because whatever we understand has come from God—really and truly.

Matthew 11:25: “At that time Jesus answered and said, ‘I praise You, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and intelligent...’” We’re also going to see how these things are hidden from the ‘wise and the prudent.’ How is it that we can pick up a Bible and understand certain things? And other people can pick up a Bible and they can’t understand ‘nothing’—just to use a slang terminology. There’s a reason why. We’ll see and examine all of those.

“...and have **revealed** them to babes” (v 25). So, it is a revelation! You have to read! You have to study! How is that you understand? *God reveals it!* That’s quite a profound thing when you think about it; that there is Jesus Christ and God the Father working together to reveal these things to you and, hopefully, that we can understand the deep things of God.

Verse 26: “Yes, Father, for it was well pleasing in Your sight *to do* this. All things were delivered to Me by My Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father; neither does anyone know the Father except the Son, and **the one to whom the Son personally chooses to reveal Him**” (vs 26-27). That is just really fantastic when you understand it. God has dealt in our lives *to reveal* these things to

us.

Let’s see some of the conditions that this revelation—this revealing, this understanding, the making of our calling and election sure—how this is done. I’m going to summarize several things. What is the beginning of understanding?

- ‘The fear of the Lord is the beginning of understanding’ (Psa. 111:10)!
- ‘A good understanding have those that keep His commandments!’

We know that we have to love God; we have to fear God

- ‘He that says *I know Him* and keeps not His commandments is a liar and the Truth is not in him!’
- ‘Hereby we know that we know Him IF we keep His commandments!’

These are all basic things on *how God reveals things to us!* He has to open our mind and we have to respond by:

- *fearing* God
- *loving* God
- *obeying* God

These are all basic things! I could go through many Scriptures and put all this together, but these are basic things, so I’m just going to summarize it.

What happens then when a person does not love and fear God? *They begin cutting themselves off!* Let’s see what happens to the wicked so that we understand these things. Here again is another Scripture that is a very basic one; I don’t want to spend so much time on the basic Scriptures and going through it, but here’s one that’s very, very important that shows about loving God.

- We have to love God!
- We have to keep His commandments!
- We have to love the Truth!
- We have to fear God!

David said, at one point, ‘open my eyes that I may behold wondrous things out of Your law.’ Here’s what happens to the wicked:

2-Thessalonians 2:9—with the coming of the antichrist: “...according to *the* inner working of Satan, with all power and signs and lying wonders, 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” (vs 9-10). That’s how the wicked are deceived.

- not only by Satan
 - not only by their own human nature
- but they are cut off from understanding because*
- they don’t love God

- they don't love the Truth

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).

There's another prophecy that ties in with this, and that is in the book of Daniel, chapter 12, where Daniel wanted to know and understand. 'Oh, Lord, help me understand.' The Lord said, 'You won't understand, go your way, it's sealed to the time of the end.' ***But the wicked shall do wickedly and none of the wicked shall understand, and many shall be made white and the wise shall understand!***

That's how God's Spirit is able to work with us and *reveal* these things to us. As we saw before, it is the Holy Spirit that teaches us these things. Let's see how these things are accomplished for us. Here's another reason why the wicked do not understand:

Isaiah 29:9: "Be stunned and amazed! Blind your eyes and be blind! They are drunk... [Rev. 17:2—'they're all drunk with the wine of the wrath of her fornication'—this whole religious system.] ...but not with wine; they stagger, but not *with* strong drink, for the LORD has poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep, and has closed your eyes..." (vs 9-10). It's a *very simple* process that God has used to *reveal*. That is one word: ***belief! If you believe you will understand.*** If you do not believe you will not, you will close your eyes.

Let's just use a classic example of how their eyes are closed, of a very simple Scripture. I imagine all of you could recite the Sabbath commandment by heart. *Remember the seventh day to keep it Holy, for it is a Sabbath unto the Lord. Six days shall you labor and do all your work, but the seventh is the Sabbath of the Lord, Holy unto the Lord. For in six days the Lord made the heavens and earth, the sea and all things in them that is, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore, you shall hallow the seventh day.*

That is a very clear, easy to understand Scripture—isn't it? But all Sunday-keepers have to close their eyes to that. If you close your eyes, what are you? *Blind!* Try going around your house sometime with your eyes closed. You're blind! You can't see! Just a simple little Scripture.

I remember when I first understood that and wanted to keep the Sabbath and came and told my boss that I'm going to keep the Sabbath, and he said, 'When did you get religious?'

"...He has covered the prophets and your rulers, *and the seers*" (v 10). We're at the time of the

'seers' again. People flock to Jean Dixon and these people. These are the 'seers'—right? What do they see?

Verse 11: "And the vision of all has become to you like the words of a book that is sealed, which they give to one who is learned saying, 'Please read this,' and he says, 'I cannot, for it is sealed.'.... [That is how the Bible is to people.] (here's why): ...And the LORD said, 'Because this people draw near *Me* with their mouth, and with their lips honor Me...' " (vs 11-13). Don't we do that! We just went through Christmas time about the Lord being born; we draw near to God; praise God. Where is their heart? *Far from ME!*

"...but their worship of Me is made up of the traditions of men learned by rote, and their fear toward Me is *taught* by the commandments of men; therefore, behold, I will proceed to do again a marvelous work among this people, *even* a marvelous work and a wonder, for the wisdom of their wise ones shall perish, and the wisdom of their intelligent ones shall vanish.' Woe *to* those who go deep to hide *their* purpose from the LORD! And their works are in the dark, and they say, 'Who sees us? And who knows us?'" (vs 13-15).

Isaiah 28:9—we're ready to begin to see how God is going to deal with us and go beyond. "**Whom shall He teach knowledge?**..." It is the Spirit that reveals the deep things of God that we might know the things that are freely given of God (2-Cor.). God wants us to know! He doesn't want us to be without knowledge. But we can't grow in knowledge until we grow in grace first; until we understand that all of this has been given to us by God's gracious goodness. That

- God's calling
- God's forgiveness of sin
- God's understanding that He gives us—the revelation of His Spirit
- to have Christ stand there as our righteousness before God

is a great and fantastic gracious thing given to us from God.

"...And **whom shall He make to understand doctrine?** *Those* who are weaned from the milk and drawn from the breasts" (v 9). Remember what the Apostle Paul said? *I have given you milk, and yet, you're still not able to bear it!* You have to be weaned. What happens when you're weaned? *You start eating food!* You can't live on milk forever.

When you're a baby you do fine; when you're a babe in Christ you do fine on milk. What if you came here and I said, 'All right, brethren, this week I'm going to give you a sermon on the

meaning of baptism.’ I start out with all the basic Scriptures. Just think of the number of years you’ve been in the Church, and pretty soon you would sit there and you’d be able to predict which Scripture I’d go to next, because you knew it. Or if I came and said, ‘Okay, brethren, I want to give you a sermon proving that we ought to keep the Holy Days.’ You would know exactly where I was going. You have almost memorized it. There is one Scripture in Leviticus that I would turn to, Lev. 23; Deut. 16, etc.

Then I would come in the next week and I would give a sermon saying, ‘Brethren, I’m going to prove to you out of the Bible that we ought to keep the Sabbath.’ *All of that is milk!* And when you have an organization that has so many changes going on, no one is able to get away from crackers and milk. They might get away from milk entirely, but it’s all milk and crackers; no strong meat! No real growing in God’s Spirit to really understand His Word. You have to be drawn from the breast; you have to be weaned.

Then here’s what happens, v 10: “For precept *must be* upon precept, precept upon precept...”

Here is the reference that fits this the best, and this is the way that it has to be done, 1-Corinthians 2:13: “Which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in **words taught by the Holy Spirit in order to communicate spiritual things by spiritual means.**” That’s *precept upon precept!*

That’s why, brethren, in order to grow in grace and knowledge, even the Holy Days and Passover and things that we keep, we should learn something new every year. When it comes around to the Holy Days, I feel as though we learn something new every year, or learn something more profoundly, more deeply *every year!* To me that just really exciting!

Isaiah 28:10: “...line upon line, line upon line; here a little, there a little’.... [For people who do not have this *revealed* to them, here’s what it comes out to them like]: ...for with stammering lips and foreign tongue He will speak to this people” (vs 10-11). That’s kind of a prophecy.

There are some people that are trying to go back and Hebrewize all the New Testament. I’ve a little paper that they printout and so forth. The reason, brethren, that there are no—not even copies—of things of the New Testament in Hebrew or Aramaic is because of the rebellion of the Jews. God wiped Jerusalem off the face of the earth, drove the Jews around the world, and preserved all the New Testament in Greek. Some will argue with me one way or the other, but that’s what I feel has

happened, and that’s a fulfillment of this right here.

How did some of the Jews look at the Greeks? *With absolute abhorrence!* But would they keep God’s commandments? *No!* Would they repent of their sins? *No!* So, God just really wiped the earth clean. They preserved the Old Testament, but in that they can’t understand the New. When you try and tell them about something in the New Testament, it’s just like with “...stammering lips and foreign tongue...”

(go to the next track)

I may have mentioned this before, I deal with a fellow who is a faithful Jew. He goes to synagogue Friday night. I know that he kept Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. I was in his house and I saw it marked out synagogue services on the nights that it should have been.

One time we got into a discussion—he knows that I’m a minister in a Christian Church—and his first question was: How can you believe in Christ if there is one God? I tried to explain to him; tried to relate to him. But it was just like I was stuttering and stammering. He didn’t understand a thing. When I talked to him on the phone—every once in while he gets a little depressed when things aren’t working right and he curses up a storm. And I have to say, ‘You know, Bob, come on let’s not have it that way.’ Then he remembers, ‘Oh yeah, well I’m sorry, Fred...’ But as far as understanding it, he goes to synagogue. The rabbi reads it.

Verse 12: “To whom He said, ‘This *is* the rest He gives to the weary’ and ‘This *is* the refreshing,’ yet, they were not willing to hear.”

Let’s go by John 14 and review this one section. We’re talking about

- reveal
- manifest
- make known

John 14:20: “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” (vs 20-21). The word ‘manifest’ means *to reveal!* All of you have had Christ *revealed* to you.

- Did you see Him? *No!*
- Did you hear Him? *Probably not!*

But something went on in your mind, in your mind alone. All those around you—maybe even your husband or wife—didn’t have that going on. It was to *you!*

Verse 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?’” We covered part of that.

- keeping God’s commandments
- loving God
- fearing Him

Verse 23: “Jesus answered and said to him, ‘If anyone loves Me, he will keep My Word...’” How much do you love God? Do you want to keep *all* the words of God in sincerity and in Truth? Not in strife and backbiting like the Corinthians were: ‘I’m of Paul, I’m of Apollos...’ But in the gracious love of God!

“...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).

Let’s see how this is to be done, Ephesians 1:13: “In Whom you also trusted after hearing the Word of the Truth... [we have to love the Truth (2-Thess. 2:10-11)] ...the Gospel of your salvation; in Whom also, after believing, you were **sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise**.” What is the Holy Spirit to do? It is:

- to *teach* us
- to *reveal* to us
- to *comfort* us
- to *lead* us

‘As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.’

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; that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you *the spirit of wisdom*...” (vs 14-17). We need to be growing in that, but we can even study—I’m not saying don’t study; please understand that.

Just like with the difference between grace and commandment-keeping. Those who are hung up on commandment-keeping don’t understand grace, because they don’t understand that commandment-keeping is required and it’s a duty, a debt. Just like if you have a loan on your house. You have a debt. You have to pay. If you don’t pay, you don’t keep your house. It’s the same with a Christian. It is his duty to do, but when he’s done with that, ‘All that I command you, you are unprofitable servants’

because it all comes with the grace of God.

What I’m saying is that it’s not he who studies will learn the most. It is not he who keeps the commandments the best will have the greatest understanding. It is with God’s Spirit! You can study without the Spirit of God and learn nothing. Please don’t say that I said not to study. *Study!* But we have to have the Spirit of Wisdom, which comes from God the Father; must come from God. We can’t churn it up. Do you understand that? I’ve learned that.

I’ve studied, I’ve prayed, done everything as a minister, but when I really had gone through circumstances, and I just asked God to help me, I guess the most often repeated prayer that anyone will give is, ‘Lord, help me!’ Isn’t that true? ‘God, help me!’ So, when you come to a point where that is really what you want, and you completely yield yourself to God, then *He will begin revealing* and *adding to* and we can grow in grace and knowledge.

It’s kind of like I heard one time, I heard a minister say that ‘If the Church would keep the commandments of God better we would have more miracles.’ Everyone said, ‘Yeah, that’s right. If the Church would keep the commandments of God better we would have more miracles.’ **WRONG! *Miracles come because God grants them, and through His grace!***

If it were that we could keep the commandments better, and God would be obligated to pour out miracles, we would be doing a work to make God indebted to us—right? Then it’s no more grace; it’s work! But the same way: if we come to the point that we really love God, and we just really give ourselves to God. It’s not going to do away with your human nature—it isn’t! We can all be inspired right here on the Sabbath and we can walk out of this room and we still drag our human nature with us. But it’s your attitude toward God that gives it.

Verse 17: “That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you *the* Spirit of **wisdom** and **revelation** in *the* knowledge of Him.” It’s got to be by *revelation*. It’s not going to be some vision that’s going to appear before you or anything, but *by revelation*. By *working in your mind* “...in the knowledge of Him.”

I don’t think, brethren, that we still have the full revelation of Jesus Christ. I think that we have a whole lot more to learn about what God really, really did for us in sending Christ. Not that we don’t understand. We understand, but how deep is that understanding? *I think there’s a whole lot more to it!*

When you really think that the Holy, righteous, perfect God took upon Himself ‘the law

of sin and death’—think on that for a minute. That is so overwhelming. I hope we’re going to understand more when it comes down to the Passover time. To understand what an absolutely marvelous and incredible and gracious and wonderful thing it was. ***The obligation of a minister is to teach!***

In the past, it was more the primary obligation of the minister to be the ‘policeman.’ If the ministry or minister is not himself growing in grace and knowledge, how can his congregation grow in grace and knowledge? God has set forth certain things that are so.

In 1-Cor. 2 we found where Paul said, ‘It was revealed unto us, we’—he’s referring to the ministry. Then he said to the Corinthians, ‘You...’

Then in Eph. 3 we’ll see how it was revealed to the apostles and prophets to teach the people. When the ministry, or minister, is not growing in grace and knowledge, growing in grace and really studying God’s Word—from the point of view of just letting it really penetrate his mind, heart and being—he’s going to reach a certain level that he is cut off or can only go so high.

Then what’s going to happen to the congregation? *They can only reach a certain level!* Then what’s going to happen? *Of necessity there will be those disciples—or members, learners—who will then be seeking God more than the teacher.* Then you’re going to have a problem that the disciple will know more than the teacher. Then you’re also headed for big trouble as far a group is concerned. Not individually, as the individual is concerned. He may be terrific, wonderful, maybe exhilarated with what he’s learning.

Verse 18: “*And may the eyes of your mind...*” Note: Job 42:1-6—remember what Job said to God after the whole experience and God talked to him out of a whirlwind? Imagine what an experience that was for Job. Think about it! Sitting there for weeks with these sores and boils and your friends around berating you with arguments for days on end. Finally, God talks to Job out of a whirlwind and says, ‘Job, where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth?’

I imagine Job just felt like a worm! Have you ever felt that? He got so puffed up in his greatness, and God came along in a whirlwind and just crushed it out. Then Job said, ‘I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear, and ***now my eye sees You.***’ Especially if you’re a big-time architect and maybe even built the big pyramids.

It the same thing here, v 18: “***And may the eyes of your mind be enlightened...***” How is that done? *Go back to a very basic Scripture!*

John 3:18: “The one who believes in Him is not judged, but the one who does not believe has already been judged because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the judgment: that the Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness rather than the Light because their works were evil” (vs 18-19). Men love the spiritual ways of the world!

Could you imagine really laying out the people and telling them in the Catholic Church about idolatry and Mary and the Mass? *They’d come and chew you alive!* God hasn’t opened their mind. What they think they are doing is wonderful.

Same way with people in India, going down and being baptized in the Gangues River. If someone came out there and said, ‘Oh you Indians out here’—like the Apostle Paul came into Athens—‘I see all these statues and you’re superstitious and you’re trying to get right with God; this is not the way!’ They love that! Just like some of the volcanoes in Hawaii, some of the natives want to stop the volcanoes and they offer sacrifices to the goddess Pele—love darkness.

Verse 20: “For everyone who practices evil hates the Light, and does not come to the Light, so that his works may not be exposed... [here’s how our mind are enlightened]: ...but the one who practices... [‘poieo’] ...the Truth comes to the Light... [You must be walking in the Light; going toward that Light on a continuous basis.] ...so that his works may be manifested, that they have been accomplished by *the power of God*” (vs 20-21). That’s how! That’s how our minds are enlightened.

Ephesians 1:18: “*And may the eyes of your mind be enlightened in order that you may comprehend what is the hope of His calling...* [Remember, ‘the eye has not seen, nor the ear heard what God has prepared for those that love Him.’ God wants us to know!] ...and what ***is the riches of the glory of His inheritance*** in the saints.” What are ‘the riches of His glory?’

I don’t know about you, I always read the paper every morning and I look for certain things. I look for health articles, but I also look for astronomy articles. Every week they’re discovering new galaxies. This last week they discovered what is called a ‘super nova’ that allegedly exploded 250-million years ago.

- Is God wealthy? *Think about it!*
- How much property do you own? *Very little!*

Every once in a while, don’t you feel like you would really like to own something purely, wholly, your very, very own and not have to pay anybody?

How much is God going to give us? It says *inheritance*, the ‘riches of His glory.’ Being in New

Jerusalem. Having a place that God has prepared for you to live in.

I don't know about you, but every time I get to a Scripture like this, I try and think: God, what is it going to be like? I've seen some of these movies like Star Wars and you see all this 'Mickey Mouse' stuff that they do and all the special effects and so forth, and I think: God, what is it going to be that we inherit? If you inherit something, you own it! And one of the deepest, most profound things I think that we can understand is that we are going to inherit the Kingdom of God! If you inherit the Kingdom of God, you have *ownership* in it. Think about it!

I would like to have some great telescope that I could look out into the universe and really see some of the things that are out there and to think that God is going to give us of the 'riches of His glory.' They know that the universe is fabulously wealthy! What's it going to be like to be spirit beings and have the 'riches of His glory' be given to us? That's the hope of our calling, brethren!

We all have to go through this thing, because I know that next week we'll be down in the muck and mire of earning a living. I know that, and that's why I'm glad for the Sabbath that comes along and we can get our eyes up on the hope of the calling and the 'riches of His glory.'

Verse 19: "And what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the inner working of His mighty power." Is there anything too difficult for God? God hasn't done certain things for us that we would like to have done.

- Wouldn't it be wonderful if we could all be whole and healed?
- Wouldn't it be wonderful if we didn't have the aches and pains of old age?
- Wouldn't it have been wonderful for the Apostle Paul to have seen clearly?
- Wouldn't it have been wonderful for him to have not suffered?

Read 2-Cor. 12 when Paul says that God told him 'His grace was sufficient.'

- Would you rather suffer a little in the flesh, but understand the deep things of God?

Maybe there's a tradeoff. I don't know and I'm not wishing anyone suffer by that. I'm not saying that because we suffer, therefore, we know more. There are people who suffer more who know less.

But this is the important thing right here, v 20: "Which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from *the* dead, and set *Him* at His right hand in the heavenly *places*." When we come before Christ,

we are coming before the great power of God.

Verse 21: "Far above every principality and authority and power and lordship, and every name that is named..." Every time I think of that, I think of the promise where God says that He has a 'new name, that He's going to tell us. *A new name!* Think what that is going to mean.

- Does God have a fantastic name?
- Does God have a fantastic existence in glory? *Yes!*

"...—not only in this age, but also in the *age* to come; for He has subordinated all things under His feet, and has given Him *to be* head over all things to the Church, which is His body—the fullness of Him Who fills all things in all" (vs 21-23).

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... [the secret of God; has to be by revelation.] ... (even as I wrote briefly before" (vs 1-3).

It would be interesting to have that epistle—wouldn't it? We don't have that epistle—do we? There are some writings of Paul that we don't have, because God didn't want them included. We have two letters to the Corinthians—1st and 2nd—obviously, there was more communication. In the book of 1-Cor. he refers to things that they wrote him; chapters 4-8 concerning things offered to idols.

In 1-Cor. 16, where he says 'I say *I'm ashamed* to you that some of you don't have the knowledge of God. I thought to myself, it's really there in the Bible. There were people in the Church who had no knowledge of God! Think of it! That's something—isn't it? *Made known by revelation!*

Verse 4: "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 4-5). Ties right in with 1-Cor. 2.

Philippians 3:7: "Yet, the things that were gain to me, these things I have counted *as* loss for the sake of Christ. But then truly, I count all things to be loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord..." (vs 7-8). There's nothing in this life that we should compare to the knowledge of God, the knowledge of Christ, or to cling to.

"...for Whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count *them* as dung; that I may gain Christ and may be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which *is derived* from law, but that

righteousness which is by *the* faith of Christ—the righteousness of God *that* is based on faith; that I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection...” (vs 8-10).

That’s going to be quite a thing—isn’t it? What’s it going to be like for all of us to be resurrected, or if we’re still alive, to be change—in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye—to have that very power and Spirit of God and go ZAP and you’re raised from the dead or you’re changed from flesh to Spirit! That has got to be an exhilarating thing; it’s just got to be!

“...and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death” (v 10). Paul learned by the things that he suffered—didn’t he?

Verse 11: “If by any means I may attain unto the resurrection of the dead; not as though I have already received, or have already been perfected...” (vs 11-12). That’s one problem they had in 1-Cor. when we get to the fourth chapter. They were saying, ‘Paul, we don’t need you, we have all these great religious experiences. We have songs, revelations, speaking in tongues; man, this is a wonderful thing.’ Paul wrote ‘I would that you were perfect; I would that you were reigning, that we could reign with you’—a little sarcastic!

But notice Paul’s attitude, “...but I am striving, so that I may also lay hold on that for which I also was laid hold of by Christ Jesus. Brethren, I do not count myself as having attained; but *this* one thing *I do*—forgetting the things that are behind, and reaching forth to the things that are ahead” (vs 12-13). That’s why you have to have *the hope of the calling* to reach before!

Verse 14: “I press toward *the* goal for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.” Most of the time we stop there and we’re very inspired—right? We’re very inspired, but notice, this brings us back to reality:

Verse 15: “So then, let as many as *be* perfect be of this mind. And if *in* anything you are otherwise minded, **God will reveal** even this to you.” So that you may repent of it. Isn’t that something? God will *reveal* it! Therefore, if God is going to *reveal* it and we yield ourselves to God, and the Spirit of God the Father do the ministers have to become policemen? *NO! God will reveal* that to you.

1-Corinthians 2:1: “And I, brethren, when I came to you, did not come with superiority of speech or wisdom, in proclaiming the testimony of God to you. For I decided not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified” (vs 1-2)—which is a whole lot; I mean, that is so fantastic.

Verse 3: “And I was in weakness... [If he’s

an apostle why hasn’t God healed him?] ...and in fear and in much trembling *when* I was with you; and my message and my preaching *was* not in persuasive words of human wisdom; rather, *it was* in demonstration of *the* Spirit and of power; so that your faith might not be in *the* wisdom of men, but in *the* power of God. Now we speak wisdom among **the spiritually mature...**” (vs 3-6). {Note Philip. 3 that kind of perfection that comes through Christ}

“...however, *it is* not *the* wisdom of this world, nor of the rulers of this world, who are coming to nothing” (v 6).

Now then we’ve covered all the rest of it, but I just wanted to review those. Don’t those words mean a whole lot more when you go back and review after what we’ve just covered? *Yes, they do!*

1-Corinthians 3:1: “And, I, brethren, was not able to speak to you as to those who are spiritual...” That’s the whole key to all the problems that they had; they were not spiritually-minded. They reached a certain point in their growth, then they added to it the ‘goodness’ of what *they thought* was good, mixed it all together and created all kinds of problems.

I’ve seen this happen in the Church, too, especially in the area of what is called psychology, where you mix psychology and the Word of God together, and it just doesn’t work—water and oil don’t mix. Psychology is a way to solve your human problems *without God*. How can you take that and mix it with what Christ has. There are a lot of things that sound similar. That’s why it’s so devastating, but sooner or later you are turned ever so slightly away, *away, away* from God, because you’re mixing carnal with spiritual. You can’t take the carnal goodness of this world and mix it with the spiritual goodness of God. It will glue together for a while, but it’s bound to come apart.

“...but as to those who are carnal—even as to babes in Christ.... [Therefore, they weren’t weaned, so they couldn’t go forward.] ...I gave you milk to drink, and not meat; for you were not yet able to *receive spiritual meat*; and neither are you able now, for you are still carnal. For since envy and contention and divisions *are* among you, are you not carnal? And *are you not* walking according to human ways?” (vs 1-3).

Therefore, God has had to let His Church—and understand why God has let His Church—do the many things and end up in the many different branches that it has gone to.

1. I think it’s easier to work with a smaller group.
2. It’s part of God’s correction on everyone

so that we all learn somewhere along the line.

When you go through them, it isn't easy. It's like the Ronald and Nancy Reagan have said: They're so disillusioned that the people who were their friends have left them. They feel down and out and depressed and disappointed.

- What does that teach us? *To look to Christ!*
- Is it therefore profitable? *Yes!*

I would rather be where there's no hassle, no envying. I can feel it in a congregation. I don't feel any of that with the people we have. But there are times when I've stood up to speak and you can feel the attitude of the congregation toward you. Or you can feel that attitude of two or three or four.

I go back and listen some of my sermons that I did years ago and I sense in it a certain combativeness in my speaking. The reason is because I was mentally and spiritually fighting those kinds of attitudes. I really didn't know what it was until one day the boom was lowered!

It's the same thing. If we have to come to where we have smaller groups where we can live in harmony—and it's harder because you can't get lost. You can't have your 'tongues' people over here, your 'revelation' people over here, your 'healing' people over here, and your 'Psalms' people over here as you would in a congregation of 500. You can't go hide! You can't sneak in the door and sneak out! We're either here or not.

But what does it do? *It teaches us to understand we all have human nature. God has called us and God has loved us, so we all need to set aside those things and grow in grace and in knowledge!*

Is that a fantastic thing? *Yes, it is! It is a wonderful thing!* Too bad it has to be that way, that it's done that way. But I guess that's just the way it is. So, let us go on from here and let us learn some of the lessons of the strong meat, which is going to come. Paul is going to give them some pretty strong stuff!

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

Scriptural References:

- 1) 1 Corinthians 2:9
- 2) Luke 14:26
- 3) 1 Corinthians 2:10-12
- 4) Hebrews 5:8-12
- 5) John 14:15-17
- 6) Revelation 4:4

- 7) Revelation 5:16
- 8) Zechariah 4:10
- 9) 2 Chronicles 15:1-7
- 10) 2 Chronicles 16:9
- 11) Matthew 16:13-17
- 12) Matthew 11:25-27
- 13) 2 Thessalonians 2:9-12
- 14) Isaiah 29:9-15
- 15) Isaiah 28:9-10
- 16) 1 Corinthians 2:13
- 17) Isaiah 28:10-12
- 18) John 14:20-24
- 19) Ephesians 1:13-18
- 20) John 3:18-21
- 21) Ephesians 1:18-23
- 22) Ephesians 3:1-5
- 23) Philippians 3:7-15
- 24) 1 Corinthians 2:1-6
- 25) 1 Corinthians 3:1-3

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Jeremiah 18
- John 4:22-24
- Psalm 111:10
- Daniel 12
- Revelation 17:2
- Leviticus 23
- Deuteronomy 16
- Job 42:1-6
- 2 Corinthians 12
- 1-Corinthians 4-8, 16

Also referenced: Sermon Series:

- *Gospel of John*
- *Epistles of John*

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Transcribed: 3-3-13

Epistle of First Corinthians VII

Chapter 3

Fred R. Coulter

Let's go to 1-Corinthians 3, and in this chapter we will see contains quite bit. There are some excellent lessons for us today, and it will help us to understand some of the problems that are in the Church of God—that includes all names, types, brands. This Epistle to the Corinthians—this first one—is one of the toughest epistles in the whole New Testament. It's very corrective, and yet, the Apostle Paul gives them an extra leeway; always he gives them a little extra leeway.

We'll see when we get to 2-Corinthians that as soon as this fellow repented then everything is all right and everybody comes back and this nice. But I just wonder what the history of the Church at Corinth was after Paul died. I just wonder what happened to this Church, because we're going to see what was in this church, part of it, today.

1-Corinthians 3:1: "And, I, brethren, was not able to speak to you as to those who are spiritual, but as to those who are carnal—even as to babes in Christ. I gave you milk to drink, and not meat; for you were not yet able to *receive spiritual meat*; and neither are you able now, for you are still carnal...." (vs 1-3).

I think that has an awful lot to do with a lot of the problems that you find in the Church of God; an awful lot of carnality. A lot of the carnality in this we have learned by experience and observation and by learning of God's Spirit. A lot of the carnality that comes into the Church of God is the carnality of the 'goodness' of human nature; the good things that human beings can do. Then they equate this with being spiritual.

They had a lot of this carnality there in the Church at Corinth, "...For since envy and contention and divisions *are* among you..." (3). How come there's so much strife in some of the churches and things like this if the Truth is to make us free? I think part of the answer is that the Word of God is not used truthfully. The Truth will make you free as long as you use it truthfully.

The Truth of God can be used deceitfully. The Apostle Paul wrote that the law is good as long as you use it lawfully (1-Tim. 1). And it talks about those who use the Word of God deceitfully (1-Cor. 4). You combine those two together and what are you going to come up with? Someone using the Word of God deceitfully?

Here's how you can use the Word of God deceitfully. It does say in Exo. 20 concerning the

Sabbath that you are to do no work on the Sabbath. Then someone comes along and says, 'Aha! The Word of God is no good because it's contradicts itself.' *Because*

John 5:17: "But Jesus answered them, 'My Father is working until now, and I work.'" This was supposed to be on the Sabbath. Aha! Working on the Sabbath! If Jesus worked on the Sabbath, therefore, I can work on the Sabbath—isn't that correct? That's the logic that is used—isn't it?

Verse 18: "So then, on account of this *saying*, the Jews sought all the more to kill Him, not only because He had loosed the Sabbath... ['Aha! Jesus was a lawbreaker.'] ...but also *because* He had called God His own Father, making Himself equal with God."

Now then, we're going accept what this Scripture says; we will work on the Sabbath. God the Father works on the Sabbath, and Jesus works on the Sabbath. Jesus broke the Sabbath. It doesn't mean anything to keep the laws of God. We can go to Rom 10 and it says that Jesus is the 'end of the law.' 'So therefore, brethren, you are free from any law!' I've heard sermons almost like that. ***That is not using the Word of God truthfully!***

Where Jesus said, "...My Father works and I work."

- What kind of work were They doing? *Preaching!*
- What is the work of God the Father? *Directing the Holy Spirit!*
- Is that a spiritual work? *Yes!*
- Was God then breaking he Sabbath doing a spiritual work? *No!*

The next part of the answer: 'The Sabbath was made for God, so that man can do anything he wants'—correct? ***NO! The Sabbath was made for man!*** The work that we do, *spiritually*, is not physical work. As a matter of fact, on the Sabbath you should be doing more spiritual work such as reading your Bible, thinking on God's Word, teaching your children, talking to each other about it.

We had a discussion last night about the Sabbath. What is that you can and cannot do on the Sabbath? As your children grow up, they don't know the things you know. We automatically assume they had their ears open for every service. NO! So, we had to go through the whole thing on what you can do and not do on the Sabbath. On the Sabbath we did a lot of work—mentally, talking—doing spiritual

work. I wasn't buy or selling. I wasn't writing up any loan applications, I wasn't taking any phone calls, I wasn't doing my own pleasure, wasn't doing my own business. But today, I drove up here and I'm going to drive home. I'm not doing the work, and my car is not an animal. I've had people say that 'all your animals can rest, too; your manservant, your maidservant,' and all that. I'm just sitting there driving. Any physical effort that is necessary to associate on the Sabbath is not work. You're not being paid for it. So, when Jesus answered them, He was telling them something that they didn't understand.

What we're doing right now in studying the Bible, we are doing a *spiritual* work. Our minds are working, we're reading, we're thinking, we're absorbing God's Word, God's Spirit is working in us. That is work! That is not the labor of your own endeavors; it's a totally different thing.

"...the Jews sought all the more to kill Him, not only because He had loosed... ['broken' (KJV)] the Sabbath..." (18). That's quite an unusual word, 'broken.'

What was it that He was accused of in 'breaking' the Sabbath? *By telling the impotent man, that He had healed, to take up his bedroll and walk!* You cannot carry your bed on the Sabbath. That's just a bedroll. It's not a mattress, not box-spring, it's just a little bedroll, sleeping bag.

But that was against the *Pharisees'* Sabbath regulation to not carry something like that on the Sabbath. Had nothing to do with the Sabbath and the regulations of God, but a Pharisee regulation. We could sit down and figure out, lay out a regulation limiting the Sabbath. If that breaks the *spirit* of the Sabbath it isn't valid before God. We may, by our own self-endeavor, keep it. That's a carnal rule. That's where strife comes from. Here's a carnal rule: you can't carry your knapsack on the Sabbath. Well, the man had been laying sick for 38 years, and he was walking through the temple area.

What does the word 'broken' mean? Where does it come from? *It comes from the Greek word 'luo'—the verb that they use as the model paradigm in basic Greek. Your very first paradigm on the verb in any New Testament Greek is going to be 'luo'—meaning to loose. What did Jesus loose of the Pharisees? He loosed that law of 'you shall not carry your bedroll on the Sabbath—which the Pharisees made.*

Let's go to Matthew 23 and see one other thing and this will help clarify that. I've had people do that to me when I was on the radio and talked about the Sabbath, people would write in and say, 'Jesus broke the Sabbath; Jesus worked on the

Sabbath.'

Matthew 23:1: "Then Jesus spoke to the multitudes and to His disciples, saying, 'The scribes and the Pharisees have sat down on Moses' seat *as judges*; therefore, every judgment that they tell you to observe, observe and do. But do not do according to their works; for they say and do not. For they bind heavy burdens and hard to bear..." (vs 1-4). This tells us anything that they give that's in conformity with God's Law, fine, do it. It's basically what it's telling us.

Anything of they have of *their own rules* and regulations and 'grievous burdens to be born' is exactly what it was right here. They laid upon this man!

Verse 4: "For they bind heavy burdens and hard to bear, and lay *them* on the shoulders of men; but they will not move them with *one of* their own fingers." This is what Jesus was *loosing*. He wasn't breaking the Sabbath.

However, have you ever been associated with a church group that if you 'break *their rule*' you're breaking a Law of God? *Yes!* That helps us see how you can have a lot of strife. It is true. I think the answer to that question is the reason why we're here. Why it is that there's so much strife? I do not want any strife! I don't want to argue about religion! When we're in a situation when it was desirable to not stir up strife, we didn't stir it up. I don't want to argue about it. It doesn't mean that I'm not seeking the Truth. But I want the Truth without strife! Hopefully we can get that.

1-Corinthians 3:3 "For you are still carnal. For since envy and contention and divisions *are* among you, are you not carnal? And *are you not* walking according to human *ways*? When someone says, 'I am of Paul,' and another one *says*, 'I am of Apollos,' are you not carnal? Who then is Paul? And who *is* Apollos? *They are* but ministers through whom you believed, even as the Lord gave to each one. I planted *and* Apollos watered, but God gave the increase" (vs 3-6). He gives the answer right here: ***always look to God!*** God gives the increase!

Verse 7: "Therefore, neither is he who plants anything, nor he who waters; for ***it is God Who gives the increase.*** Now he who plants and he who waters are one, but each shall receive his own reward according to his own labor. For we are God's fellow workers; *and* you are God's husbandry, *even* God's building. As a wise architect, according to the grace of God that was given to me, I have laid *the* foundation, and another is building upon *it*" (vs 7-10). Then it gets down their own individual lives.

Verse 11: "For no one is able to lay any

other foundation besides that which has been laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if anyone builds upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay *or* stubble, the work of each one shall be **manifested...**" (vs 11-13)—*to reveal!* {Note part 5 of this series} Everyone's work is going to be revealed! Every person that God calls is going to have his work revealed. We are going to be tested. We've gone through quite a few tests. We've endured quite a few things.

"...for the day *of trial* will declare *it*, because it shall be revealed by fire..." (v 13). This is symbolic fire; this is not a flamethrower. I have yet to know of any church member having to walk through a flame-throwing contest.

"...and the fire shall prove what kind of work each one's is. If the work that anyone has built endures, he shall receive a reward. If the work of anyone is burned up, he shall suffer loss; but *he* himself shall be saved, yet as through fire. Don't you understand that you are God's temple, and *that* the Spirit of God is dwelling in you?" (vs 13-16)—*living within you*.

Verse 17: "If anyone defiles the temple of God, God shall destroy him because the temple of God is Holy, which temple you are. Let no one deceive himself..." (vs 17-18). The first big problem that comes with false prophets is that they *deceive themselves*.

"...If anyone among you thinks *himself* to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, so that he may be wise *in God's sight*. For **the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God...**" (vs 18-19). Just sit back and think about the world and think about what goes on, and think how men react and so forth; that is so true. One example: simplified tax reform.

"...for it is written, 'He entraps the wise in their own craftiness.' And again, **'The Lord knows the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain'**" (vs 19-20). That's an awesome power that God has; He knows our thoughts. Think on that for a minute. **God knows our thoughts!** We'll see later that *He tries our hearts and our reins*.

Verse 21: "Therefore, **do not let anyone boast in men**; for all things are yours, whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or *the* world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come—all are yours; and you *are* Christ's, and Christ *is* God's" (vs 21-23).

We could have saved ourselves an awful lot of strife and turmoil. Let's just use an example of what happened in the Worldwide Church of God. There was a time when they didn't glory in men.

Then came the carnality, the goodness of human nature creeping in, and then they began glorifying men.

Here is a clear command not to let anyone '...glory in men...' There is an automatic self-destruct penalty that happens with that when you start glorying in men. Then you have the little clique that gives more glory and more favor to the one. Then you have the little clique over here that's left out because they're not included on the list to have dinner with so and so, who used to be. That's the way it was. The same thing worked with putting ministers in different locations. What happened? *Because of that one thing*—and the vanity of that one thing—*came every sin in the hierarchy of the Worldwide Church of God!* Because of that one sin came all the rest.

Then came *an* apostle, then it was *God's* apostle, then it was *God's only* apostle; and alongside that vanity came adultery, lying, cheating and stealing. Along with that came strife and argumentation, because there were people who didn't want to put up with it and saw that it was clearly not the way it should be with God. That one thing, right there; if they had not broken that one command it would make you wonder what the Church would have been like.

Let's go back and look at several of these sections. The first one we want to take is v 3—about all the strife, envying and things like that and carnality. A lot of this I'm just going to refer to because we've studied it.

Romans 8:7—"Because the carnal mind *is* enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God; neither indeed can it *be*." Enemies of God—carnality!

Galatians 5:19—here again is a basic Scripture that tells all the works of the flesh: "Now, the works of the flesh are manifest, which are *these*: **adultery, fornication...**" Just think of all the problems we have in the world just because of those two things; those two works of the flesh..."

"...**uncleanness...**" Think of how many problem, sickness and things we have of uncleanness. I saw a whole report on cholera. The first scientific survey ever done was in the 16-1700s in London, where someone sat down and figured out and analyzed from where the people were getting the cholera, where they would get sick. They were all along the river. The ones on the high ground were not getting it.

Then they began to analyze different things and they finally came up with that it was the water. Why was it the water? *Because of the sewerage*

getting into the water stream. So therefore, with the big cities—London was one of the first—to have underground sewers where they would flush it all out to the sea. That was finally finished in the 1800s.

There's a saying, 'cleanliness is next to Godliness.' There is a true saying. I've come into some places, brethren, if I described some of those things that I drove up to way back, it's just the typical thing you would see in a movie, you drive up and here's a rooting hog, and there are dirty everything everywhere. It smells to high heaven. You walk through a cloud of flies. This happened to me up in eastern Oregon. I would never have believed it. It was a typical Ma and Pa Kettle thing. The guy had written in for baptism. 'I've listened to Herbert for 35 years.' He sat there rocking in his rocking chair and his bib overalls and said, 'Yep, you know, I think I ought to be baptized.' I was just waiting for him to do his next spit with his tobacco. It was really something!

But it is true! *Uncleanness!* How much sickness, disease, and miserable things that come with that? That has other overtones into sexual habits and relationships, too.

"...licentiousness" (v 19). Taking license to do evil. No one has license to do evil. That is creating a license to do evil. Just like a friend said when you were younger, and said, 'Come on down to confession with me.' You asked what that was, and they said, 'Well, I go confess all of my sins this week and I can do anything I want to next week.' That's a good example of *licentiousness*.

Verse 20: **"Idolatry...** [they love their little idols and things] ...witchcraft, hatred, strifes, jealousies..." We have a society today filled with emulators, reflected in shirts, styles, music, hairstyles, language.

"...indignations, contentions..." Just this week someone got angry and took a gun and killed someone, and then just sat there and waited for the police to come get him. Terrible!

"...divisions, sects, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revelings, and such things as these; concerning which I am telling you beforehand, even as I have also said in the past, that those who do such things shall not inherit *the Kingdom of God*" (vs 20-21).

Doesn't sound like the churches in Galatia were all too pure, either—does it? He had to warn them. Have I ever sent you a letter warning you like this? *NO!* I have never written a letter like this. Think of it!

Driving in the car gives me a lot of time to think. I can't stand listening to the radio all the time,

and all those stupid commercials; dumb-headed commercials; same way on TV. When I want to be inspired, I have my *Messiah* tapes and put those on. It really helps me in just out there driving around, to be able to think; *to think on God's Word*. The more I see, the more I think, and the more I experience, the more I know that these things are true.

One thing I try to do when we're studying, I try and think about what was it like for Paul at Corinth. What would it be like to stand up in front of a congregation like what was in Corinth? *or* Some of these congregations in Galatia? Where Paul wrote them; remember the first part of the chapter when he said, *'I marvel that you are so soon removed from Him unto another gospel.'* I thought, man, that's really something—isn't it? Think about it!

You go raise up a church, God raises up a church, and you say, okay, brethren, be true to God, love each other, follow the Bible and fare thee well—because he couldn't travel back and forth like we do today—I'll see you in a couple of years. Lo and behold, someone sends a letter, 'Paul, you can't believe what's happening in this church.' Then he emphasized the 'fruit of the Spirit.'

Verse 22: "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faith, meekness, self-control; against such things there is no law. But those who *are* Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and lusts. If we live by *the* Spirit, we should also be walking by *the* Spirit. We should not become vain-glorious, provoking one another *and* envying one another" (vs 22-26).

Why are people carnal? *Because their conversion is not very deep!* We all have a certain amount of carnality we carry with us—don't we. Even Paul said that he was carnal and 'sold unto sin.' That is talking of himself. Why?

There's the key right there, v 24: "But those who *are* Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and lusts." How do you do that? *You let the Word of God do the correcting!* The easiest way to receive correction is to receive it from the Word of God. All you have to do is read it:

- It's *between you and God* and the words you read. And you say in your mind 'I'm going to change.' That's the easiest correction.
- The next easiest is to have *a minister tell you*
- Next would be to have *a letter*, like one of these epistles
- The next easiest is *to have your husband or wife* tell you. Sometimes neither one likes it, but that's still easier
- The next easiest—and by now it's getting

pretty severe—*God is going to confront you with circumstances* so that you must choose

- Then the one is going to be the worst is where *God has to personally deal in your life* to bring about the correction.
- And absolutely the hardest, toughest correction is what Job went through, where God had to personally talk to Job

Talk about a correction! So, there are all the degrees of correction, and in between it there are the trials and things we'll see in a little bit.

Luke 14:26 tells a little bit about the carrying of our own cross, which means *crucifying the flesh*: "If anyone comes to Me 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.... [that's one condition] ...**And** whoever does not carry his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple" (vs 26-27). You have to bear your cross. Bearing your cross is not going around with a persecution complex. Bearing your cross is crucifying the flesh daily—that's what it means.

In that then, that's the easiest correction that you can have if you're doing it. Remember where the Apostle Paul said that if you 'judge yourself, you won't be judged of God'? (1-Cor. 11). I know exactly what's going to happen, because I've experienced it. When you let that kind of correction happen, *you then begin to see it the way God sees it, because you see it with God's eyes*. You think, 'Oh stupid! Oh what a fool!'

The psalmist in Psa. 73 said, 'I was envious of the wicked and their wealth and everything, and I got myself in trouble until I went into the temple of God and then I understood. I was a fool before You and I behaved myself stupidly. God, forgive me.' *That is God's Spirit working with you!*

Have you ever had some temptation come upon you that just seemed to be in the minute kind of overwhelming, overpowering or titillating? 'Well, that's interesting. Ah, yes, let me investigate that a little further.' Then you realize what's happening and you repent of it, then you say, 'Oh, what a miserable thing that was.' That is called *crucifying the flesh!*

James 4:4: "*You adulterers and adulteresses...*" This is not just talking about the physical act of adultery; this is talking about *spiritual* adultery. Rev. 17:1-6, where it talks about the 'great whore that sits upon many waters; that all the inhabitants of the earth are made drunken with the wine of her fornication.'

"...don't you know that the friendship of the world is **enmity** with God?..." That's the same word that used that the 'carnal mind is **enmity** with God' (Rom. 8:7). Why is that enmity? *Because you have to do what the world does!* I think some of these athletic teams are a good example—everything is always positive; everything is great.

You'll notice whenever there is a political speech, what do they do? *They come in and it's called 'press the flesh.'* They go around and actually press the flesh. Watch them shake hands and you watch some of these politicians. They will shake the hand and grab the forearm. That's supposed to be some sort of communication thing that is for people and makes them secure. It's called *pressing the flesh*.

They always tell all about the 'good' things of everybody, except your enemy. What is the 11th commandment for Republicans? *Thou shall not speak against thy fellow Republican!* There is an example of the 'goodness' of this world. You get out in the world and sooner or later you're going to have to be friends with them. I'm not saying to make enemies with them. But the Bible says that 'the world is at enmity with God.' So, when you pick up on *their* ideas and *their* philosophies and *their* ways to make it part of your way of living, then you are committing *spiritual adultery!*

For example, if you wanted to increase your business and you knew that this person went to church on Sunday. You strike up a conversation—I'll apply this to me—and I want to land a big loan here. I want to have a friendship thing, so I invite the guy out to dinner and sort of wine and dine and we get everything all built and we talk about church and he says 'I go to church on Sunday.' *Oh, that's nice, can I go with you sometime, that would be so good.* And I get involved in it and become a total hypocrite. *That is making friendship with the world!*

We have to live in the world. We're not going to go around on the other hand with a great big chip on our shoulder and say, 'Aha! You are the world, get away from me; I don't want anything to do with you.' No, you don't want that either.

"...Therefore, whoever desires to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. Or do you think that the Scripture says in vain, 'The spirit that dwells in us lusts with envy'?" (vs 4-5). That's our own human nature. What about Paul when he said, 'I'm one thing to one people, and another thing to another person. Why was he doing this?'

Obviously you're to set an example to your neighbors; obviously, you're to love your neighbors as yourself. But you are not to befriend them as part of the world. You can befriend them as a Christian. In other words, making friendship with the world in

this case is giving up your Christian character so that they will be your friends. That's what it's talking about. How many of these little groups are like that? You do what we say. If you want to join this group or this little club over here, here are the rules. What does that have to do with what Paul said?

1-Corinthians 9:19: "For although I am not under bondage to anyone, I have made myself a servant to all, so that I might gain the more." So, the whole purpose what to gain them to Christ. He had a goal in mind. The goal was to gain them to Christ, not to become as they are.

Verse 20: "Now, to the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain *the* Jews..." In other words, he could talk to them from the perspective of a Jew, and say, 'Yes, I know, I understand that. Yes, I myself am a Jew. I do understand that. However, to understand Christ you must learn this.' That's what he's talking about here.

"...to those who are under law, as under law, that I might gain those who are under law; to those who are without law, as without law (not being without law to God, but within law to Christ), that I might gain those who are without law" (vs 20-21).

What he's saying is that he would come and sit down and talk to them and speak to them, and he would approach them from their own level; like he did on Mars Hill in Athens. He came and said, 'You men of Athens I see that you are superstitious and you worship your demons over here. I pass by this little monument that you had to the unknown God. I've come to preach Him to you.' So, he starts at their level to preach Christ to them. That's what he means.

He comes to people who don't have any law; they're just kind of lawless and have their own rules and regulations and he says, 'I know what human nature is like. I know what that kind of thing is.' And he would start off right from there.

(go to the next track)

Let's go to 1-Timothy 6:3—here's another place where envy and strife and those things take place. "If anyone teaches any different doctrine, and does not adhere to sound words, *even those* of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the doctrine *that is* according to Godliness, he is proud... [arrogance, vanity] ...and knows nothing. Rather, he has a morbid attraction to questions and disputes over words... [strife; and that can happen] ...from which come envy, arguments, blasphemy, wicked suspicions, vain reasonings of men who have been corrupted in *their* minds and *are* destitute of the Truth—*men* who believe that gain is Godliness. From such withdraw *yourself*" (vs 3-5).

This just shows how this carnality just breeds up. *A little leaven leavens the whole lump.*

Titus 3:3: "For we also were once foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving all kinds of lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful *and* hating one another." Sounds like walking one of the streets of Oakland or whatever city.

Proverbs is really a good book; it's full of a lot of these simple comparisons and understanding. Proverbs 23:17: "Do not let your heart envy sinners... [that's a command for us] ...but *be* in the fear of the LORD all the day long." If you're loving God and fearing God, and it's all the day long...

- Why would you envy sinners in the first place?
- Does it mean that if you envy sinners and what they have that you don't believe that God has what He's going to give you?

I would say it could come in several categories, because you may find yourself in economic want, and yet, you're trying to obey God and you can't understand why you can't have the basic things when all these sinners have everything. That's how it could be. It's your own human nature working, because *you're not really believing that God is going to do it.*

For example: If you are a Christian and unemployed, down to your last dollar and you have no visible means of support coming in, and then one of your friends drives up in a BMW or a Mercedes Benz and invites you over to their house; their kids are running around in the best clothes, beautiful, fine house, the heat is on, everybody is well-fed, there is no strife or problems, but they are pork-eaters, smokers, cursers and swearers. If they go to church they do it on Sunday. Let's say they don't do it at all; we'll just make it worse, they're atheist Jews.

Here you are striving to follow Jesus. I can picture someone letting their envy kind of get away with them. They might even do like the fellow did in the *Fiddler on the Roof*. Here's this poor guy just grubbing on this dirty rotten little farm in his rotten little town and he's out there in the barn taking care of his chickens. He starts dancing around and saying, 'Oh, God, would it really spoil Your plan if I were a rich man?' Things like that!

However, if—in *faith*—you would say, 'God, I know what You have to give me is the whole universe, therefore, what I know I'm going through is to help me to do the things that are pleasing in Your eyes, and I know you will provide.' I guarantee you, you won't leave that house envious. But that would be hard! Especially if you haven't been close

to God and your human nature is tugging a little bit harder on you than otherwise.

I. Strife:

Proverbs 28:25—where does strife come in the Church? *Here's part of the answer:* “He who is of a proud heart stirs up strife... [because when you have emulations of men, you're following men, you have *pride*] ...but he who puts his trust in the LORD shall be enriched. He who trusts in his own heart is a fool; but whoever walks wisely, he shall be delivered” (vs 25-26). I read a lot of those and all I can think of is: ‘God, help us!’

Proverbs 17:1—this is true: “Better *is* a dry piece of bread, and quietness with it, than a house full of sacrifices *with* fighting.”

Proverbs 16:19: “*It is better to be of a humble spirit with the lowly than to divide the spoil with the proud.*” They base a lot of movies on this. Have you ever seen where there's stolen treasure and there are 5-8 of these people all figuring out how they can get it.

One of them: *It's a Mad, Mad, Mad World*, they're all chasing after money, all trying to figure out how he or she could get it and split off the least amount to someone else. The detective was the one who ended up with it. The way they ended it was something. The detective got up there and had all the money in a suitcase and the suitcase came open and the wind blew it all, and all the crowd watching this thing picked up all the money.

Verse 8: “Better *is* a little with righteousness than great revenues with injustice.” Remember the fellow who was arrested and was the kingpin of the drug dealers in Oakland. I commented about his funeral. He was tried, convicted and sent off to Leavenworth awaiting appeal. I didn't know this until the other night, that once you are convicted in a Federal court, you cannot have the conviction stand unless you have the right of appeal. So, that's an automatic right of appeal.

Now I understand how many of these big kingpins get everything reversed. They get with the appellate judges and they're all of those who are masons, in the conspiracy, or in this Jewish thing. I've often wondered how is it that they get these convictions and they find some technicality and the rat gets off. I know now! I was shocked!

Because he was killed in prison he could not physically be there with his attorney for the appeal, therefore, they had to throw the case out and declare him innocent, because you cannot convict a dead man.

Therefore, the millions and millions that the government confiscated—as a taxpayer I'm a little

upset about this because I want those millions to go into the treasury—they can't use, confiscate, and sell it because they can only take when the guy is convicted. He couldn't be convicted because he was dead and declared innocent. Talk about a twist of law—the great revenues without right.

Proverbs 15:18: “A wrathful man stirs up discord, but one slow to anger calms strife.” The older you get the more you must learn this and apply this, especially as your children get older, when you have to step in the middle of their strife to end their strife. You can't be angry when you do it, but you must be firm. This is one that I like to hang onto as kind of model for me.

II. Concerning Ministers:

I think this is the way it needs to be. The minister is not to be in a hierarchy above the people, but he's also not be below the people. Just as the members are able to be members in good standing—as long as they're right with God—so also should a minister be as long he's faithfully preaching the Word of God.

Rather than go through all kinds of Scriptures with this, just read especially 2-Timothy having to do with ministerial instructions. Talks about

- how he's to conduct himself in the house of God
- how he's to be an example
- what he's to teach
- how he's to teach it
- he's to be faithful with the Word of God
- don't get all blown up in your own vanity

2-Tim. is especially good concerning what a minister is to be and how he is to conduct his life. 1-Tim. is also good.

III. Building on the Foundation of Jesus Christ and Trials:

1-Corinthians 3:12: “Now if anyone builds upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay *or* stubble, the work of each one shall be manifested; for the day *of trial* will declare *it*, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall prove what kind of work each one's is” (vs 12-13).

Let's key this into the most important thing that it needs to be. 1-Peter 4:12: “Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery trial... [there it is, trial by fire] ...among you *which is* taking place to test you, as if some strange thing *were* happening to you.” When they do come that's what you think: some strange thing has happened to you. We're guaranteed trials. We're going to see the various kinds of trials that will come:

1. There are trials that you create for yourself

Have you ever created trials for yourself? You create trials for yourself because you don't pay attention, you don't follow God's Word, your own vanity stirs it up or you don't do something you're supposed to. Those you can avoid by just asking God for wisdom.

2. There are trials that come upon you because God is going to test your faith

It has nothing to do with whether you're righteous or sinful; God is going to test your faith. When He tests your faith, He wants to know that you're going to be faithful. That's what it's for. I've heard people say, 'If you have a trial it's because you're sinning. God's purging it from you.' That's one kind of trial, that's true, but not every trial is that way. Sometimes it's *just to test your faith*.

3. It is for God's glory

For nothing else; for a witness!

4. Those which then are going to add to your reward

Let's take a look at the trial in Rev. 2, which is to God's own glory. It wasn't anything that these people had done. It wasn't that they were sinners. He doesn't condemn them for one sin. On top of it, they were poor.

Revelation 2:8: "And to the angel of the Church of *the* Smyrneans write: These things says the First and the Last, Who was dead but is alive. I know your **works and tribulation...**" (vs 8-9). When you go through some of these tribulations, you don't have to wait for the Great Tribulation to come.

I've had people say, 'Why should I have to wait for the Great Tribulation, I have it right now.' Sometimes that's true. Not *the* Great Tribulation when you're laying your head on the chopping block, but it is tribulation.

"...and poverty..." Think about it for a minute. If some of these Christians that were in the Church of Smyrna were resurrected now and could see what we have... We would invite them all into our homes and we take them down to our grocery stores and into our department stores and show them all the cars and all the wonderful things that we have. Then we say, 'Will you preach on the Sabbath for us.' I wonder what that would be? I wonder what sort of message they would bring? It says that they had their *poverty*.

We will see that some of their poverty was being driven from cave to cave. Would you still be faithful, being driven from cave to cave? Caves are not very warm. No thermostats, no carpets.

Then for someone to come along and say, "...*(but you are rich)...*" (v 9). God doesn't look at things like we do. *He looks at the richness of faith!*

"...and the blasphemy of those who declare themselves to be Jews and are not, but *are* a synagogue of Satan. Do not fear any of the things that you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to cast *some* of you into prison, that you may be tried; and you shall have tribulation ten days..." (vs 9-10). Ten years and there's an historical period of ten years when that occurred. Does He correct them for any sin? *No! No sin!*

So, the assumption is, if God is trying you, you must be a sinner. *NO!* He says they're rich! He even let's those of the synagogue of Satan and Satan himself do the work to put them in prison. This is a trial to God's glory; nothing that they deserved.

So, next time something happens in the way of trial, I'm not going to say, 'God I didn't deserve this.' It's not for me to decide what I deserve or don't deserve. It's what God decides! Sometimes it's pretty rough. That's why I'm not anxious to bring the Day of the Lord. Jesus said, 'Woe to you that want the Day of the Lord.' It's a terrible, awful time!

"...Be faithful unto death, and I will give you a crown of life" (v 10). They had a tough life, brethren. I would have to say that we're very comfortable Christians compared to them.

Let's look at the reason for the trials that we go through. We're guaranteed to have them, absolutely guaranteed. So, whenever these things come along, let's keep them in perspective. What happens too many times is that we equate God's thoughts, feelings and emotions on a human level. For example:

- Why did he do that to me?
- Why did she do that to me?

However you want to put it, we equate God with our emotions, and we go completely off the track because we don't understand. I know it's the hardest thing to do.

I know when I was going through what I was going through, I look back and it was miserable! Absolutely miserable! My heart, mind and everything was just all in turmoil. God always provides someone to say something just at the right time. There are those of us who are the outsiders looking in. There is always someone who comes along and says, 'Don't worry, it's all going to work out all right.' By the time we hear that—we like to hear it—we don't appreciate it, because no one knows what we're going through.

Here is the one Scripture that you can go to,

to really give you comfort, because what this does is it puts it in perspective so that you understand *from God's point of view*—and that's the way we need to understand it.

1-Peter 1:1: “Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to *the* elect strangers scattered in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia... [Apparently Peter wrote this to the people that Paul cared for after Paul had died. Remember, at the end of 2-Peter, he said, ‘Paul wrote certain things...’] ...*who have been chosen according to the predetermined knowledge of God the Father, by sanctification through the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ...*” (vs 1-2). That says an awful lot.

He's getting their minds on God the Father, that we have God's Holy Spirit that we are sanctified by God, we've had our sins blotted out through the blood of Jesus Christ, and then applied to us.

“...Grace and peace be multiplied to you” (v 2). Whenever you are in a trial, get your mind on God the Father first. I know that in time, it's not going to happen instantly, because in trial we're going to see that God is proving us, testing us. Do we need to be tested to know what's in our heart or not? *Sure we do!* That's why the prayer is: ‘Deliver us from evil, and lead us not into temptation,’ but rather lead us out of temptation, because they'll come along.

Verse 3: “Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who, according to His abundant mercy, has begotten us again unto a living hope through *the* resurrection of Jesus Christ from *the* dead.” Think of what Jesus went through. Think of what this Scripture says.

We have a *living hope!* Therefore, it really doesn't matter what our circumstances are around us if we have a *living hope!* In the middle of your trial, think of that. If we really believe, we wouldn't be envious and have the doubt. There it is right there!

“...has begotten us again...” Having God's Spirit, from God the Father. And then think of the resurrection of Jesus Christ then beyond that.

Verse 4: “Unto an inheritance incorruptible...” Keep your eyes on the section of the paper that puts in the astronomical reports. They have discovered by photography a thin blue light stream that runs all the way across the universe. They've never been able to see that before.

I don't know what it is, but I think perhaps it could be a visualization of some of the magnetic force fields perhaps that hold the universe together. That's astounding! To think that God is going to share the universe with us! That is amazing! If you

get your mind on that, instead of the immediacy of the problem, notice what he does. He gets the mind of the people

- first on God the Father
- then on Jesus Christ
- on His crucifixion
- on His resurrection
- on the fact that we have a living hope
- on the fact that we have an inheritance that nobody can touch that is incorruptible

“...and undefiled and unfading, reserved in heaven for us, who *are* being safeguarded by *the* power of God through faith, for salvation *that is* ready to be revealed in *the* last time. In this you yourselves greatly rejoice... [in all of this that we've just said] ...though for the present, if it is necessary, you are in distress for a little while by various trials; **in order that the proving of your faith...**” (vs 4-7). That's the one we go through more than anything else—*the trial of your faith.*

“...which is much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is being tested by fire... [everyone is guaranteed it, no strange thing] ...may be found unto praise and honor and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ; Whom, not having seen, you love...” (vs 7-8). That takes an awful lot. You can only do that by faith.

Of course, there's a special blessing that goes with that. Remember what Jesus told Thomas? I'll never forget what John wrote about that. They were all gathered there, and Thomas is finally with them—he wasn't there the week before—and he said, ‘I'll believe it when I see it.’ Jesus appeared in the midst and said, ‘Thomas, come here.’ Thomas said, ‘Oh, my Lord, I believe.’ And Jesus said, ‘**Blessed are those who believe and have not seen!**’ So, there's a blessing. You believe and love God.

“...in Whom, *though* at the present time you do not see Him, you believe, *and* rejoice with unspeakable joy, and filled with glory; *and are* receiving the end of your faith—even the salvation of *your* souls; concerning which salvation the prophets who prophesied of the grace *that would come* to you have diligently searched out and intently inquired, 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, 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” (vs 8-12).

He's gone through all that and now he's

going to tell them the practical advice, v 13: “For this reason, be prepared in your minds...” In other words, get your thinking straightened out. But you can’t get your thinking straightened out until you get your perspectives all lined up, and that’s what he did.

“...be self-controlled, *and* be fully hoping in the grace that will be brought to you at *the* revelation of Jesus Christ” (v 13).

Do we not all get trials that we deserve? *From this point of view, what we have coming to us—what we have owed to us—is death.* The ‘wages of sin is death.’ That’s truly what we deserve. But what I meant when I said that there were some trials that we’ll go through that we don’t deserve, I meant from the point of view that it is a trial that was not caused because a person necessarily sinned to bring it upon themselves.

There’s a trial of faith, we’re all going to get that. But like those people in the Church at Smyrna, there wasn’t anything that they did where you would say was deserved—where God was compelled to bring a trial upon them.

Look at the Laodiceans. They’re rich and increased with goods. God is compelled to bring that upon them. Whereas with those in Smyrna, He’s not compelled to do it. He’s going to do it *for His own glory!*

Another example is Paul’s thorn in the side (1-Cor. 12). I don’t know whether he deserved it, but he virtually said that it was used of God as an instrument to ‘keep me humble so that I would appreciate God’s grace. I asked God to remove it three times’ and since God didn’t do it, ‘who am I to argue with God?’

Could Job have learned the lesson of self-righteousness in the situation that he had without going through the trial? *I really don’t know!* But since he went through it, we would have assume that there was no other way to do it.

- Do we have to go through trials?
- Can’t we learn without going through trials?
- How about someone who can see himself becoming an alcoholic and just quit vs someone who is in the same stage of alcoholism and may or may not see it and goes on to the end of what happens to alcoholics?
- Couldn’t that second person also learned the easy way by quitting sooner? *Yes, he could have!*
- But did he? *No, he didn’t!*

That’s why there are trials, because there are a lot of things you don’t know. There are things that even though God knows everything, there are certain things—because we have choices—He does not know how it’s going to go until there’s a trial where He’s going to prove what our choice is going to be.

Let’s clarify a little bit: Is an alcoholic going through it as a trial, or is that a tribulation that God had to bring upon him because He was compelled to because of his sin? *It would be the latter one!* God was compelled to bring it upon him because of his sin. There are natural consequences for that.

The trial only comes from being in a situation looking out. Whereas, from outside the situation looking in it’s not a trial. It’s your own stupidity. But in your own stupidity looking out, it’s a trial, because it’s messy and a miserable thing.

It’s just a matter of perspective. But it is true, as a person sees he or she is becoming an alcoholic and decides to quit; it’s a choice. So therefore, all these things are individual cases—aren’t they? Every one of them is an individual case. What should we do as Christians? I know as a minister, many times in the past I have said, and I’ve heard others preach, that if you have a trial you’re sinning before God. Maybe you’re not, maybe you are. But I now see that the trials that each person has, you have to handle each one of those on an individual case.

Some person could go through an experience that they can survive; others it would crush them, they would never survive it. So, God doesn’t bring it upon you.

God always gives us hope and He always gives us a way out, 1-Corinthians 10:13: “No temptation has come upon you except what is common to mankind.... [it’s common to humanity] ...For God, Who *is* faithful, **will not permit you to be tempted beyond what you are able to bear; but with the temptation, He will make a way of escape, so that you may be able to bear it.**”

If you don’t take that way of escape you may be crushed by it. It’s all a matter of choice. Each of these things are individual things. We can’t make a blanket statement and condemn everybody in the same category, because everybody is different. Each one of those have to be an individual situation.

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

Scriptural References:

- 1) 1 Corinthians 3:1-3
- 2) John 5:17-18
- 3) Matthew 23:1-4
- 4) 1 Corinthians 3:3-23
- 5) Romans 8:7
- 6) Galatians 5:19-26, 24
- 7) Luke 14:26-27
- 8) James 4:4-5
- 9) 1 Corinthians 9:19-21
- 10) 1 Timothy 6:3-5
- 11) Titus 3:3
- 12) Proverbs 23:17
- 13) Proverbs 28:25
- 14) Proverbs 17:1
- 15) Proverbs 16:19, 8
- 16) Proverbs 15:18
- 17) 1 Corinthians 3:12-13
- 18) 1 Peter 4:12
- 19) Revelation 2:8-10
- 20) 1 Peter 1:1-13
- 21) 1 Corinthians 10:13

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- 1 Timothy 1
- 2 Corinthians 4
- Exodus 20
- Romans 10
- 1 Corinthians 11
- Psalm 73
- Revelation 17:1-6
- 2 Timothy
- 1 Corinthians 12

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Transcribed: 3-15-13

Epistle of First Corinthians VIII The Need for Trials—Chapters 3-4

Fred R. Coulter

I've been studying and re-studying and going over 1-Corinthians and part of 2-Corinthians. I want to pick up all the telltale clues as to what was happening in this church. I think we're going to be absolutely amazed. What it has really impressed upon my mind is how that we need to really keep ourselves in the love of God in everything we do.

Look what happened here in 1-Corinthians Paul comes in and there are total pagans worshipping these demons. There are pagan temples everywhere, doing whatever they want to do. Yet, they're 'religious.' That tells you right away that he's going to have a whole lot of problems. What is the very first thing that any carnal person does when they hear about God and religion? *They try to compare that with what they've been doing to justify what they've done in the past as a good thing!* That is natural; that is exactly what has happened here.

The way Paul treats them in 1-Cor. 4, he really has to be very sarcastic with them; it's amazing what he said. But it's just impressed upon my mind how we need to, beginning: 1-Corinthians 3:11: "For no one is able to lay any other foundation besides that which has been laid, which is Jesus Christ"—and to keep yourself in the love of God.

I tell you, I've had a couple of tough weeks with some of the things that I've been doing, and I'm so glad when the Sabbath comes, it just really impresses upon me how that the only thing that keeps my sanity is doing exactly that: *building upon this foundation of Christ!* Every one of us will kind of drift away in our thoughts and things like this and we'll be kind of slack in the things we need to do: in praying, studying, etc.

Next thing you know you'll be out there and you'll be confronted with a choice. I guarantee you'll be confronted with a choice as to what you're going to do. When you choose God's way and then look back upon the other potentials that those other choices presented, you think: how bad, how stupid, how dumb. ***God's way is right, all the way through!*** So, build on that foundation of Jesus Christ.

There are likened six different kinds of elements that you build with: "...gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay *or* stubble" (v 12). Let's go at these backward.

Stubble, hay and wood:

Stubble burns up very quickly. We know there are going to be trials, and that's what we're

going to cover: the need for trials and why we go through them. I think it's very important that we grasp that. Not from the point of view that we can go around and bring trials upon ourselves.

I think there's even a psychology of bringing trials upon yourself. We don't want to get into that kind of pattern or anything. But if you build it with stubble, it's going to burn. Hay also goes very quickly; wood a little slower. Wood is kind of deceiving. Wood kind of reminds me of what a Laodicean would be. The way I came across that was: We've been building some fires in the fireplace and saving on electricity. I've been getting some free wood going down to the lumber yard and getting these big blocks that they cut off and throw away because they're used for headers for windows and doors and they can't have any cracks or pitch and the knots have to be solid if there are knots in it, otherwise they have to discard it.

I'd split those up and stack them in. I'm a lazy fireplace fire-builder. We have a little gas thing, so I turn that on and just put the logs in there and it burns. This wood is such that you get it going, and the fire is coming out and it's burning down. When is it the hottest? When it starts? *or* When it's almost out?

With these blocks you have to turn them over, because the fire doesn't come around like it does on logs. The coals are red hot on the backside and the heat is right there. I was thinking that this fire is going out, but if analyzed, if the fire were analyzing itself, it would say, 'I'm better off than ever before because I have more heat' when it's ready to go out! That reminds me of the Laodiceans. They're lukewarm and they think they're on fire and they don't realize that they are ready to go out. So, wood is very deceiving.

You can also have a nice finish. You can have a veneer. So, we can draw many parallels here. You can have a very fine piece of furniture—*looks like* a fine piece of furniture. You can have a very thin veneer of the most expensive wood in the world on it, yet, that piece of furniture would only be worth about as much of pressboard that that's glued onto. I'm sure you have some of that furniture at home. It's really nice looking furniture, but it's got a thin veneer and it's just pressed wood behind it.

Wood, hay and stubble can all be deceiving. Just to back up a little bit with hay. Someone dumped a big bale of hay right on the sidewalk at the front of our house. I was going to throw it away, but

Delores said to take it out and put it out so the dogs could sleep on it. I was nettling out a place for the dogs to get in, and they got in there and stayed in there. When they came out it was warm. That hay is so warm and comfortable and nice.

Just draw that analogy with being a Christian. You get so warm and everything seems to kind of just nice and sung and wonderful, but you put a torch to that and WOOSH! it's gone!

Precious stones, silver and gold:

With precious stones we're dealing with something else. Precious stones actually get better when they are refined with heat. That's how synthetic diamonds are made, by putting them into real high-pressured heating and they are as good as the ones that they mine. That's how God makes those things in the earth.

I've been watching this thing on television *The Earth*. It showed what's happening with the earth and how the molten core of the earth is always moving and shifting, and when it comes up through these cracks and comes out as a volcano or as the plates are moving under the ocean. They actually have pictures now where they can see the volcanic material coming out and pushing the plates of the oceans and there's a big crack in many different places under the ocean. There are 20 of those where they have those plates. It's producing these very high quality and precious minerals and stones. That's where they get the quarts and gold and silver; it all comes out of it. When you take gold, precious stones and silver and you refine it, it becomes better, more pure.

So, the analogy is that with a trial, if you're building gold, silver and precious stone you're going to have a better character through Christ.

Verse 13: "The work of each one shall be manifested; for the day of trial will declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall prove what kind of work each one's is. If the work that anyone has built endures... [building on Christ] ...he shall receive a reward. If the work of anyone is burned up, he shall suffer loss; but *he* himself shall be saved, yet as through fire" (vs 13-15). {Note Rev. 3:14-21, about the Laodiceans; 'buy of Me gold tried in the fire.'} That's purifying their character.

Let's go through and understand about trials and see the things that it talks about in the Bible. Our faith is going to be tried and tested. They ran a survey and they found out that more and more people are leaving Christianity and going for these modern 'eastern-type' religions. Frankly, when you turn on the television and you look at some of these guys, like Oral Roberts, 'If I don't get \$4.2-million

the Lord is going to call me home.' Laying a guilt trip on all these people out there that are watching him. I imagine a lot of people just took the switch and shut him off.

All of the gink-heads get on TV. It just seems that way. A person says, 'You want to know about Christ? Watch Pat Robertson.' That looks like the lottery spin. Watch him when they have the money-raising thing. They have it everyday. It's just like a circus and you think, 'If that represents God, then other things I see out here are just as good.' So, people get turned off of God. Then someone with a strange religion says, 'I look at all this silliness of Christianity and we have a better religion.'

The Hindus have a new palace right down here and now that they have that one of their parts of their religion is that they can marry their wives early. They had a report in the paper and on the news that this man who is 60 married his third or fourth wife and his wife was only five-years-old. It is weird! It is strange!

We live in such a secular, materialized world that if you tell someone that you are really believing in Christ and following the Word of God, you are a strange thing, indeed! I know that things are going to get more militant. They're bound to. Look what's happening with these marches. They're not just marching out now because we want to have equal rights. They're marching for political power. They are marching for demonstration of who is in control.

The battle-lines are going to be drawn. I know that there's going to be a white backlash and black backlash that's going to take place. All I want to do is stay out of the middle, because you're going to get chewed alive. What is that Proverb? *He who enters into an argument with another and tries to stop two men from fighting is like walking into a dog urinating!* That's true. I'm going to stay out of the middle of it.

You read what's happening and you think 'they ought to do this; they ought to do that; they ought to do the other thing.' Then when you really think about it, you if you were elected or you could be in this office or if you could do such and such, you couldn't do any more than they can do. It's all a part of this world and you'd just be chewed alive.

Being a true Christian is going to, in time—and we're not too far from it—be a whole lot more difficult than it is now. We've gone through some trials, every one of us have had trials. But I tell you, when you read some of the things that the Jews went through, we haven't gone through anything. We haven't gone through a thing. We haven't even gotten to the sandbox, let alone graduating from kindergarten.

1-Peter 1:1: “Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to *the* elect strangers scattered in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia; *who have been chosen* according to *the* predetermined knowledge of God *the* Father, by sanctification through *the* Spirit, unto obedience...” (vs 1-2). {note John 14:15—‘If you love Me keep My commandments’} That is a key when people say that you don’t have to obey the Ten Commandments or keep the laws of God.

“...unto obedience and sprinkling of *the* blood of Jesus Christ: Grace and peace be multiplied to you. Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who, according to His abundant mercy, has begotten us again **unto a living hope...**” (vs 2-3). The Greek there is ‘zao’—*living*—not an empty hope; not a hollow hope, but a *living hope*.

“...through *the* resurrection of Jesus Christ from *the* dead” (v 3). Every time I read about it or think about that, I just wonder what it’s going to be like when the resurrection takes place—if I’m still alive—to be changed from flesh to spirit. About the closest thing that I can think of, to just kind of peak my interest a little bit, is to do this: When you’re sound asleep and all of a sudden your body sort of shocks itself awake. All of a sudden you’re wide-awake. It’s almost as if someone took an electrical shock and zapped you. That’s the closest I can think of what it would be like for the resurrection. Every time I read that I can’t help but think:

- What were the thoughts of Christ when He was resurrected?
- What was it like to be God and be dead for three days and three nights and be resurrected?

When you just sit down and just think about it, and maybe just take something like that and kind of let that be the theme or your thought for the day and think about that off and on all during the day. And when your mind starts wandering, just wonder and think what that may be.

Verse 4: “Unto an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and unfading...” The more you look at the banking system and what they do, and what’s going to happen with the confiscation of property when the mark of the beast comes in, you talk about creating money out of nothing just by having reserves like the banks do today. Once the mark of the beast comes in, and it’s all computerized, they’ll just generate it out of a computer.

This inheritance that we have, “...reserved in heaven for us...” (v 4), no one is going to take; no one is going to undo. Think of it for a minute. “...an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and unfading...” That inheritance has got to be more

than just you as a person in the form of a spirit being. That inheritance is reserved for you in heaven, but you are on the earth.

Again, this inheritance that God is going to give us is going to be part of the ownership, under Christ, of the Kingdom of God. That is going to be something! In your studies please see if you can find anywhere that those who are entering into the Kingdom of God after the first resurrection are going to have that kind of inheritance. I don’t think you’ll find it. It is fantastic! That’s why God is calling just a few. It’s so fantastic, yet, so simple! But so fantastic that God not calling the whole world to it.

Verse 5: Who... [that’s us] ...*are* being safeguarded by *the* power of God through faith, for salvation *that is* ready to be revealed in *the* last time.” It tell you, if we’re not living in the last time, I don’t want to be around when the last times come.

Verse 6: “In this you yourselves greatly rejoice... [in the salvation, and in God’s calling and the inheritance reserved for you] ...though for the present, if it is necessary, you are in distress for a little while by various trials... [and temptations] ...In order that the proving of your faith...” (vs 6-7). That’s what it’s for. There’s a difference. We’re going to see that Paul makes a difference. There are those things that we bring upon us that are trials, which God hasn’t brought upon us. We do it because of our own stupidity or because of some other fault, and we have to go through the ‘meat grinder’ to learn.

The *trial of faith* is different, “...which is much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is being tested by fire, may be found unto praise and honor and glory at *the* revelation of Jesus Christ” (v 7).

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. But to the degree that you have a share in the sufferings of Christ...” (vs 12-13).

I’ll just have to mention right here that I think I understand this Scripture a little bit more. I’m still not at the point of rejoicing at every trial that comes along, but I am beyond the point of complaining when I’m going through them. Are you to rejoice during the trial? *or* After the trial? Most of my rejoicing is *after* the trial. In some cases quite a while after, when I understand. Then you think, ‘Oh, God, You saved me! You intervened!’

Hebrews 12:1—this tells us the attitude that we need to have to rejoice or to joy in the trials: “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, *although* He despised *the* shame, and has sat down at *the* right hand of the throne of God. 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**” (vs 1-3).

It is an attitude thing! When you are going through it you get weary! Have you ever had a trial that just *wears you down*! And you want to give up! That’s a trial of your faith. “...so that you do not become weary and faint in your minds.” What do you do when you come to that point? *You go back and you look to Christ! Keep in the love of God!* That’s going to save an awful lot of problems. You’re going to avoid an awful lot of things.

Verse 4: “You have not yet resisted to the point of *losing* blood in your struggle against sin.” I don’t know anybody who has done that. I’ve fought sin! You’ve fought sin! But I haven’t gone out there and either gnashed my teeth to the point of bleeding, or keep my hands or feet from doing something to the point of bleeding. I haven’t been lashed with a whip. I haven’t been strung up on a cross. No, I haven’t resisted sin unto blood. Christ did!

Verse 5: “And you have already forgotten the admonition that He addresses to you as to sons: ‘My son, do not despise *the* chastening of *the* Lord, nor grow weary of being reproved by Him.... [This from where our trials come] ...for **whom the Lord loves**...’” (vs 5-6). All too often we have in our mind what it is that we think love is—all up, good, fun, happiness, joy—and there’s nothing else but that. That’s the world’s vision of love. God is love! That’s what God is—isn’t it? But:

- is He going to punish the world?
- is He going to be angry?
- is He going to destroy sin and people?
- *Yes!*

But if you love God “...He chastens, and He severely disciplines every son whom He receives” (v 6). Likened unto scouring. You scour some pots, and you have to really scrounge it down. But when you get it scrounged down it’s a lot better. Same way with a precious stone.

- What do you have to do with a precious stone? *Cut it, grind it, polish it!*
- What do you have to do with silver and gold? *Melt it out, purify it!*

Same thing! Here the analogy follows all the way through.

Verse 7: “If you endure chastening, 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” (vs 7-8). You get to this ‘good time’ Christianity; no correction, everything is wonderful, *wonderful, wonderful!*

Verse 9: “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” (vs 9-10).

If when we’re going through a trial or correction, we keep that in mind so that we can be “...partakers of His Holiness” to be Holy as God is, then I think we can come to the point of rejoicing *during* the trial—though it’s hard. I don’t think I’ve quite come to that point, and I’m not begging for any trials. There are going to plenty in store down the line. They are going to be coming, so we don’t need to go out and look for it and ask for it.

Verse 11: “Now truly, no chastisement for the present seems to be joyous, but grievous... [and it is] ...nevertheless, **afterwards** it yields *the* peaceable fruits of righteousness to those who have been exercised by it.” We’re to count it all joy when different things come upon us, that’s how we’re to do it.

1-Peter 4:13: “...rejoice; so that, at the revelation of His glory, you also may rejoice exceedingly.” I don’t know how to quite draw an analogy concerning that, except maybe someone who runs a marathon, when they win and finish. They can look back on all the pain and suffering they had to go through in training, and they have to train something fierce; it’s terrible. But when they make it, then there is joy. It’s going to be the same thing for us when we are partakers of that joy. That’s a good analogy how we’re able to rejoice. When we go through a trial it reveals a flaw that needs to be gotten rid of, or needs correcting. That’s good!

Verse 14: “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. Assuredly, let none of you suffer as a murderer, or a thief, or an evil doer, or as an over lording busybody in other people’s lives” (vs 14-15). That was another problem in the Church—glorifying men and busybodies in other people’s matters; going around telling everyone how to live. It says, ‘don’t suffer that way.’

Verse 16. Yet, if anyone *is suffering* as a Christian, he should not be ashamed; but let him glorify God because of this, 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?" (vs 16-17).

James 1:1: "James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes, which *are* in the dispersion: Greetings!" This leads me to believe they knew where the ten 'so-called' lost tribes were. If you're going to send a letter to the twelve tribes, you have to know where the other ten are.

However, I do see how that part of the way the Jews have done, by taking everything that belongs to Israel and applying it to themselves, helps keep the other ten tribes lost to the general knowledge of the public. Almost every religionist you hear, anything you read: 'the Jews crossed the Red Sea; the Jews got the Ten Commandments from Moses; the Jews this... Then they say, we're Israelites. That keeps everyone blinded as to who Israel really is.

Here James wrote "...to the twelve tribes, which *are* in the dispersion: Greetings! Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you are beset by various trials" (vs 1-2). When I first read that my reaction was 'that's kind of dumb.' That shows you how completely removed from reality that I was as far as understanding about God's Word.

Verse 3: "Knowing that the testing of your faith produces **endurance**." That's the key! What are we to do? *He who endures to the end the same shall be saved!* (Matt. 24:13). So, the trying of your faith works endurance.

I know, and I'm sure you know, that after the things that we have gone through, we are able to endure a whole lot more, plus God has given us some wisdom so we can avoid some of the pitfalls. That's why we have these trials.

Verse 4: "But let endurance have *its* perfect work, so that you may be perfect and complete, not lacking in anything. However, if anyone lacks wisdom, let him ask of God..." (vs 4-5). I've often wondered:

- Why did it change topics all of a sudden in this verse? We go from *trial of your faith to wisdom!*
- What is the wisdom talking about?
- Just wisdom in general?

I've heard many ministers use this as an opening verse for giving a sermon on wisdom.

- What kind of wisdom is this talking about?
- Wisdom in general?

No, *the wisdom of God to understand the trial!* That's so simple it's hard to believe that it was difficult to understand.

Verse 5: "However, if anyone lacks wisdom... [to understand this trial] ...let him ask of God 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*. 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 5-8).

This was the problem with the Church at Corinth. "...**a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.**" Isn't that what the problems in the Corinthian Church were all about? Following people, and all these weird ideas?

- we're to *rejoice* when a trial comes
- we're to *ask for wisdom* to see our way through it
- What is God trying to do in all of this?
- What is God trying to accomplish in all of this?
 - because we've been given free moral agency
 - because we're to choose between good and evil
 - because we're to choose the right over the wrong

Remember this whenever there's a trial going on, Jeremiah 12:3: "But You, O LORD, know me...." Does God know us? *Sure He does, because we have His Spirit!* He knows where His Spirit is! Didn't Jesus say, 'I know My sheep and they follow Me'?

"But You, O LORD, know me. You have seen me and tried my heart toward You...." (v 3). God is the One Who *tries the reins and the heart*.

Revelation 2:23 "...and all the churches shall know that I am He Who **searches the reins and hearts**; and I will give to each of you according to your works." That's why we have the trials: to *try our hearts and try our minds!*

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..." (vs 1-2). Notice what Paul emphasizes there. Whenever you're going

through a trial, just keep your mind on Christ, look to Christ, the Author and Finisher of our faith, and also the fact of God's grace. Keep your mind on that grace and faith that God can give you.

Especially the grace "...in which we stand..." (v 2). In other words, there's that grace all around us, covering us.

"...and we ourselves boast in *the* hope of the glory of God. And not only *this*, but we also boast in tribulations..." (vs 2-3). Paul learned something—didn't he? James said to 'count it all joy.' Rejoice when God corrects you. Remember the background on the Apostle Paul {parts 1-2 this series} that 'I will show him what things he must suffer for Me.'

Paul went all the way from rejoicing and rejoicing to *glorying* in tribulation. That has got to take an awful lot of God's Holy Spirit.

"...realizing that **tribulation brings forth endurance**, and endurance *brings forth* [experience]" (vs 3-4). Once you've experienced something, you can rely on that experience and you can see some of these things coming so you won't get into the same trap as before. You can see it coming!

"character, and character *brings forth* hope... [You have more hope in God.] ...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).

This how then we're able to go through the trials!

(go to the next track)

These Scriptures mean more to me now, and I have more understanding of these than I ever have before. As we live a Christian life and go through all these things, we can understand more of God's Word. Why is it that we're able to understand more of God's Word now than we did years ago? *Because we've gone through many more different things!* We've had more experience. We can look back and say, 'Yes, I know...'

That doesn't mean we're not going to have more trials in the future; *we are!* That doesn't mean we're not going to grow in grace and knowledge and learn more things; *we are!* But I tell you, when you go back and read these Scriptures....

I was thinking when we went through the series in the book of Romans, going back and reading this section of Scriptures I have more of an understanding of what it means and more of feeling in my heart and mind than I ever did. We were still suffering through some of the wounds of the trials. We could understand it better than we did at that

time, and each time we progressively learn, but I read some of these things now and it's just like Job said, 'Now my eye sees....' I understand!

1-Corinthians 3:16: "Don't you understand that you are God's temple, and *that* the Spirit of God is dwelling in you?" We could give a whole thing about the temple of God: worshiping God in Spirit and in Truth.

Remember what happened when David finally got the Ark of God back from Kirjath Jearim. It was stolen by the Philistines when Eli, Hophni and Phinehas went out with the troops and try to win a battle and God wasn't with them. The Philistines took the Ark of God and then the plagues came on them. They finally sent it back and it came to Kirjath Jearim. David decided that he would go ahead and move it up to Jerusalem.

He did it the wrong way the first time, and he put it in a cart. Remember, Uzziah touched it and God zapped him and killed him. The lesson is that God doesn't need any help from a man. They were not doing it correctly.

Then David pondered the situation, and said that 'we did this wrong; get the Levites, the priests, and let them carry it, and do the singing and everything. So, they brought the Ark to Jerusalem and set it in a tent. It's going to be wonderful to meet David. There's so much about him. He's a warrior, a musician, king, politician, and a 'man after God's heart.' There he was strumming on his instrument of ten strings. I don't know what that would look like.

I've seen these things that kind of look like a miniature harp that's got a hole in it and you strum across the strings. Was it like a harp that you hold? Was it like a banjo that you play. I don't know what he was doing, but anyway, he was out there playing this, thinking and praising God. He said, 'God, I want to build You a house.' I want to build You a temple.'

Nathan came and said, 'David, God says, 'I dwelt in a tent and a tabernacle since the time I have been with the children of Israel. Where is the house that you will build for Me? I'm going to build one for you, David. I'm going to build you a house where your kingship—told him what He was going to do—shall never lack for a man to sit on the throne.' But He also said, 'David, I'm going to let you build a house for Me. But not you, I'm only going to give you the plans and let you get the material, but your son will build it, because you're a bloody man.'

So, God supposedly dwelt in that temple. But where is it that God wants to reside the most? *In His own children! We are the temple of God's Holy Spirit!* Sometimes we don't feel like it—do we? I

mean, we go around in this carnal world, and right now during Sabbath services we can feel it. Yes, we are the temple of God's Holy Spirit. Maybe tomorrow you won't feel necessarily that you're the temple of God's Holy Spirit.

Nevertheless, that is true! There's a tremendous responsibility because not only is God's Spirit with us, but because of that we carry the name of God and we represent God.

1-Corinthians 3:16: "Don't you understand that you are God's temple, and *that* the Spirit of God is dwelling in you? If anyone defiles the temple of God, God shall destroy him because the temple of God is Holy, which temple you are" (vs 16-17).

Ephesians 2:20: "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, 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 20-22). Paul relates to this several times.

1-Corinthians 3:18: "Let no one deceive himself..." That's the easiest thing to do. When you get a pet idea, or you get a pet thing... Have you ever had a pet project that just really consumed your mind? You can deceive yourself on that, and you can think that this is the greatest thing that has come along since whatever. That's the first thing we do is deceive ourselves.

"...If anyone among you thinks *himself* to be wise in this world..." (v 18). Quite a statement! We're here at Eureka Federal Savings. Suppose we had the president of Eureka Federal Savings here? We would say, 'Mr. So and So, in the world you're really something, but in this room you're stupid.' I'm saying it a little more bluntly than Paul did. He'd get mad! He'd say, 'I'm smart! I'm educated! I have all these degrees!'

"...If anyone among you thinks *himself* to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, so that he may be wise in *God's sight*" (v 18).

- if you don't know God
- if you don't know the plan of salvation
- if you don't know why Jesus Christ came
- if you don't know why He had to give His life and was resurrected

What good is all the knowledge in the world? *It isn't!*

Verse 19: "For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God for it is written, 'He entraps the wise in their own craftiness.' And again, '*The* Lord knows the thoughts of the wise, that they are

vain'" (vs 19-20).

All you have to do is watch this program *The World of the Rich and Famous* with Robin Leech—a perfect name for him, *Leech*. Look at some of the things that they have, and you see some of the houses that they built—the rooms, and the things that they have done—and it is really ludicrous sometimes. Sometimes they're quite inspiring, and you think that they had all the money to do that and I can't repair the back screened door, because I don't have enough money, or whatever. "...the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain."

Verse 21: "Therefore, do not let anyone boast in men... [enough said, we don't have to belabor the point] ...for all things are yours, whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or *the* world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come—all are yours; and you *are* Christ's, and Christ *is* God's" (vs 21-23).

That introduces 1-Cor. 4. Now we're going to start getting down to the nitty-gritty. Let's begin: 1-Corinthians 4:1: "So then, let *every* man regard us as ministers of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. Beyond that, it is required of stewards that one be found faithful. But to me it is an insignificant matter that I am judged by you, or by man's standard; and neither do I judge myself. Now, I am not conscious of anything against myself, yet I am not justified by this; for the one Who is judging me is *the* Lord" (vs 1-4).

There are two things here that are important to realize. I have seen someone take this Scripture and twist it. There are people who deal in Scriptures deceitfully—we've seen that. If you come up to someone, because of their adulterous behavior or because they're lying or cheating, and they hide behind a 'religious' cloak and they say, 'How dare you question me or judge me, I am God's minister.' That's not what Paul is doing here. That's not what he's saying here.

God is going to judge him, but what they were doing is judging him over every little itty-bitty thing. We've seen that happen. Have you ever had someone do that to you, judge you over every little, itty-bitty thing?

Verse 5: "Therefore, do not judge anything before *the* time; *wait* until the Lord comes, Who will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the motives of *all* hearts; and then shall each one receive praise from God." That is **IF** you do it right. If your heart is right, if your counsel is right, then you will have the praise of God.

Verse 6: "Now these things, brethren, I have applied to Apollos and myself for your sakes; that in us you may learn not to think *of men* beyond what is

written, so that no one among you is puffed up on behalf of one *of us* against the other.” That’s what happens. Vanity gets involved and then you’re striving one against the other.

Verse 7: “For what makes you superior to *others*? And what do you have that you did not receive?...” I get the feeling that they were combining some of this Greek mysticism in the Christianity there. But just think if what came out of Corinth continued to develop—which I’m sure it did—then you have exactly what you have in the world of Christianity today; just a hodge-podge and a mish-mash of everything.

“...But if you also received *it*, why are you boasting as if you did not receive *it*?” (v 7). That’s so true. I had one man tell me, ‘I don’t have to study my Bible, I know it.’ He’s making all these wild assertions. It’s a good thing it was only a passing acquaintance, because I didn’t have to endure it beyond that. So, I just kind of rolled my eyes and looked off to the side.

Verse 8: “Now you are satiated. Now you have been enriched.... [Paul is making fun of them] ...You have reigned without us.... [you’ve got it made; you’re ready to be kings 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...” (vs 8-10). There were sure going after him—weren’t they?

“...we *are* weak, but you *are* strong; you *are* glorious, but we *are* without honor” (v 10). I tell you—I joke about it every once in a while—I guess it’s true. I have two of the most hated profession in the world: a loan broker and a minister. I can relate what the Apostle Paul is saying here.

Verse 11: “To the present hour we both hunger and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and wander without a home.” He had a tough life—didn’t he? Think about it, he had a tough life.

Verse 12: “And we labor, working with our own hands.... [to please you self-righteous, stuck-up people over here in Corinth] ...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. I do not write these things to make you ashamed, but as my beloved children **I warn you**” (vs 12-14). That must have been a tough congregation that he had to write such a letter.

Verse 15: “For you might have ten thousand tutors in Christ...” That tells you a little of something—doesn’t it? Let’s get one of the clues as

to what was going on. They were having a ball back there. If you could advertise the Corinthian Church on television you would bring them in by the flocks. We have speaking in tongues; we have songs; we have super preachers; we have revelations.

Every Sunday night between 6-7 there’s nothing on TV and the news is so rotten and stupid I don’t want to watch it, so I flick back and forth between a couple of these religious channels, and there was one that clapped their hands and praised the Lord, and three songs later there were still going, sweating, screaming and yelling to come to this church, full of life and vigor!

That’s what the Corinthian Church was like—‘ten thousand’ teachers in Christ; everyone was a teacher, an expert.

2-Corinthians 11:4: “For indeed, if someone comes preaching another Jesus, whom we did not preach, or you receive a different spirit, which you did not receive... [from us] ...or a different gospel, which you did not accept... [from us] ...you put up with it as *something* good.” In other words they were putting up, ‘Oh, something new, we want to hear about it.’

Verse 5: “But I consider myself in no way inferior to those highly exalted *so-called* apostles.... [This not talking about the chief apostles in the Church. This means the hotshot super-duper apostles.] ...For although *I may be* unpolished in speech, yet, *I am* not in knowledge; for in all things I have demonstrated this to you” (vs 5-6).

Verse 13: “For such *are* false apostles—deceitful workers who are transforming themselves into apostles of Christ.” So, when you have this saying: ‘I am of Paul, I am of Apollos, I am of Cephus, I am of Christ...’ some of those who said they were of Christ were following those false apostles who said they were apostles of Christ. This was a confusing mad mess!

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—...” (vs 14-15). If those things had not been going on in the Church at Corinth why write the letters? Why write them? They had some wild, wild things going on there so bad, that Paul said:

1-Corinthians 4:15: “For you might have ten thousand tutors in Christ, but *you do not have* many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I did beget you through the Gospel. Therefore, I am exhorting you to be imitators of me” (vs 15-16). Then he modifies that ‘Follow me as I follow Christ’ (1-Cor. 11:1).

Verse 17: “For this cause I sent to you Timothy, who is my beloved son, and faithful in the Lord, who will remind you of my ways that *are* in Christ, exactly as **I teach everywhere in every church**. Now some of you are puffed up, as though I were not coming to you” (vs 17-18). They’re saying, ‘Oh well, this Apostle Paul, he really doesn’t have it all. This nice apostle over here, he’s a wonderful apostle’—one of these false ones sneaking in—‘he’s a got a lot of wonderful ideas, good ideas. Listen to him.’

Verse 19: “But I shall come to you shortly, if the Lord wills; and I will know not *merely* the words of those who are puffed up, but the power.... [whether they have the power of God or just the power of vanity] ...For the Kingdom of God *is* not in words, but in power. **What do you desire? Shall I come to you with a rod, or in love and a Spirit of meekness?**” (vs 19-21).

That’s tough! I have never had a letter written to me like that. That’s pretty tough; you think about it! Go back and review the other chapters up to here, because when we come 1-Cor. 5 he’s going to lay it on pretty heavy—it’s all pretty heavy all the way through. They were really letting things get all strung out and all under the grace of God, all under everyone’s a teacher and all this sort of thing.

What should happen with the Spirit of God and studying God’s Word? *The more you study it, the more you realize how fantastic and great it is, and how little you really know*, even though you know certain things up to this point.

Apparently they didn’t have anyone strong enough to control it the way that should have been controlled. However, even a strong man can only control it so long. Where does the control actually lie with the individual? *Within their own heart and mind!* It’s like the old phrase: ‘You can lead a horse to water, but you can’t make him drink.’ You can even take him out in the middle of the stream and drown the critter, and it still doesn’t want to drink.

It’s the same way: God tries the hearts and reins and you can have a strong person there. I’ve seen where there have been strong ministers, but if it isn’t from the heart and mind with each individual member there, they are going on the coattails of the strength of that man, and when he goes things will be different. When reading it, it really makes you wonder if they were ever really in the Church.

Paul says, ‘There are those of you in the Church who have not the knowledge of God.’ (1-Cor. 15:34). So, it does make you wonder. It shows you what can happen to a church when it deteriorates. Yes, you can have leadership—that’s fine, that’s

important—but you also to have faithfulness with each individual’s own part. You have to have the knowledge of God. You do have to come to the point that the whole purpose of the ministry is to fulfill what Jesus said, ‘It is sufficient that the disciple become as the master.’ That’s the whole purpose of the minister teaching; to bring people to that knowledge, to help them understand.

Not necessarily just control. You can do all kinds of things with controlling a group, but that doesn’t mean that they are necessarily developing Godly faith—there’s a vast difference.

1-Corinthians 15:34: “Awake to righteousness, and do not sin, for some *of you* do not have the knowledge of God. I say *this* to your shame.” That’s something! There were those who weren’t believing in the resurrection. There were some in the Church at Corinth saying that ‘the resurrection is past. We’re all going to heaven.’ It’s incredible!

I shake my head, but I have to say that I don’t know all the circumstances there, and God sure preserved this for us for a good reason. I know I wouldn’t want to pastor a church like this. I would be going stark raving mad; poor Paul, he really had it.

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

Scriptural References:

- 1) 1 Corinthians 3:11-15
- 2) 1 Peter 1:1-7
- 3) 1 Peter 4:12-13
- 4) Hebrews 12:1-11
- 5) 1 Peter 4:13-17
- 6) James 1:1-8
- 7) Jeremiah 12:3
- 8) Revelation 2:23
- 9) Romans 5:1-5
- 10) 1 Corinthians 3:16-17
- 11) Ephesians 2:20-22
- 12) 1 Corinthians 3:18-23
- 13) 1 Corinthians 4:1-15
- 14) 2 Corinthians 11:4-6, 13-15
- 15) 1 Corinthians 4:15-21
- 16) 1 Corinthians 15:34

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Revelation 3:14-21
- John 14:15
- Matthew 24:13
- 1 Corinthians 11:1

FRC:bo
Transcribed: 3-15-13

Epistle of First Corinthians IX Flee Sin!

Fred R. Coulter

I'm going to start this one a little differently. I'm going to pick up a little bit from a couple of statements that we made last week in 1-Corinthians 15:34: "Awake to righteousness, and do not sin, for some *of you* do not have the knowledge of God. I say *this* to your shame."

I have quite a few clippings here, all put together, and we're going to see why it's possible for this to happen. 2-Thess. 2 is going to be very important in the days that lie ahead, and why these things are going to happen.

2-Thessalonians 2:9: "*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 they did not receive the love of the Truth, so that they might be saved**" (vs 9-10). Remember that phrase "...**because they did not receive the love of the Truth**..."

- Thy Word is Truth
- I am the Way, the Life and the Truth
- Jesus is the Word

All those things tie together there.

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).

How is that going to take place? Before I read this, I just want to preface it with an article that my wife read that how most people look for churches *that fit their social inclinations*. They don't go to church for doctrine, but for *their social inclinations*.

Here's an article that was sent to me:

Some Reasons for the Perverted Society (no source given or found)

The perverted society that we live in.

Here are the results of a poll of Protestant clergymen conducted by socialist Jeffery Hayden. Hayden contacted 10,000 clergymen of whom 7,441 replied.

So, he had three-fourths reply.

The clergymen were asked whether they believed in the physical resurrection of Jesus from the grave. Fifty-one percent of the Methodists said that they did not

accept Jesus' resurrection as an historical fact.

You're going to be shaking your head when I'm done. That's just the first one. That's not too bad of one, really.

1-John 4:1: "Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world." This tells us something very important—doesn't it? Demonic spirits are with false prophets. That's what it says.

Verse 2: "By this *test* you *can* know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in *the* flesh is from God." Even the Catholics say that Jesus came in the flesh, but not quite, because Jesus did not have—according to Catholic doctrine—flesh as we have because He was born of the immaculate conception and did not have the 'law of sin and death' in Him, therefore, He wasn't like us; He was a little different than we are. The immaculate conception of Mary: Jesus was conceived immaculately; did not have the stain of Adam's sin on His soul, is the way the Catholics put it. They literally do not believe that Jesus came in the flesh, that is the flesh as you and I are. You can't understand that verse unless you believe that Jesus came in the flesh; that He Himself had 'the law of sin and death' in Him.

51% of the Methodists said they do not accept Jesus' resurrection as an historical fact

What are you going to base your Christianity on?

35% of the Presbyterians could not accept it

30% of the Episcopalian ministry could not

33% of the Baptists could not

13% of the American Lutherans could not

7% of the Missouri Synod Lutherans could not

The Missouri Synod Lutherans are those that split away when the Lutherans became more and more liberal back in the mid-sixties or the first part of the seventies. It says:

93% of the Synod Lutheran ministers believe in the resurrection of Christ.

Which is pretty good as Protestants go.

When asked if they believe in the virgin birth of Jesus is a biological miracle:

60% of the Methodists said *no*
so did:

44% of the Episcopalians
49% of the Presbyterians
44% of the Baptists
19% of the American Lutherans
5% of the Missouri Synod Lutherans

So, there is one group of the Protestants out here that still believe in the Bible.

When asked if they believed in Satan and the existence of evil, demonic powers,
62% of the Methodists said *no*

Just watch what's going to happen to the Methodist Church. They're the highest percentage of all. As did:

37% of the Episcopalians
40% of the Presbyterians
33% of the Baptists
14% of the American Lutherans

I suppose of the Missouri Synod Lutherans was 100% that believe in Satan, so they didn't even include them.

When asked if they believe the Bible is the inspired Word of God:

There's the basis to begin with. I just read the Scripture that *they received not the love of the Truth*.

82% of the Methodists said *no*

How are you going to preach out of the Word of God if you don't believe it? I mean, you might as well get Grimm's Fairytales. Just like I said, I wanted to preface this with the report that my wife read in the paper that most people go to church because it's a social thing, and they sort have their own little acceptance of love and joy. That's religion to them. It's a social thing.

Why even show up if the purpose of going to church is to have worship and contact with God somehow, and you don't believe that the Bible is His Word—why go? Yet, this is from clergymen; it's not just lay members. The ones standing in the pulpit—8 out of 10 of the Methodists' ministers, almost 9 out of 10—in attendance get up there and preach social this and social that.

We have right now in the State of California a self-esteem department, that the way for people to succeed is to have more self-esteem. Now what we need to do is find out how we can get self-esteem in Californians so they can love their neighbors more, because people with self-esteem treat others nicer. I'm not kidding; I'm serious, they have a board, a commission of 15 members.

They should have started with the Bible!
Can you truly love yourself if you don't love God?

If they're going to do it right they should have started in kindergarten.

89% of the Episcopalian clergy said they do not believe the Bible is the inspired Word of God
81% of the Presbyterians
57% of the American Lutherans
no figure was given for the Missouri Synod Lutherans

If most of them believe that the Bible is the Word of God, then one of these days they're going to have to answer the question concerning the Sabbath and other things.

A 1979 Gallop Poll survey: 49% of all Protestants and only 44% of all Catholics could name more than four of the Ten Commandments. But over 75% of all American's polled believe that the Bible is the Word of God.

'Oh yes, I believe it's the Word of God.' Would you obey it? *Well now, come on let's not get religious on us! I believe it's the Word of God, but don't apply it to me!* Typical American! It's amazing!

Gallop Poll—July 1984—Attitudes of the U.S.:

72% said they lie when a superior ask them to, that they would
63% said they take companies goods home when they can

One time right out here at this Ford Assembly Plant, right down in Freemont, they were going to call a special meeting and everyone thought that they were going to have a search that day, and all they were going to do was inform them of some company benefit. There were tools found lying all over the parking lot where they assembled them to talk to them because they thought they were going to have to go through the gate and be searched.

75% take time off when only mentally tired
76% consider society's honesty and integrity are on the decline
40% of college religion teachers and pastoral counselors believe that it is immoral for an unmarried man and woman to have sex.
16% think that adultery is wrong
87% did not believe that adultery should be a crime
91% believe the government should not regulate sex between homosexuals
53% thought that the legal system should limit marriage to opposite sex couples
71% would approve of a male homosexual teaching elementary school

They believe a lie because they don't receive the love of the Truth!

Here's another Bible thing in America; here are the facts:

Only half of those who attend church can name the four Gospels. Less than half know who delivered the Sermon on the Mount. Less than half could name three of the Ten Commandments. Of Evangelicals, 30% read the Bible daily; of mainline churches 17-26%; of Catholics 7%.

There's no knowledge of God in the land!

Hosea 4: "Hear the Word of the LORD, children of Israel, for the LORD *has* a controversy with the inhabitants of the land, 'There is no Truth, **nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land.**'" If there's not Truth, you can't love it! And if you tell them the Truth, you're a nut! You really are!

Verse 2: "By swearing, and lying, and killing..." I just saw a report that they're more murderers getting brutal with policemen. They don't even give the policemen a chance anymore. The policemen are getting gunned down before they even have a chance to draw a weapon. There was a funeral just last month in Florida where they buried eight policemen in different towns. It's getting crazy!

"...and stealing, and the committing of adultery they break out; and blood touches blood. Therefore, shall the land mourn..." Is the land mourning? *Yes, we're flooded over here, and drought over here, cold over here, and heat over here!* Is the land mourning? *Yes, it is!*

"...and everyone who dwells in it shall languish... [Is that true? *Yes, it is!* Every one of us is walking around with some little toxin in us.] ...with the beasts of the field and with the birds of the heavens. Yes, the fish of the sea shall also be taken away" (v 3).

El Nino is a strange thing. You figure putting a huge pot on your stove, on one burner, and figure how long it's going to take you—with ice cold water—to heat that. I want you to think in gigantic terms, because the Pacific Ocean was raised 15 degrees in temperature because of El Nino. To heat the ocean 15 degrees is a powerful amount of energy. Now we're inundated with catfish farms; it's unclean food—it's crazy!

Verse 6: "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I will also reject you from being as a priest to Me. Since you have forgotten the law of your God, I will also forget your children." This is reading today's newspaper, brethren, right here in

this prophecy.

Verse 7: "As they were increased, so they sinned against Me. I will change their glory into shame. They eat up the sin of My people, and they set their heart on their iniquity" (vs 7-8).

This is kind of a long way around to come into 1-Cor. 5, but I think this will help us understand what was going on there.

Verse 9: "And it has become, like people, like priest..." Priests are no longer Holy; a priest is not anything; priests no longer represent God.

"...and I will punish them for their ways, and reward them for their doings, For they shall eat and not have enough. They shall commit whoredom and not increase..." (vs 9-10). Isn't that what's happening; our population is going down proportionally. How many women cannot have children because they're infertile? How many are infertile because all they did was play around when they were younger—etc., etc. Same way with the men.

"...because they have stopped taking heed to the LORD. Whoredom and wine and new wine take away the heart" (v 11).

I want to read you an article here; this is a summary of the one that came up the day before. I just read to you about the Episcopal leaders; here they are; Episcopal leaders don't believe the inspired Word of God; don't believe in the virgin birth; don't believe there is Satan.

Episcopal Leaders Debate Sexual Issues: Priests divided on pre-marital sex:

In an emotionally charged debate Friday, leaders of the Episcopal churches Newark, N.J., diocese divided on a report that urges the church to give its blessing to sexual relations between homosexual, unmarried, divorced or widowed adult couples.

"I think we're crossing a line of advocacy and I don't want to be a part of it," said Chuck Meredith of Maywood. The Grotto's news stories about the report have prompted telephone calls from distressed parishioners in a proportion to nothing else. More than women entering the ministry, which occurred a decade ago.

They had a big furor and now they have women in the ministry. What happens when you have a big furor? Wherever it's a political thing and it's steamrolling and Satan is behind it, it's going to go in; you're guaranteed it's going to go in.

Other delegates to the diocese reported a similar flood of phone calls, some

supported the report. Because of the report we have people coming into the church looking for what we have to offer.

Isn't that wonderful! The 'First Church of Sodom' is going to open up right down the road here. It doesn't matter what your preference is.

The task force findings embraced by diocesan leader Bishop John Sprung, were a minority view among the nation's 3-million Episcopalians.

When they get down to the crunch and someone says 'The Bible says this...' They're going to say, 'That was written for a time long ago; that's not for us today. You really don't believe that the Word of God is for us today? How many of you learned ministers here believe the Word of God is for us today?' *No you don't!* We have to modify it—right? You know that's how they're going to answer it.

Today, the 200 priests and 500 lay members will vote on whether to distribute the report among the church's 55,000 members for debate. Sprung says that he intends to ignite national debate on sexual ethics with the report in hopes that it will prompt religious leaders to amend doctrine to embrace all believers.

How far should you amend doctrine to embrace all believers? That's sounds like a wonderful statement—doesn't it? 'We want to include everybody!' What if God amended everything so that all believers would come into the Church? What would you have to do?

James 2:19: "Do you believe that God is one? You do well *to believe this*. Even the demons believe—and tremble *in fear*." Let's take this statement to embrace *all* believers. If you extended it to that then you would have to also include even demons. It sounds like a good statement. We can understand all of these things; remember when we were talking about how the people are deceived by which sounds good and appears good? 'We don't want to exclude anybody. We love everybody.'

Members of the task force acknowledged to some 50 or so people who packed the hotel conference room to overflowing, but they did not attempt to include all points in the report. That prompted angry comments: 'Are we going to re-write the Bible?' shouted one priest.

Hey, at least someone is saying something!

The task force said that because attitudes toward marriage had changed as more women defer marriage and reject it for careers, the church should accept pre-marital sex.

You see what we're opening with this before we get to 1-Cor. 5.

Homosexuals also have as much right to worship God as heterosexuals.

Ah ha! The end-line of democracy is what? See where all this leads? You can take all those good sounding things...

Their rights to church recognition and ministry should not be ignored. Unselfish sexual relationships should be recognized if they maintain feeling, consideration, compassion, mutuality, concern for others.

Silly standard!

However, one of the 'reverends'—Al Salt of the All Saints Church in Millington—finds "no healing message in this doctrine at all. Homosexuals who have come to the knowledge of Christ can be healed of homosexuality."

He apparently one of the few that still believes in God.

That comment drew moans of disapproval, quoted one: "I am tired of hearing that homosexuality is a sickness. There is no convincing moral basis for homosexuality being a sickness."

How should we react toward these people? *It's answered in 1-Cor. 5!* I would say this, there are some people who would go so far as to be zealous and take the sword of the Lord in their hand and kill them. Obviously, we shouldn't do that. Obviously, we can't go to the other extreme and say, 'God loves everybody regardless of who you are and what you are.' There are the two extremes.

How should we view them? *I'll tell you how I view them!* I have to do business with them. I just completed a loan for homosexuals that owned a home. I do business with them; that's it!

If you know anyone who is or a relative who is and pray for them to the extent that God deals in their lives, that they would come to the understanding of what they need to deal with, but let it go at that.

The same way with someone who is thief. Keep everything locked up! What if someone in your family came down with AIDS, you'd hate to have someone turn their back on them completely. There comes a point where everybody has to stand on their own alone whether for good or whether for evil.

I don't know whether God is going to reject them or not. That's not my judgment to make. But He has punished them for their sin and he's punishing the whole society because a greater

proportion of the society than ever before are homosexuals; therefore, God is punishing with fury! If you don't think AIDS is fury; *it is fury!*

Just like a read a couple of weeks ago concerning King Manasseh when he let the land become filled with demonism and things like this, much innocent blood was shed!

- It's a shame that babies are born with AIDS!
- It's a shame that people who are hemophiliacs and get transfusions and come down with AIDS!
- It's a shame that these things take place!

However, it gets back to where, if somewhere along the line, however close or far back, that were not these sins against God, they wouldn't be getting AIDS.

God is going to have to take care of that. But one thing we need to understand is, we do not need to accept the argument of all of the 'bleeding hearts.' God is going to take care of it in the long run and in His way. In the meantime, because as I've just read to you in Hosea 4, 'because you've forgotten God, I'll forget your children.' That's exactly what we're seeing. People have forgotten God, so they say, 'Oh, God, why did You do this to my children. That's part of you. We're responsible for our children.'

We are responsible to take care of our lives so that before we're married we can come into a marriage with an acceptable inheritance and sexual life that is going to result in the kind of children that God can bless. When people don't do that they cut themselves off from God! Those results happen. I don't care if it's in America; I don't care what country, race, nationality, whatever, that's His living law that God has set forth.

How far should someone go in taking care of someone, a family member, who has AIDS? Sooner or later you're going to have to get to the point of what it was in the Bible, to quarantine those who have those kinds of communicable diseases. When they get to the point—and I've seen some of the pictures of those in the hospital and things like this who have AIDS—that they are at, they're going to have to suffer on their own.

Sure you can comfort them, sure you can do all those kinds of things, but nobody is learning a lesson out of it. Everyone is 'bleeding hearts' about it; it's incredible! I don't know if their exposed or contaminated; you may have to wait 6-10 years before you really know. But that's the thing about it, the whole lesson is that no one who is going to defy God; no one is going to mock God and get away with it.

If you have to take care of someone like that, you would have to take every precaution to keep clean. Make sure you are clean; make sure that you don't carry any of that around; you make sure that you take a bath everyday and put on clean clothes everyday, and if you're going to take care of someone that had hepatitis and is ready to die, you'd have to do that. However, if I were compelled, and in a circumstance to do it, I would take care of whomever I had to take care of, but I would put them in an isolated room and I would make sure that they were clean, comfortable, and I would wear gloves and a mask at all times. Hepatitis is not as deadly as AIDS.

Let's go to 1-Corinthians 5. This has been a long way around 'the mulberry bush' to start out, but it gives us a little better understanding.

1-Corinthians 5:1: "*It is commonly reported that there is sexual immorality [fornication (KJV)] among you...*" Fornication is from the Greek word 'porneia' from which we get the English word *pornography*—photographs of 'porneia.' Porneia is not restricted to the English word *fornication*. The English meaning of *fornication* means heterosexual relations before marriage; that is *fornication*. The Greek word 'porneia' means *any sexual relationship outside of marriage*, be it homosexual, heterosexual, and also includes the term 'adultery.' Adultery we will cover when we get to 1-Cor. 7, when we talk about marriages that are binding or marriages that are not binding.

"...commonly reported..." In other words, it's understood by the whole congregation. 'Oh, look at that guy.' *Yeah, that's the one who sleeps with his mother-in-law.* 'Oh, but they have a wonderful spiritual church. Judge not lest you be judged.' You can hear it all! "...commonly reported..." *Oh well, that doesn't bother me, I'm in the 'revelation' group over here.*

"...to the and such immorality as is not even named among the Gentiles..." (v 1). That's a little exaggeration on Paul's part there, because we're going to read that the ones who were kicked out of the land of Canaan had that plus much more.

"...—allowing one to have *his own* father's wife.... [apparently with his stepmother.] ...You are puffed up..." (vs 1-2). Why did they get puffed up?

1-Corinthians 3:3: "For you are still carnal...." That's why they're puffed up. They thought they were spiritual.

1-Corinthians 4:18: "Now **some of you are puffed up**, as though I were not coming to you." Just like these things that I've read to you out of this report which say that we should 'accept all' sexual relationships if they manifest healing, reconciliation,

compassion, mutual concern for others. That's puffed up! That's the biggest example of puffed up religious nonsense that I've heard in years. It's amazing how that fits in exactly right here: *they are puffed up!*

1-Corinthians 5:2: "You are puffed up and did not grieve instead..." They should have mourned to clean this thing up instead of standing around talking about it. 'He's such a nice young man, and his mother-in-law is so nice. It must be something that God wouldn't condemn.' I can almost hear it!

"...so that he who did this deed might be taken out of your midst. For I indeed, being absent in body but present in spirit, have already judged *concerning* him who has so *shamelessly* committed this *evil deed* as if I were present. **In the name...**" (vs 2-4). Very seldom do you see the Apostle Paul say:

"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 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. Your glorying *is* not good...." (vs 2-6). That's exactly what we just read here. We're an educated society. You shall accept all people as long as they are loving, healing, reconciling, and after all, homosexuals have right to worship God as well as anybody else.

Verse 6: "Your glorying *is* not good. Don't you know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? Therefore, purge out the old leaven, so that you may become a new lump, *even* as you are unleavened. For Christ our Passover was sacrificed for us" (vs 6-7).

Now maybe we can get the emphasis on it. I don't like to go through all kinds of things like this. Very seldom do I bring a sermon like this, but there it is in the Bible and we have to cover that when it's appropriate. I tell you one thing, when you see and understand what Jesus Christ has done, which you can't see. If you're following Paul; if you're following Peter; if you're following Apollos or those apostles that say they're following Christ, and you're going down the wrong way, you can't understand what it is about the sacrifice of Jesus Christ and what that means to you as an individual in what God has done for you.

You're all blinded by the self-justification of your own sins! It blinds you! I'm not talking about this congregation, I'm using 'you' as a generic term. We're beyond that. I'm talking about 'you' in a general sense of people. If someone comes up and condemns a homosexual for his acts, he is going to justify it. That is being 'puffed up.' He doesn't know

anything about Christ. How can a homosexual worship Christ unless he's repentant? There's no way! It's impossible! That's why it's saying, 'I'll meet you at sunrise when it sets.'

Whether these people will be saved or not is not for us to judge. We leave that in God's hands. Our judgment is limited to the Church. We can judge and see how the society is going.

Verse 8: "For this reason, let us... [those who are Christians] ...keep the Feast, not with old leaven, nor with *the* leaven of malice and wickedness, but with *the* unleavened *bread* of sincerity and Truth. I wrote to you in an epistle... [this was an ongoing problem; he's referring to another letter] ...not to associate with the sexually immoral..." (vs 8-10)—in the Church, because they shouldn't be *in the Church*.

"...and yet, you *can* not altogether *avoid contact* with the sexually immoral of this world..." (v 10). You're going to go out and have contact. You'll meet homosexuals. You'll meet people who are 'shacking up' and all this sort of thing. You deal with them in the world in a different sense: treat them nicely and decently; you don't accept their sins, but you don't castigate them and reject them as individuals.

(go to the next track)

You don't bring them into your home and make them part of your family. It's a matter of being decent to people in the world regardless of who or what they are. But if it gets down to the nitty-gritty and they try and foist something off upon you, you reject it. And if you have to, let them have it.

Verse 9: "I wrote to you in an epistle..." there is reference to at least two other writings, perhaps three.

1-Corinthians 7:1: "Now concerning the things that you wrote to me..." So, they wrote to him. They were communicating back and forth.

1 Corinthians 5:9: "I wrote to you in an epistle not to associate with the sexually immoral; and yet, you *can* not altogether *avoid contact* with the sexually immoral of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or idolaters, since you would then have to go out of the world" (vs 9-10). Sometimes we wish we could; put me in this little capsule and send me into orbit and get away from this evil place.

Here they had the same problem exactly. How do I handle this problem? I've got mother-in-law, sister-in-law, my uncle, my aunt or somebody and they are devotees of Zeus, and they have pictures of Zeus all over their house. I won't ever set foot in their house. Or someone who is a fornicator,

or whatever, you have to conduct business and live in the world.

You go to the grocery store and you don't know what the clerk's moral background is. You don't know if they're stealing from the boss. You don't know if they're embezzling out of the cash register or if they're taking goods home. You don't know anything about them. You talk to them or you checkout your groceries or ask them to bring you something from the backroom and you go on about your business. All these things come from within, which we'll see in a little bit.

Verse 11: "But now, I have written to you not to associate with anyone who is called a brother, if *he be* either sexually immoral, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such a person *you are* not even to eat." This is where then you have the famous or infamous—however you want to look at it—authority to disfellowship, which we've seen the abuses of it, and I'm not going to belabor the point.

Verse 12: "For what *responsibility* do I have to judge those who are outside *the Church?*...." That's your answer.

- We don't judge whether they're going to be saved or not; *God's going to take care of whether they're saved or not!*
- We don't judge whether they will repent or not; *God's will judge whether they repent or not!*

We've got all we can do to take care of ourselves.

"...Are not you yourselves to judge those who are within? But God judges those who are outside. So then, **put the wicked person out from among yourselves**" (vs 12-13). It's to be out of the Church. You're not get rid of them in society.

You couldn't even raise up someone worse than Hitler to get rid of all the sinful people in the world, just to get rid of them. There's no way, because sin is in the heart.

Let's look at some other Scriptures that go along with this. First of all, I want to start out with the 'flee' Scriptures. It is amazing! It is used four times in the New Testament for specific things.

1-Corinthians 6:18: "**Flee sexual immorality**.... [that's an extension of 1-Cor. 5] ...Every sin that a man may commit is outside the body... [If you steal something—unless it's something to eat—it's outside your body.] ...but the one who commits sexual immorality is sinning against his own body." There is no mental rational defense against it.

Once you let lust and emotions get involved,

there is no man or woman who has the strength to completely resist on their own. They may put up a good fight for a long time; resist for a long time, but in the long run the only protection is *flee fornication! Get away from it!*

This Church at Corinth was something! I imagine after the Apostle Paul they had debates like the Episcopalians. 'All these good people in Corinth, we can't...our membership is going down because we're to hard-lined now.

1-Corinthians 10:14: "Therefore, my beloved, **flee from idolatry.**"

Example: The other day we had to go way out south of Hollister finishing up a loan for this one family. They built a nice new house and they needed permanent financing on their loan. I called her and said that I had a couple of things that they needed to sign to get it finalized and I'll bring it out. They lived about ten miles out from where we lived, but the road was closed going south, so I had to go clear around and come in the back way.

Delores and I went out there and this woman was very religious. She belonged to the Apostolic Church. She liked doing business with me because she knows I'm a minister. I haven't told her that we believe in the Sabbath and all this sort of thing, just a few general things.

So, she was showing my wife the house, and she let it be known that she just came off a three-day spiritual fast. What did Jesus say about fasting? *When you fast, you do it to God!* Anyway she let us know that she had a three-day spiritual fast. She was taking Delores around to show her the house and she said, 'Here's my prayer closet.' Doesn't the Bible say that when you pray enter in to your closet...' So, she opened up her little prayer closet and there was a 'wonderful picture of Jesus' with long hair and all this sort of thing.

It says here "...flee from idolatry." It can be in those churches that think they're Christian. It's amazing! I tell you, brethren, as a minister I'm getting an education studying this book myself. I mean, *literally!* It's one thing to study on your own, it's another thing to sit down and prepare it for a Bible Study for everyone.

These next Scriptures are 'flee' Scriptures for ministers. I know ministers that would have been better off if they fled these things.

1-Timothy 6:3: "If anyone teaches any different doctrine, and does not adhere to sound words, *even those* of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the doctrine *that is* according to Godliness... [that excludes everything that I just read in the report] ...he is proud... [puffed up] ...and knows nothing.

Rather, he has a morbid attraction to questions and disputes over words..." (vs 3-4).

Remember what we just read in this report; they're arguing: should we let them in the church or not let them in the church. No one has asked God!

"...from which come envy, arguments, blasphemy, wicked suspicions, vain reasonings of men who have been corrupted in *their* minds and *are* destitute of the Truth—*men* who believe that gain... [money or members] ...is Godliness. From such withdraw *yourself*. But Godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into the world, and *it is* evident that neither do we have the power to carry anything out *of the world*" (vs 4-7). Amen to that!

Verse 8: "But having food and clothing, we should be satisfied with these, for those who desire to become rich fall into temptation and a snare, and many foolish and hurtful lusts, which cause men to sink into destruction and perdition. For the love of money is a root of all evils; *by* which some, *while* striving after *riches*, were seduced from the faith, and have impaled themselves with many sorrows. But you, O man of God, **flee these things** and pursue righteousness, Godliness, faith, love, endurance *and* meekness. Fight the good fight of the faith! Take hold of eternal life to which you were also called, and did profess a good profession in the presence of many witnesses" (vs 8-12).

2-Timothy 2:22: "But **flee youthful lusts...** [What does this tell us about that Greek society? *There were many temptations!* He had to tell Timothy twice, 'Get away from these things, man! Don't let them pull you down!'] ...and pursue righteousness, faith, love *and* peace with those who are calling on the Lord out of a pure heart."

There are the four 'flee' Scriptures of the New Testament:

- flee idolatry
- flee fornication
- flee evil
- *Flee all of those things; get away from them!*

There's one place in the Old Testament where that literally took place, and that was with Joseph; with the first man that took care of him after he was sold into slavery. The wife kept coming around and saying, 'sleep with me.' *No! I wouldn't want to sin against my master.* Then she ripped off his cloak and ran running screaming to the other servants, 'Oh, I've been raped.' He went to prison because he said *no!* He fled! He obeyed God!

What if you purged the whole earth of this? You started out again and you had only two

descendants and started all over again just like with Noah and his wife and his three sons. A fresh start! Hooray! No more sin! God buried it all! Just give it a little time and you're going to have trouble.

Mark 7:21—this is where it comes from: "For from within, out of the hearts of men, go forth evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications... [adultery and fornication are different; there Jesus makes a distinction. Fornication is any kind of 'porneia' act.] ...murders."

Isn't it interesting that the possession of these thoughts all sort of run together. You watch the news, you're going to find someone who is involved in stealing or drugs and they're going to be involved in illicit sex. Sooner or later they all go hand-in-hand. If you commit adultery or fornication you're stealing. Did you know that? *Stealing from that person's marriage! or their future generation! or their children!*

It has to do with sex before marriage, or any kind of sex activity, before marriage or during marriage. Adultery has to do with only illegal heterosexual activities. The other includes everything else. Just remember: fornication—'porneia'—pornography. Remember those three things and you'll remember it.

Verse 22: "Thefts, covetousness, wickednesses, guile, licentiousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness; **all these evils go forth from within, and these defile a man**" (vs 22-23).

There are even those who are advocating this: Remember the supposed organization 'Just Say No' and how that Mrs. Reagan was the one who supposedly started it when someone asked her how can a person stop from taking drugs, and she said, 'Just say no'? So, they had this whole movement with young people to 'Just Say No' to drugs.

Now they've got a whole movement of 'Just Say No to Sex Before Marriage.' It's amazing! Sooner or later, because the penalties coming around, God is going to grind it back on them. A lot of these psychologists when I was going to college you would read about Freud. They would always decry the Victorian Age in England. The Victorian Age was setup as the 'prudent' age. Women wore dresses clear down to the floor with sleeves to the wrists; and how that no one should ever enter into any kind of sex unless it is in marriage.

Well, they forget the historical background that led up to that. Europe was almost desolate. Twenty-five percent of the population died because of syphilis. There was a reason for the Victorian Age. Whereas there's a new Victorian Age coming;

and AIDS is going to be the reason. We can see part of it in these organizations like 'Just Say No To Any Sex Before Marriage.' This is a contract; a pre-nuptial contract that you hereby swear before God that you haven't had AIDS. You wait and see, there will be those contracts.

There's a reason, because there's a backlash. God puts an automatic check when a population goes so far and He slams the door on them. They better come to their senses or they're going to die. The only thing they respect is when there's death.

Leviticus 18:1: "And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 'Speak to the children of Israel and say to them, "**I am the LORD your God.**"'" (vs 1-2). Whenever you see where God says, *I am the LORD your God*, you might want to put a little star by it. All through the way through the book of Leviticus and Ezekiel, He says, 'I am the LORD' or 'The mouth of the LORD has spoken it.' Whenever it says that, God it's getting your attention! There's more emphasis!

Verse 3: "As they do in the land of Egypt where you dwelt, **you shall not do**. And **you shall not do** as they do in the land of Canaan, where I am bringing you. **Neither shall you walk in their ordinances.**"

Revelation 11:8 talks about this society and it's epitomized in the city of Jerusalem: "And their bodies *will lie* in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified." That's the way God looks at this society. And you know something, that's what that city is going to represent. I got a Time Magazine article where all the religious leaders gathered at CC; it shows how the pope did it, and he's the one who called it.

I mentioned about the coming new religion. It's going to come! Who believes in the Bible anymore? It's going to be so easy. Just do some miracles, heal some people, say everyone is lovely, wonderful and good—*Sodom and Egypt!* Not only does it tell us what it is spiritually, but it also tells us what the sexual morality will be physically.

Leviticus 18:3: "**As they do in the land of Egypt...** [It tells us what they did here] ...where you dwelt, you shall not do. And you shall **not do as they do in the land of Canaan**, where I am bringing you. **Neither shall you walk in their ordinances.** You shall do My judgments and keep My ordinances, and walk in them. **I am the LORD your God.** And you shall keep My statutes and My judgments, which if a man does, he shall live in them. **I am the LORD**" (vs 3-5).

What is the biggest sexual problem today? *Incest!* The unspoken sexual crime! The Bible deals

with it.

Verse 6: "None of you shall approach to any who are near of kin to him to uncover *their* nakedness. **I am the LORD.**" *To uncover their nakedness* is a polite expression *to come toward them in a manner of sexual activity!* If they were truly, in the city of Corinth, trying to follow the Bible; they had the Bible with Lev. 18.

Verse 7: "You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father or the nakedness of your mother. She *is* your mother; you shall not uncover her nakedness. **You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father's wife.** It *is* your father's nakedness" (vs 7-8). There it is! A direct commandment.

We saw the same thing when there were sexual sins within the Worldwide Church of God. Instead of those being exposed, what happened? *We had vanity! Puffed up!* Instead of getting rid of the sin, they got all puffed up with their projects and their own greatness.

Verse 9: "You shall not uncover the nakedness of your sister, the daughter of your father or the daughter of your mother, born at home or born away. Their nakedness you shall not uncover. The nakedness of your son's daughter, or of your daughter's daughter, you shall not uncover their nakedness, for theirs *is* your own nakedness. You shall not uncover the nakedness of the daughter of your father's wife, begotten of your father. She *is* your sister. You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father's sister. She *is* your father's near kinswoman. You shall not uncover the nakedness of your mother's sister. She *is* your mother's near kinswoman. You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father's brother. You shall not approach his wife. She *is* your aunt. You shall not uncover the nakedness of your daughter-in-law. She *is* your son's wife. You shall not uncover her nakedness. You shall not uncover the nakedness of your brother's wife. It *is* your brother's nakedness. You shall not uncover the nakedness of a woman and her daughter, neither shall you undertake to uncover her son's daughter, or her daughter's daughter. They *are* her near kinswomen; it *is* wickedness. Nor shall you take a woman along with her sister as wives, causing rivalry to uncover her nakedness during her lifetime. Also you shall not approach to a woman to uncover her nakedness in the impurity of her uncleanness. And you shall not lie carnally with your neighbor's wife to defile yourself with her. And you shall not let any of your children pass through *the fire* to Molech, neither shall you profane the name of your God. **I am the LORD**" (vs 9-21).

Have you ever wondered why that verse was put there? It seems to change topics—doesn't it? A

lot of these frenzied sex acts took place after they had their dancing and whipping around the fire and jumping over the coals. They had their potions and drugs and all of those things. Society is no different! Opium poppies grew back then as well as now.

Verse 22: “You shall not lie with mankind as with womankind. It is an abomination *to God*. And you shall not lie with any animal to defile yourself with it. And a woman shall not stand before an animal to lie down to it. It *is* a perversion. Do not defile yourselves in any of these things, for in all these the nations which I cast out before you are defiled. And the land is defiled....” (vs 22-25). It affects everything! True ecology begins with the *love of God*! It really does!

“...Therefore, I visit its wickedness against it, and the land itself vomits out those who live in it.... [Brethren, in this nation it is coming!] ...You shall therefore keep My statutes and My judgments, and shall not commit *any* of these abominations, *neither* the native, nor any stranger that lives among you; for the men of the land who *were* before you have done all these abominations, and the land is defiled. *You shall not do these* so that the land may not spew you out also when you defile it, as it spewed out the nations that *were* before you; for whoever shall commit *any* of these abominations, even the souls who commit *them* shall be cut off from among their people. And you shall keep My ordinance, so as not to do *any* of these abominable customs which were committed before you, and that you do not defile yourselves in them. **I am the LORD your God**” (vs 25-30).

I don't know how anyone could misunderstand that; that is plain straight Scripture. Just think what a glorious and wonderful land; what glorious and wonderful children that this whole nation could have if it only adhered to the one law: *you shall not commit adultery!* Of course, all of these other laws fit under the Ten Commandments. Just that one commandment; it would be amazing!

We wouldn't have to have the March of Dimes for birth defects, because there wouldn't be any. God would bless instead of curse. We wouldn't have to have research to try and get a vaccine for AIDS, and spend billions to try and take care of them.

Let's go back and cover the things concerning the Church and then what is called *spiritual fornication*. Ephesians 5 is the opposite. I imagine the Apostle Paul loved the Church at Ephesus and the Church at Philippi. Just reading those two epistles, he loved those two churches. He was inspired to write inspiring and uplifting letters to both of them.

Ephesians 5:1: “Therefore, be imitators of

God, as beloved children.” What a difference in attitude. Just think of the difference that he's saying to these people compared to the Corinthians.

Verse 2: “And walk in love, even as Christ also loved us, and gave Himself for us *as* an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savor. But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, **do not permit it even to be named among you**, as is fitting for saints” (vs 2-3). Quite a different tone!

In Corinth Paul is saying, ‘Get that guy out of this church! You people, don't you know!’ What a difference. As I said before, I would not have wanted to pastor the Church in Corinth. But it shows you how much that the Church can be corrupted and how much God will put up with if there is real repentance.

Verse 4: “Nor filthiness, nor foolish talking or jesting, which are not becoming; but instead, thanksgiving. For this you know that no fornicator, or unclean person, or covetous *person*, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the Kingdom of Christ and of God. Do not let anyone deceive you with vain words...” (vs 4-6). They had a few problems with deceivers, too.

“...for because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience” (v 6). Paul is saying that Lev. 18 was in full force during his day.

Verse 7: “Therefore, do not be joint partakers with them.... [the children of disobedience in the world] ...For you were once darkness; but now *you are* light in *the* Lord. Walk as children of light, (because the fruit of the Spirit *is* in all goodness and righteousness and Truth); proving what is well pleasing to the Lord; and have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose *them*; for it is shameful even to mention the things being done by them in secret” (vs 7-12). Quite a different situation there in that Church.

Now let's cover one other aspect of fornication where it is used in the Bible, where it talks about the *great whore*; Revelation 17:1: “And one of the seven angels who had the seven vials came and spoke with me, saying to me, ‘Come here; I will show you the judgment of the great whore who sits upon many waters; with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication...’” (vs 1-2)—that they have their ‘religious’ alliance with this spiritual Babylonian whore!

Incidentally, the gold that is being mined and processed in the Philippines is being handled by the middleman who guarantees purity, weight and delivery. Do you know who the middleman of that is of those transactions? *The Vatican!* I read it in the

newspaper.

As far as what's going on in the world, we're stupid, ignorant and dumb—and I include myself! I don't want to be enlightened to what's going on in the world. If you want to really be discouraged, you just see if there's any way you can save this world with any movement of men. It won't work! "...with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication..." They've embraced that 'religion' rather than the Truth of God, rather than worshipping God.

"...and those who dwell on the earth were made drunk with the wine of her fornication." (v 2). What happens with a drunk person? *They can't see straight! They can't think straight! They can't understand!* Furthermore, you can't talk to them because they're in such a stupor they can't understand you anyway. Many go zonkers and wake up with a hangover and they won't remember a word.

Now maybe you can understand why the two witnesses are going to come on with such power. Maybe you can understand why the two witnesses, when they speak, fire is going to come out of their mouths and devour the adversaries. That will be something! It really is! It's called fornication because it's greater than adultery. It's worse than adultery.

Revelation 18:2: "And he cried out mightily with a loud voice, saying, 'Babylon the Great is fallen, is fallen, and has become a habitation of demons, and a prison of every unclean spirit, and a prison of every unclean and hated bird; because **all nations have drunk of the wine of the fury of her fornication**, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth have become rich through the power of her luxury.' And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, '**Come out of her, My people, so that you do not take part in her sins**, and that you do not receive of her plagues, for her sins have reached as far as heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities'" (vs 2-5).

So, the day is coming! The day is going to come! When it comes, when God sets His hand, look out! It's going to be something! I want to be way out of the way before that happens, literally. I want to be out of it, completely. Like it says: "...Come out of her, My people..." **out if it!** It's something the days we're living in.

This Bible is more real and living than ever before right today while we sit here and study it. There things are happening and going on just incredibly. And it's an amazing thing:

- the more that you study the Bible
- the more that you love God
- the more that you believe His Word
- the more that you understand
- the more that these things become alive and real to you

One of the tremendous things that we have been experiencing today in our little group here, I tell you, it's something!

Revelation 19:1: "And after these things I heard *the* loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, 'Hallelujah!.... [These are all of those on the Sea of Glass; it's going to be us! When this system goes down, we're going to say, 'Praise God! 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, **who corrupted the earth with her fornication**, and He has avenged the blood of His servants at her hand.'" (vs 1-2). All of this is going to be put down and we'll look forward to the marriage supper of the Lamb.

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

Scriptural References:

- 1) 1 Corinthians 15:34
- 2) 2 Thessalonians 2:9-12
- 3) 1 John 4:1-2
- 4) Hosea 4:1-3, 6-11
- 5) James 2:19
- 6) 1 Corinthians 5:1-2
- 7) 1 Corinthians 3:3
- 8) 1 Corinthians 4:18
- 9) 1 Corinthians 5:2-10
- 10) 1 Corinthians 7:1
- 11) 1 Corinthians 5:9-13
- 12) 1 Corinthians 10:14
- 13) 1 Timothy 6:3-12
- 14) 2 Timothy 2:22
- 15) Mark 7:21-23
- 16) Leviticus 18:1-3
- 17) Revelation 11:8
- 18) Leviticus 18:3-30
- 19) Ephesians 5:1-12
- 20) Revelation 17:1-2
- 21) Revelation 18: 2-5
- 22) Revelation 19:1-2

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Transcribed: 3-15-13

Epistle of First Corinthians X Sins and Disfellowshipment

Fred R. Coulter

Let's just review 1-Corinthians 5 a little bit. We have the problem in the case of the fornication (v 1) and they were all puffed up in their vanity. Paul said to 'put this one out.' What I want to cover is that the word *fornication* comes from the Greek 'porneia'—*sexual licentiousness*; any kind of perversion.

Whenever a nation perverts its morals; there are two things that destroy a nation:

1. perverted morals
2. idolatry

They go hand-in-hand; every one of them do.

We'll see what happens when people get so involved in 'porneia.' That's all you can say a great deal of television is anymore. It's just 'porneia'; that's all it is. Every movie has got to have some sort of sex thing in it. No man can appear unless he's a woman-luster. No woman can appear unless she's a man-seducer. There is hardly anything except on the Disney Channel where you can see anything that's decent. It just is not there! The problem is, we think—as we look at it—that it's kind of an aberration of TV. That's reflecting a large portion of the society.

If you don't believe it, the next time you go shopping and you've got this rock music pounding in your head, and you're going nearly insane because you can't stand it, just realize that the other people there can't shop without it. They are just getting their brains beat up with this rock music and all the satanism and demonism and sexuality that comes with it.

Romans 1:28: "And in exact proportion as they did not consent to have God in *their* knowledge, **God abandoned them to a reprobate mind...**"—*a mind void of judgment and discernment*. That means they cannot understand how God would even be concerned with their moral behavior. After all, 'what we need to do is send out an avalanche of condoms, fill the country with condoms. Every restaurant, every bar, every school, every restroom will now have a condom vending machine.'

I just heard on the news: You know the traditional college blast they have during spring break in Florida, where all the college students go supposedly for sunshine; they go down for sexual fun and games. If they will not let the hotels and motels pass out condoms, they are going to have

people strolling up and down the beaches passing out condoms.

From the point of view of being a little funny or humorous it is, but I want us to understand how absolutely reprobate that kind of thinking is, because they aren't telling people: 'Listen, the inheritance of the future generation is involved in sex, and you're destroying that generation.'

Instead of passing out condoms, they ought to take them to the insane asylum; they ought to take them to the cripple children's hospital; they ought to show them rotten bodies of people dying of AIDS and say, 'You do this and you are going to die in the same manner!' Maybe they'd get some sense in their heads!

The reprobate mind follows along the way of human reasoning. I'm sure that all of you have memorized this Scripture: ***There is a way that seems right to a man, and the ends thereof are the ways of death!*** There is nothing more destructive than idolatry and fornication.

As Paul said: 'He that sins against his own body' (Rom. 6), idolatry says that if you bow down to idols, God is going to bring that upon the third and fourth generation. Now they're finding that a lot of these diseases that we have are third and fourth generation diseases because people being people were promiscuous way back when.

I think this society is reaching an extreme proportion. Not only reprobate minds, you couldn't even get on the TV to stand up there and say, 'Thank God for AIDS so that we will know who is promiscuous; and if you don't stop, God is going to kill all of you!' I couldn't even get a ten second spot like that on television. I would be thought of as insane, stupid, representing an unloving, unkind, hateful, cruel, wrathful God—right? ***Right!*** I don't even think I could get out of the station alive, because there would be the homosexual engineers waiting to catch me at the door with I nice friendly little knife to put into my fifth rib!

Now let's go back and see in 1-Corinthians 10:5: "But with many of them God was not pleased...[not only what He not well pleased, He was angry] ...for their dead bodies were strewn in the wilderness. Now, these things became examples for us, so that we might not lust after evil things, as they also lusted. Neither be idolaters, as *were* some of them; as it is written, 'The people sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play'" (vs 5-7). That's

exactly what they do today!

Verse 8: “Neither should we commit sexual immorality... [fornication (KJV)] ...as some of them committed, and twenty-three thousand were destroyed in one day.” The word ‘fornication’ refers to men who were married and who went out and committed ‘fornication’ with the women of Midian. We will see the implications of that.

It says 24,000 in the book of Numbers; let’s read that account. I think we’re going to find that this is a most noteworthy occurrence that took place. Balak hired Balaam and Balaam came out to curse. He got the money, but he couldn’t curse; all he could do is bless. Then he got Balak off to the side and said, ‘I’ll tell you what to do, since you can’t curse these people, let them curse themselves. Get all your women and line them up along the border and you tell them to wave all the men over and come and have a feast with these women. Then God will destroy them.’

Talk about the way that people think. Kidnappers are almost as evil as Balaam. ‘We’re going to kill the hostages; but we’re not going to kill the hostages if you negotiate for the 400 prisoners in Israel. Just back and forth evil, just stretching everybody’s emotions up and down and back and forth.... As a nation and a people we have gone so far that there is nothing we can do that is right, because anything we try to do is just like God said to Jeremiah said, ‘Don’t even pray for these people, because what I’m going to do, I’m going to do!’ Maybe that will help you understand what’s going on in politics. There isn’t anything that can be done that is right; it’s past that point.

Numbers 25:1: “And Israel dwelt in Acacia Grove, and the people began to commit whoredom with the daughters of Moab. And they called the people to the sacrifices of their gods. And the people ate and bowed down to their gods” (vs 1-2).

Every time I read that I just shake my head! Here they were, they saw the pillar of cloud everyday, that gave them cloud covering so that they didn’t have to have the intense heat of the desert. And they had the pillar of fire by night. God was there with them; yet, they went right out and provoked God here.

Verse 3: “And Israel joined himself to Baal Peor. And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel. And the LORD said to Moses, ‘Take all the heads of the people and impale them before the LORD facing the sun, so that the fierce anger of the LORD may be turned away from Israel.’” (vs 3-4).

That’s a strong statement! ‘Go out there and

get all these people and cut their heads off and string them up before Me.’ How mad do you have to get for a God Who says, ‘I’m merciful and gracious and kind and loving.’ How angry does He have to be to say that?

Verse 5: “And Moses said to the judges of Israel, ‘Every one of you kill his men who were joined to Baal Peor.’ And behold, a man of the children of Israel came and brought to his brethren a woman of Midian, in the sight of Moses...” (vs 5-6). Talk about gall! Talk about rebellious! You hear the independence of the American spirit; here it is right at work. ‘How dare that Moses tell me not to have any of this; I’m going to get me one right now and bring it right in front of him.’ So, he did!

“...and in the sight of all the congregation of the children of Israel, who *were* weeping before the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.... [All the children of Israel that were repenting with weeping. ‘God, what a sad state of affairs!’] ...And when Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, saw *it*, he rose up from among the congregation and took a spear in his hand” (vs 6-7). Here’s one of these pacifist priests (I say that in jest)!

He took a javelin in his hand, v 8: “And he went after the man of Israel into the tent... [snuck into the tent] ...and pierced both of them through, the man of Israel, and the woman, through her belly. So, the plague was stayed from the children of Israel. And those that died in the plague were twenty-four thousand” (vs 8-9). That’s what Paul is referring to. ‘They sat down to eat and drink and rose up to play.’ That’s what it means.

Verse 10: “And the LORD spoke to Moses saying, ‘Phinehas the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, has turned My wrath away from the children of Israel in that he was zealous for My sake among them, so that I did not destroy the children of Israel in My jealousy’” (vs 10-11). They were committing idolatry by going after other gods and fornication. There it is together, *idolatry and fornication!* Today we have the same thing: rock idols and fornication goes hand-in-hand. They wear all this jewelry and all this satanism and all that stuff; it’s terrible!

Verse 12: “Therefore say, “Behold, I give him My covenant of peace. And he shall have it, and his seed after him, the covenant of an everlasting priesthood... [wherever the descendants of Phinehas are—whether they’re rabbis or ministers or whatever—they are serving God in some way] ...because he was zealous for his God and made an atonement for the children of Israel.” And the name of the Israelite who was killed, he who was struck

with the woman of Midian, *was* Zimri, the son of Salu, leader of a chief house of the Simeonites” (vs 12-14). It would be like Senator Ten Kennedy, flaunted it before the world, murdered the girl.

Verse 15: “And the Midianite woman’s name who was killed *was* Cozbi, the daughter of Zur. He was head over a people, and of a chief house in Midian.” This is a high-level conspiracy!

Do we have high-level sexual conspiracies against the people today? *Yes!* Against our children in our schools, on television, in our music. I think we’ll see just about where we are in this nation today. You can only go so far with God. God’s mercy endures forever! However, there’s a time when His wrath is kindled. There’s a time when His wrath is like a hot scorching vehement fire! It’s like brimstone!

2-Kings 17:7: “Now, it came to pass because the children of Israel had sinned against the LORD their God, who had brought them up out of the land of Egypt, from under the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and had feared other gods, and walked in the statutes of the nations whom the LORD cast out from before the children of Israel, and of the kings of Israel, which the nations had made. Now, the children of Israel secretly did things that *were* not right against the LORD their God....” (vs 7-9).

That’s what is happening *sexually* in this nation. People are doing a lot of secret things, and it’s even the law of the land that you can have no law abridging any conduct between consenting adults in the privacy of their own abode. But God has a law, and God is going to call this into answer!

“...And they built high places in all their cities for themselves from the Watch Tower to the fortified city. And they set up images and groves for themselves in every high hill, and under every green tree” (vs 9-10). Called today discos, churches, restaurants, warehouses and bathhouses.

Verse 11: “And they burned incense in all the high places...” Why did they burn incense? Just to make a little smoke? They had what you would call hashish—well known in the Middle East—‘hash.’ You burn it and everybody inhales and get all high. What do you think they had it for? They had their drugs, incense and everything back there.

“...like the nations whom the LORD had removed from before them, and they practiced evil things **to provoke the LORD to anger**” (v 11).

Brethren, I feel with this whole thing of AIDS, with the condom deluge, *we are provoking God to anger!* Instead of having an opportunity to repent, we are giving an opportunity of more license by saying that if you wear this condom or give it to

your partner everything is going to be all right. ***No it won’t! They’re going to provoke God to anger!*** It’s one thing to have God angry at you; it’s another thing to *provoke* Him to anger!

For those of you have children, you know what I mean. You can get angry at your children when they do something wrong. Then you correct it and it’s all over with. But I tell you, there’s nothing like the anger of them coming and taunting you, and continually taunting you, and doing it over and over and finally you are provoked to anger that the steam blows out of your ears, and the lightning comes out of your eyes.

I tell you, the words come out of your mouth like a sword and they say, ‘Oh, what are you so mad about?’ I’ve done that to my kids once in a while. That kind of anger they don’t like. I don’t calm down for a day or two. I’m sure that’s the same with you when you’ve had to.

But this is what they’re doing to provoke the Lord to anger, v 12: “For they served the idols of which the LORD had said to them, ‘You shall not do this thing.’ And the LORD testified against Israel and against Judah, by all the prophets, *by* all the seers, saying... [read Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Nahman, Obidiah, Zechariah, Haggai, Zephaniah and all those that are not written and recorded for us] ...‘Turn from your evil ways and keep My commandments *and* My statutes, according to all the law which I commanded your fathers, and which I sent to you by My servants the prophets.’ Nevertheless, they would not hear, but hardened their necks, like the neck of their fathers who did not believe in the LORD their God. And *they* rejected His statutes and His covenant...” (vs 12-15).

That’s where we are today. You stand up and preach morality, they say, ‘Get out of here with that stuff. We don’t need religion. We don’t need God.’ *They’re going to find out that they are going to need God!* That’s strange—isn’t it? Every homosexual that is dying of AIDS lies there in the bed and cries out to God. Is God going to hear them? *No!* They didn’t hear God whenever they knew. It doesn’t have to be necessarily from one of God’s ministers to tell them. The very fact that they know that it’s against God’s Law, or that they have heard that ‘God has said...’ *They reject it!*

“...*they* rejected His statutes and His covenant which He made with their fathers, and His warnings that He testified against them. And they went after vanity, and became vain...” (v 15): television, behavior, the education that we have today. It’s vain! What is the worst kind of idolatry? The most vain thing you can do? *Self-esteem!* The humanistic approach: Think positive thoughts; you

are a god unto yourself, which is Hindu religion. That's all it is, just Hindu religion in a more modern form; be positive and you can do anything you want. **Nonsense!** 'Man at his very best is vanity!'

"...and went after the nations around them, concerning whom the LORD had charged them not to do like them. And **they left all the commandments** of the LORD their God..." (vs 15-16). Not just some, but *all* the commandments. Isn't that where we are as a society? Left all the commandments of God! Just go down through the Ten Commandments, it's incredible.

What did you read in the paper this morning? They have indictments against all these Wall Street brokers. Now there's going to be sixty more indictments. Nice white collar, clean looking and they're thieves, liars and cheats. Left all ethics; everything is gone! See what happens when the whole society leaves God.

"...and made molten images, two calves for themselves. And they made a grove, and worshiped all the host of heaven, and served Baal. And they caused their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire...." (vs 16-17). We cause sons and daughters to pass through the fire of rock music, sex at ten, or some say that if you don't have sex by eight you're all through and washed up for life. That's putting them through the fire!

"...And they used divination and sorceries... [let's have meditation; let's repeat things over and over again. They're bringing that into business forms and practices, school and everything] **...and sold themselves to do evil...**" (v 17). How do you sell yourselves to do evil? *You go in debt to the devil!* We could have had the first full blown false messiah when Satan said to Jesus, 'Bow down and worship me.' Do you know what Satan would have done to Jesus? *Satan would have exalted Him as a great messiah!* We'd have a false religion just so bad you couldn't believe it.

"...sold themselves to do evil in the sight of the LORD, **to provoke Him to anger....** [It says it twice. That's pretty heavy!] ...So, the LORD was very angry with Israel and removed them out of His sight..." (vs 17-18). That's what God is going to do.

(go to the next track)

Let's go to Revelation 2 and let's show how that when God is provoked to anger, what does He do? Remember, God told Jeremiah, 'Don't even pray for these people.' That's a shame that things get so bad that God says not to even pray for them.

But what happens? *God leaves His people and joins the enemy and fights against them!* That's

what's going to happen in this nation. We're going to provoke God to anger, and He's going to send this nation down. I can see it; it's going to happen!

Revelation 2:12: "And to the angel of the church in Pergamos, write..." It's harder to be a Christian, harder every day, especially if they know you keep the Sabbath. I don't let them know anymore. I just tell them I have things to do on Saturday and I know what time sundown is going to be, so I just say, 'I'll be available after whatever time the sun goes down.'

"...These things says He Who has the sharp two-edged sword" (v 12). Immediately you know something tough is going to be said. He doesn't say 'Thus says the all merciful loving God...' He says the One who has two sharp edges! That tells you something!

Verse 13: "I know your works and where you dwell where the throne of Satan *is...*" Living right in the middle of Satan's society; that's where we are today, right in the middle of Satan's society. It is harder to be a Christian today. That's why God has us in smaller groups, so we can get more strength. That is a blessing! God is protecting us and watching over us and keeping us out of trouble. He really is!

"...but you are holding fast My name, and did not deny My faith, even in the days in which Antipas *was* My faithful witness, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells." (v 13). They were faithful only as long as they had one man who was a leader.

Verse 14: "But I have a few things against you because you have there *those* who hold the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to cast a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols and to commit fornication." You can tie that in with Rev. 17:2—that 'all inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk by the wine of her fornication.'

Here the Church was infected by it. Was the Church at Corinth infected by it? *Yes!* They had a man come traipsing in and guess what, 'I'm making love with my mother-in-law. It's a spiritual thing.' Everyone was talking about it! That's why Paul was so upset!

Then there were the righteous ones, and 'the things that you wrote to me to avoid fornication, don't even touch a woman' (1-Cor. 7). That doesn't work either.

Verse 15: "Moreover, you also have *those* who hold the **doctrine of the Nicolaitans**, which thing **I hate**." That's the doctrine of St. Nicolas. By the way, the pope is always buried in a Santa Claus

suit. Go to the library and see a *Life Magazine* on the death of Pope Pius, the one before John II, and you will see that he's lying there in state and he has a on a little Santa Claus hat, and it's all a bright red suit with a black belt. He's in a Santa Claus suit because he's the successor of St. Nicolas. {picture can be found on U-Tube}

So, it's taking in Catholic doctrines. This Church, brethren, has got to be horrendous! If you and I ever walked into this Church in Pergamos today, we would have to say that's a church of the world; surely it's not of God.

Notice what Jesus says here, v 16: "Repent! For if *you* do not *repent*, I will come to you quickly, and will make war against them with the sword of My mouth." That's awful hard— isn't it? God says He's going to fight against His own people!

Verse 17: "The one who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches...."

To the Church in Thyatira, v 20: "But I have a few things against you, because you allow the woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce My servants into committing fornication and eating things sacrificed to idols." Notice how those go hand-in-hand.

Verse 21: "And I gave her time to repent of her fornication, but she did not repent. Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of their works. And I will kill her children with death..." (vs 21-23). Christ is powerful here. He's just laying it right out!

"...and all the churches shall know that I am He Who searches *the* reins and hearts; and I will give to each of you according to your works. But to you I say, and to *the* rest who *are* in Thyatira, as many as do not have this doctrine, and who have not known the depths of Satan, as they speak; I will not cast upon you any other burden, but hold fast what you have until I come" (vs 23-25).

That's pretty strong, powerful things! These two churches right in a row, then the Laodicean is a piker compared to those two. They're just 'rich and increased with goods.'

I want to relate to you this thing I saw on television about Pompeii and about how God can work things to even fight against people. Pompeii is located near what is modern day Naples in the bay at the foot of Italy. Mount Vesuvius is the volcano there. Pompeii is on one side of the mountain and Herculaneum is on the other side of the mountain. When the Vesuvius erupted in the 60s_{B.C.} the wind was blowing from the southwest and blowing all of the ash on Pompeii. So, the people in Herculaneum

were not bothered with the initial eruption of Vesuvius. The eruption was mostly just an ash eruption.

In the 1800s when they discovered Pompeii, they found in the houses that the ash had covered everything! They even found loaves of bread covered with ash. But inside there was bread, and they found the people covered with ash in their last position, just the way they were. They found that if they cut open the bodies of the people and pulled the bones out and re-poured it with plaster, they had a perfect impression of that person when he or she died. It was really something!

The real thing that struck my interest was Herculaneum. They didn't know anything about Herculaneum until one day in the city a man of almost the same name was drilling a well and the bottom fell out. It's not like now with the machines like we think of today. They had to excavate down and they had a hole big enough so they could go down and drill.

They went down in there and found a whole cathedral-type auditorium; magnificent! They found gold and jewels; bronze statues of a quality they have not been able to find anywhere—perfect replications of humans; absolutely magnificent. They found that when they began excavating around, this was really quite some town. Down through time they have excavated and they have almost the whole village of Herculaneum excavated. They have artist renditions of what it was like.

But the strange thing about Herculaneum is that they couldn't find any people. Why were there people in Pompeii, but no people in Herculaneum? Even though it was closer to the sea, it was closer to Vesuvius than Pompeii. They were never able to answer that question from the time they discovered this in the 1800s until the 1970s.

They excavated out the town and the streets were down to the cliff, where the ocean was. Along this cliff where the Mediterranean Sea is are arches. They could see them in the stone. So, they decided to excavate in these arches and lo and behold they found that these arches were actually parts of buildings down near the Mediterranean Sea where all the people from Herculaneum fled and all their bones were found in there all jumbled up in a terrible mass.

It showed this one woman who was an anthropologic geologist who can take these bones and tell whether it's male or female, how old this person was—and they had whole skeletons. They excavated very, very carefully, and when they got all the bones in this one area they would put it in a plastic tub and they had hundreds of these tubs!

They would take them in and clean up all the bones and would cover them with something to keep them from decomposing any further. Then she would take these tubs and reconstruct the skeletons.

It showed her taking a skeleton and putting on some white glue on this one side and another white glue on the other side and put the skeleton together. Then she would say that this was 'a skeleton of a woman. Here's the pelvis bone and she was about 27-years-old and she had two children.

Then there was this young girl about 13-years-old that was cradling a little baby. At first they thought the girl was the older sister of the little baby, but they found jewels on the baby, but not any on the girl. So, she said by researching this out and putting the skeleton back together and looking at the arm bone where the muscle attaches to the bone there are deep grooves where this muscle attaches showing that this young girl was doing inordinately heavy lifting. So, this young girl was a slave.

The thing that astounded me, and I bring it up here, because it talks about the 'depths of Satan' and it talks about 'where Satan's seat is' it showed them excavating with water right near the ocean where they're digging all of these out. They were pouring water and they were taking a little bit of dirt—over and over—and showed right where they were digging it out, they brought out a bracelet of pure gold.

Brethren, these people were rich beyond what we have any concept of. They had food, gold, wealth, wine, oil, slaves, trading, clothing and bathhouses. Because of the springs there they had hot baths and flushing toilets. They showed one great, huge one-piece marble bathtub that when the volcano blew it took that thing and the glass—they had glass—went into the tub and they could see where the glass was when they took away the debris from the tub.

It was absolutely amazing! They had running water, flushing toilets, hot and cold baths. But this bracelet... I want to get back to this bracelet to show you how that God is going to call a society into its judgment where God decides He's going to do it. There's no turning it back. It was a beautiful gold bracelet and it was of a serpent and there were two serpent heads coming together with their tongues intertwined.

Herculaneum was named after the god of Hercules, which is another name for Nimrod! What happen to Herculaneum? They know now, from the volcano of Mt. St. Helens that when it blew all of sudden the debris came back down and rushed down the mountainside at an incredible speed. When it first blew up it had the ash and it rained down on

Pompeii. Then it exploded! The thing blew! They were able to figure it out because down in the caves all these people suffocated. There were shards of wood, which were obviously burned by the heat of up to 300 degrees! How did that happen?

They figured it out. Herculaneum was buried with the kind of volcanic debris that is like cement. So, they had to carefully chip away every piece, whereas, over in Pompeii everything was ash and you go and dust it off. When the Vesuvius blew, they had three minutes to get out of town! It blew the top just like an atomic explosion! Then all of this came settling down on the side of the mountain at about 70 miles an hour, and just covered the whole city.

They grabbed what they could grab and they all ran down the streets that led to the cliffs, which led to those area that were right under the cliffs and they all went in there and this came down and just covered them all and buried them.

You talk about God's judgment coming in a moment. They had plenty of warnings—didn't they? The top was blowing over here and the ash was coming down on Pompeii. They had plenty of warning, but they ignored them, because they were sitting there with all their wealth and comfort and saying. 'Well, it's all coming down on Pompeii and we're okay.' Then BAM! the top blew off that thing and they had three minutes to get out! That was it! Snuffed out all their lives!

I'm sitting there looking at that and thinking there's a lesson for us to learn out of that today. The lesson is that we are living in Satan's world, and living at a time when God's judgment is going to come. It's going to be just like those people. If we are out in this society 'eating and drinking with the drunkards...'

Brethren, it's going to come, and everything is more intense. Matthew 24:36: "But concerning that day... [the return of Christ] ...and the hour, no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only. Now, as *it was in* the days of Noah, so shall *it* also be *at* the coming of the Son of man. For as in the days that *were* before the Flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark" (vs 36-38). Compare that with Gen. 6 and it says that 'the imagination of the heart of man was evil continually!'

Yet, they had a normal life, supposedly! Everything looked normal to them. Isn't that what we have today? We are so mesmerized by everything that we have that nothing shocks us anymore! They show graphic pictures of these poor Palestinians starving to death; eating rats, mules,

horses and human flesh. But tonight we're going to go home and have a nice meal!

Verse 39: "And they were not aware until the Flood came and took *them* all away... [Just like the volcano of Herculaneum. Gone! Three minutes to get out of town. You flee for your life, but you die!] ...so shall *it* also be *at* the coming of the Son of man. Then two shall be in the field; one shall be taken, and one shall be left; two *women shall be* grinding at the mill; one shall be taken, and one shall be left. Watch, therefore, because you do not know in what hour your Lord is coming. But know this, that if the master of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have been watching, and would not have allowed his house to be broken into. Therefore, **you also be ready. For the Son of man is coming at a time that you do not think.** Who then is the faithful and wise servant whom his lord has set over his household, to give them food in due season? Blessed *is* that servant, **whom his lord when he comes shall find so doing**" (vs 39-46). That's why we need to keep doing what God says!

Verse 47: "Truly I say to you, he will set him over all his property. But if that evil servant shall say in his heart, 'My lord delays *his* coming,' and shall begin to beat *his* fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken, the lord of that servant will come in a day that he does not expect, and in an hour that he does not know. And he shall cut him asunder... [Rev. 2, 'I will fight against him with the sword of My mouth.'] ...and shall appoint his portion with the hypocrites. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (vs 47-51).

If you go through the Bible, a good part of it is blood, guts, gore, and warning! When you get down to how much is inspiration, you get the inspiration and love when you're close to God. We have to live in the world. How do we protect ourselves from the world? *Know what's in store for the world! Know that it's going to come, and say, 'I don't want any part of that!'*

Disfellowshipment

1-Corinthians 5 is the place where the Bible shows disfellowshipment. Let's see how this is done. 1-Corinthians 5:3: "For I indeed, being absent in body but present in spirit, have already judged *concerning* him who has so *shamelessly* committed this *evil deed* as if I were present." See why Paul was so upset about this? He knew what would happen to the Church if this continued. He knew His Bible and what God had done to Israel of old. We read part of it in 1-Cor. 10.

- How can you have a church continue with

that going on?

- How can you have it exist in a proper way before God, in a Godly way?

The same way with the experience in Worldwide (Church of God).

- How could the leadership continue in the sins that they had?

or *any church* continue in the sins of:

- adultery, fornication, drunkenness, lying, stealing, cheating?

That's exactly what was going on and still is to this day! And they haven't repented yet! Then they turn here and they take these Scriptures and they start kicking people out of the Church *because they disagree with the leadership!*

That's not what God means. The Worldwide Church of God is not the only one to use that, the Jehovah Witnesses even are being sued in court by ex-members for the same identical thing: spies to see what you're doing. I don't see anywhere where Paul says that 'you go out and watch that guy to see if he's sinning, and come back and report to me and we'll get him.' *No way!*

Verse 4: "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 to deliver such a one to Satan..." (vs 4-5). You kick them out of the fellowship; they are not be fellowshipping.

You can't fellowship with sin and God. You can't have members actively sinning and staying in the congregation and have the congregation blessed. It's like any plague; that's what Paul is saying here.

Verse 6: "Your glorying *is* not good. Don't you know that **a little leaven leavens the whole lump?**" In other words, if you've got one person in a congregation who is living such a depraved life, the whole church is affected by it; bound to be!

One of the things that made me leave the Worldwide Church of God was when Herbert Armstrong came out on a tape and said, 'God doesn't view sex sins as very important.' I said, 'You've got to be kidding! God destroyed Israel! God curses people with deformed children for sex sins—doesn't He?'

If you listen KGO on this doctor call-in thing, it's a 'crotch-rot' program! That's all you hear. One guy called up and says, 'I've got this infection in my prostrate.' *What is it?* 'Well, it's pussy all the time; the doctors....' I thought, why don't you tell the dodo that he's got a venereal disease and to take care of himself and go get the thing cleaned up and sit home and be chaste!

It happens to the Church. If you allow that

thing to happen, you're going to have puss running in the Church, too.

Verse 5: "...that the spirit may be saved in the Day of the Lord Jesus." He's put out because he's going to suffer. Maybe he'll repent so that he can be saved.

Verse 6: "Your glorying *is* not good. Don't you know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? Therefore, purge out the old leaven, so that you may become a new lump, *even* as you are unleavened. For Christ our Passover was sacrificed for us" (vs 6-7). One of the biggest reasons that people will allow sin in a church is because *they do not understand the sacrifice of Christ*. They just don't! He's our Passover, sacrificed for us!

Verse 8: "For this reason, **let us keep the Feast...**" This tells us two things they were keeping at a minimum:

1. the Passover
2. Feast of Unleavened Bread

We know that just from this Scripture.

"...not with old leaven... [the leaven of sin and licentiousness] ...nor with *the* leaven of malice and wickedness, **but with *the unleavened bread of sincerity and Truth***. I wrote to you in an epistle **not to associate with the sexually immoral**" (vs 8-9). The idea is that everything was going to come back on them.

How would it be if everyday you went down to this homosexual bar? On the way home you stop in this nice little convenient bar and 'I'm going to have me a little drink.' You sit in there and the next thing you know you're talking to some people there. Even though you're not doing what they're doing, you are companying with them so that you partake of their attitudes and their ideas and their philosophies. Then you begin to look at these people as not so bad. It clouds your vision; it clouds your spiritual understanding. That's why Paul says, 'Stay away from that kind of thing!' Don't have anyone in the Church that way; put them out. Later, when the man repented, Paul brought him back.

Romans 16—here's another one on disfellowshipment. I've heard the soft line on it, and I've heard the hard line on it. After seeing what's happening in the world—this is the Roman world, and we are living in the Roman world today—we've got to be tough on some of this stuff.

You don't have to treat them hatefully, but the inverse can happen. When the church leadership becomes corrupt and people are disfellowshipped for seeking the Truth and put out of the Church, then the church members are told to avoid them as if they're

sinner. All they're trying to do is get away from sin. That's all we tried to do is get away from sin. This last time we had to run lest we get beaten up, chewed alive!

Romans 16:17: "Now I exhort you, brethren, to take note of those... [set them aside, not just visually observe them] ...who are causing divisions and offenses **contrary to the doctrine** which you have learned, and shun them." Paul said, 'Have no company with them.' Two categories:

1. the sinner
2. one that is contentious and causing problems

Verse 18: "Because these are the sort who are not serving our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own bellies... [avoid them; don't fellowship with them. If they're in the congregation, obviously, get rid of them] ...and are deceiving the hearts of the innocent by smooth talking and flattery"—with wrong doctrine.

We've seen that happen. You don't tolerate them in the Church. You kick them out of the Church. If they repent, then fine, have them back; but you don't bring coals of fire to your bosom twice. Make sure that the coals of fire are out.

Let's see what it says to Timothy as a minister, 1-Timothy 6:3: "If anyone teaches any different doctrine, and does not adhere to sound words, *even those* of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the doctrine *that is* according to Godliness." That's what happened in Worldwide; that's what later happened in Biblical. That's why we want to have this little church the way it is. No hassle! We're tired of hassles! I don't want anymore fights. It's a shame, we have to fight the world so much and it's a terrible shame if you have to come to Sabbath services and fight on the Sabbath. I mean, think of it!

Verse 4: "He is proud and knows nothing. Rather, he has a morbid attraction to questions and disputes over words, from which come envy, arguments, blasphemy, wicked suspicions, vain reasonings of men who have been corrupted in *their* minds and *are* destitute of the Truth—*men* who believe that gain is Godliness...." (vs 4-5).

Guess what old booklet I found? *Ending Your Financial Worries!* Which should have been entitled: How You Can End *My* Financial Worries? Supposing "...that gain is Godliness...." Isn't that true.

- We have a 30% increase
- We are Godly because God has blessed us
- We have all the physical gain

Nonsense! Paul ended up without anyone following

him! It doesn't work that way.

“...**From such withdraw yourself**” (v 5). That's the *reverse* disfellowshipment. Things get so corrupt within a church that you have to leave it. There's both! If you want to follow God you can't associate with a congregation of sinners. And in the congregation of the righteous, you cannot have a sinner stand either.

Psalm 1 talks about the righteous and the evil. Just know that the proper disfellowshipment is for the removing of people that cause the blocking of the fellowship between God the Father and Jesus Christ and the congregation. It can come two ways:

1. sinners within the congregation have to be removed
2. if the church leadership becomes sinful and they won't change, then you withdraw from them

That's what it says, *withdraw yourself from them!*

Here's the way that God looks at it, Psalm 1:1: “Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, nor stand in the way of sinners... [the way that sinners live their lives] ...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. And he shall be like a tree planted by the streams of water that brings forth its fruit in its season, and its leaf shall not wither, and all that he does shall prosper. The wicked are not so, but they are like chaff which the wind drives away” (vs 1-4). That reminds me of a funeral—as the wind blows—it's just gone.

The Truth before God doesn't matter how talented a person is, it matters what their character is, because that's what they are.

Verse 5: “Therefore, the wicked shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous; **for the LORD knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked shall perish**” (vs 5-6).

Scriptural References:

- 1) Romans 1:28
- 2) 1 Corinthians 10:5-8
- 3) Numbers 25:1-15
- 4) 2 Kings 17:7-18
- 5) Revelation 2:12-17, 20-25
- 6) Matthew 24:36-51
- 7) 1 Corinthians 5:3-6, 5-9
- 8) Romans 16:17-18
- 9) 1 Timothy 6:3-5
- 10) Psalm 5:1-6

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- 1 Corinthians 5:1
- Romans 6
- Revelation 17:2
- 1 Corinthians 7
- Genesis 6

FRC:bo
Transcribed: 4-7-13

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

Epistle of First Corinthians XI

Chapter Six

Fred R. Coulter

I want to cover a few things on the chapter of 'porneia.' Here's an editorial from the *Vacaville Reporter* (thereporter.com): Tell the Truth about Death Toll from AIDS

I just read this morning that in the morgue in Miami, Florida, that they are running blood tests on all corpses brought into the coroners office. He says that he feels he can do it because you can't jeopardize the rights of the dead. But they are finding a 1% AIDS infection, just in the random general population coming in. That was on 1300 corpses.

In San Francisco they're running 2.5% with AIDS infection. Those coming to the blood bank in San Francisco who are turned away from giving blood is running 3%. That's getting significant when you figure a population in San Francisco is 650,000—you're looking at 20,500 just based on that 3% figure walking around with AIDS that come into the blood bank.

Tell the Truth about Death Toll from AIDS

Some doctors write misleading death certificates to protect the privacy of AIDS victims. A process made easier by the complex nature of the disease, but one that produces a false view of the proportion of the epidemic.

Some physicians and public health officials contend that death certificates do not endanger public health as long as doctors obey laws requiring them to report live AIDS cases to health agencies.

The whole sum of it is, they should report all of it.

Then there is a thing here about putting cloak of natural causes over the death of those who die with AIDS.

Well, it's going to come. I remember one of the things that literally would scare the liver out of you was reading the book *1975 in Prophecy*. All the pictures by Basil Wolverton of people starving to death and plagues. It may not have happened in 1975, but Paul was off by 2,000 years. I don't see anyone walking around saying, 'Down with Paul.'

Then we had this thing on Stanford campus where they ran around passed all these condoms around. That's not going to work. There's nothing that human nature is going to be able to figure to do that is going to be right. ***There is a way that seems***

right to a man, but the ends thereof are the way of death! That's just the way it's going to be.

- No one is going to stop it!
- No one is going to turn it back!
- No one is going to change it!

There comes a time when God is going to do what He's going to do and all our prayers is not going to change His mind. God said, 'Do not even pray for this people' (Jer. 7). I tell you with behavior like this, with passing all these things around and everything is going to be hunky-dory, I think they're coming really close to provoking God to anger. If you provoke God to anger, that's something else!

Wellness Letter from Berkley:

Myth: AIDS virus is something new; probably a product of lax sexual morals in modern times.

I don't believe that it's something new. I believe what Solomon said, 'There's nothing new under the sun' and I think this is just a repeat when it reaches a certain stage and God lets these things come.

Stop and think about this: If you were a modern scientific investigating team of doctors and you happen to be in Jerusalem when David sinned after numbering the children of Israel, and he chose to have the plague brought upon himself and the people for three days—70,000 died of the plague. You could send your teams out there, just like in this Sweetwater thing up in Nevada where all the fish and birds are dying because of something in the water. You can analyze it all day long.

Same way if you had a medical team back then when the plague came on the people because of David's sin, you can analyze it all day long and you'd be amazed. It struck all of a sudden, now it's over and it's gone. Same way with AIDS. We go along and think it's something new. No! It's just something that God has used before and is using again.

Our knowledge of the AIDS virus is new, but retro-viruses are part of the natural world and are no more likely to manifest Divine wrath than any other infectious agent.

Well, Who is the Creator of all things? Who said, 'I create good and I create evil'? ***God does!***

As early as 1910 an American scientist isolated and studied a retro-virus that

causes cancer in chickens. Dr. Robert C. Gallo, head of the team that discovered the first human retro-virus—the agent responsible for a form of leukemia— theorizes that it may have originated in Africa centuries ago and may have spread around the globe by slave trade and other commercial ventures from the period after the discovery of America.

Nor are sexually transmitted diseases anything new; they've been carried around the world for centuries.

That's because sin and human nature are nothing new. It's been here ever since Adam and Eve decided that they would reject God.

I just want to mention here a couple things concerning disfellowshipment that I didn't cover in part 10 of this series. We have to understand that the way that it is done.

1-Corinthians 5:3: "For I indeed, being absent in body but present in spirit, have already judged *concerning* him who has so *shamelessly* committed this *evil deed* as if I were present: In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when you... [the congregation] ...are gathered together, and my spirit, together with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ to deliver such a one to Satan for *the* destruction of the flesh..." (vs 3-5).

It is not a secret, behind the scenes thing. It is something that is done openly before the whole congregation. That way the whole congregation knows at the same time what is happening, what is being done, rather than just stand up there and make some shocking announcement. Let's see how this is supposed to work, the mechanism by which they should be done.

Disfellowshipment is not something that can be arbitrarily done because the minister is angry, or because someone has someone has some honest and legitimate questions that they want to have.

If there are doctrinal strifes and divisions, you're to mark them and have no company with them. But that has to do with the true doctrine in the Bible. That doesn't have anything to do with the doctrines of men. The problem is that disfellowshipment is a proper and useful thing under the right circumstances. But in so many cases it has been misapplied simply because there has been the threat to the hierarchy or there have been people who have wanted to learn more in the Bible, but since the hierarchy would not accept any new 'Truth'—and as I've been told in the past—new Truth will only come out of headquarters.

Matthew 18:15: "So then, if your brother

sins against you, go and show him his fault between you and him alone...." That means don't go tell anybody else first. Or don't be discussing it with other people and say, 'Hey, what do you think?' Go to him alone!

"...If he is willing to hear you, you have gained your brother" (v 15). This is the best and the most logical and loving thing to settle a problem at the lowest level first, right where it occurs; the easiest way to do it. So, that if there's any difficulty that you have one with another, you go see each other and work it out. It's simple. It might not be very comfortable; it's never very comfortable trying to work out a difficulty. It may be a little awkward and maybe there will be a little temper flurry here and there and maybe a little upset, whatever.

Just like a husband and wife. If they have set their minds to be married to each other and live with each other as husband and wife all their lives, you know there is bound to be a trouble come along—or two or three or four, or maybe quite a few. But if they've really set their minds to work it out between themselves, it will be worked out.

I'll guarantee what happens: You will do what is called 'mellowing.' You will understand each other more, and you will mellow because you have worked out your difficulties face-to-face.

In Worldwide [Church of God] and with the Jehovah Witnesses, yes, even the Catholic Church when it gets down to their things—I think we would be surprised how many church organizations operate in the same way—instead of going to each other alone they would go to the minister or the priest. Then one day you get a phone call and the minister says, 'I need to stop out and visit you; when would be a good time.' Immediately people would get scared and wonder why he's coming and wanting 'to see me. What have I done!' I've been through these kinds of things.

I'll have to say that while I was in Worldwide I did, on a few occasions, tell them that 'if you want to tell me, go tell them.' I did believe what was in the Bible. I've had that exercised upon me, so I know what that is like. If you have something to settle, settle it between yourselves, I don't even want to know. I don't want to hear about it.

Same way with husband and wife things. I know there were times in Worldwide when homes would be divided—same way with other churches—divorces would be instigated because either the husband or wife would run off to the minister to build their case in what they were going to do to their spouse. That's not right.

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. And if he fails to listen to them, tell *it* to **the Church**....” (vs 16-17). The Church is the assembly, the ‘ecclesia.’ It becomes a congregational matter.

“...But if he also fails to listen to the Church, let him be to you as the heathen and the tax collector. Truly I say to you, whatever you shall bind on the earth will have already been bound in heaven...” (vs 17-18)—concerning the matter of the action that the Church would take, which includes the members *and* the ministers.

“...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).

Now, this is a broad and generalization here. You can say that when two or three people are gathered together to study and worship God’s Word, that Christ would be there. Also, what are the two or three talking about right here in context? *To solve a problem, work out differences between themselves, to establish every word.* Christ will be in the midst to help resolve it.

Maybe that’s why some problems have never been resolved. Maybe that’s a little bit different than what you have understood in the past, but if you read exactly what it says, it says ‘take two or three with you’; ‘where two or three are gathered in My name, there I am in the midst of you.’ So, when you get together and try and solve a problem, then it certainly do it with some kind of prayer, because you’re there in the name of Christ.

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?’ Jesus said to him, ‘I do not say to you until seven times, but until seventy times seven’” (vs 21-22). I suppose married people understand that more than anybody else, especially if they have a commitment to live together. That’s the way that it is.

- that’s how you *build love*
- that’s how you *build understanding*
- that’s how you *overcome problems*

Let’s see another way not to disfellowship, which we have also seen. That is through political strife and political power within a church organization.

3-John 5: “Beloved, you are faithfully

practicing whatever you have been doing for the brethren and for strangers, who have testified of your love before *the* Church. You will do well to send them on their way in a manner worthy of God; because for the *sake of His* name they went forth *preaching*, taking nothing from the Gentiles. For this cause, we are personally obligated to receive *those who do such service*, in order that we may be fellow workers in the Truth. I wrote to the Church, but Diotrephes, the one who loves to be chief among them, does not accept us. Because of this very thing, if I come, I will call him to account for the actions that he is practicing with evil words—maliciously berating us; and he is not satisfied with these things, *for* he himself neither receives the brethren, *nor does he permit* those who wish to receive the brethren, *but* he forbids *them* and casts *them* out of the Church” (vs 5-10).

And we’ve seen that happen, too. That’s not the way that it should be done. That is purely a political thing, turning the Church of God into a political machine for control. That should not be! So, you have the two extremes on this thing. Those are not the way that it should be done; same way with disfellowshipping.

Can people build up a case politically against others to get rid of them? *Sure they can!* That’s what the whole story of the Inquisition was about with the Catholic Church. They built up their cases politically, went after them and they got them. Regardless of what they said, they did it.

This also ties in with disfellowshipment, 2-John 6: “And this is the love *of God*: that we walk according to His commandments. This is the commandment, exactly as you heard from *the* beginning, that you might walk in it, because many deceivers have entered into the world—those who do not confess *that* Jesus Christ has come in the flesh. This is *the spirit of* the deceiver and the antichrist. Watch out for yourselves in order that we may not lose the things we have accomplished, but *that* we may receive a full reward. Anyone who transgresses and does not continue in the doctrine of Christ does not have God. *But* the one who continues in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son. If anyone comes to you and does not bring this doctrine, do not receive him into *your* house, and do not say to him, ‘Welcome!’ For anyone who says, ‘Welcome!’ to him is partaking in his evil works” (vs 6-11).

There is the way to protect yourself against false doctrine. But every one of these things can be twisted and turned in a political way against people if a person so desires to do so. Out of the deceptiveness and the evilness of their own heart, or being zealous for a wrong cause. All those can be

twisted and turned so as not to become protection for the Church, disfellowshipment then became a use and device to maintain power. That's not what God wants.

Disfellowshipment is a tool to maintain purity of the doctrinal Truth of the Bible! That's what it's for, ***and to maintain purity of conduct among those who are in the congregation!*** That's what it's for, not for any other thing.

It's never been done as Paul did it, presenting it before the congregation, and then the congregation—unanimously—says, 'According to God's way you're out, goodbye. When you repent, and we've seen that you repent, come back.' We've never seen it done that way in the Church of God.

If there are strifes and things like that, separate yourself from them. That's the way it should be. I tell you what, if that were really the way that it was done, you would have so few disfellowshipments it would be incredible. That's why it's designed that way.

If it can be done in a corner, sin allowed in a corner—and if it's not taken care of—it will continue. 'A little leaven leavens the whole lump.' Or if you have a disfellowshipment done over here in a corner and you have power and authority, and you tell that person 'don't you dare contact anyone. If I hear of you so much as calling anyone...' That's not right. Then you never know the truth of it. There were occasions where you would know someone and you would *know* that was not true. However, there are cases where people occasionally do go off the deep-end with things. They really do.

With divorce and remarriage—which we will cover in 1-Cor. 7—when they had it that they would separate the families because of a previous understanding of marriage and divorce, that created one set of problems, then after they said that if it's been in the past then it's covered with your baptism and so forth, 'we will allow you to stay married with the one you're presently married to.' Then it swung to the other side.

I had one fellow that I baptized in Boise, Idaho, in 1966. He's married and had five children. He and his wife had some marital difficulties, but nothing really very serious. Then in 1974 when this divorce and remarriage thing was changed, he called me and said, 'I want to ask you a question.' *What's that?* 'Before I was baptized I was planning on divorcing my wife. Can I leave her?' I said, 'You've got to be crazy to even call and ask such a question. If you were planning to leave before you were baptized and you're both baptized, and you've forgiven each other and you have accepted Jesus Christ, you are bound before God. There's no way!

Besides you weren't divorced or in the process of divorcing, you were thinking of it. Then you changed your mind when you came into the Church—right?' *Right!* 'Well, what makes you think you can change your mind now because you want to get rid of her like an old shoe and you come to me and ask if you can get a divorce.'

He was really mad at me, because he wanted me to say, 'Yeah, do it; do anything you want.' What he did, he shopped around and found another minister, moved into that church area and told the story to that minister. By that time, he modified just enough so he knew what to tell him. So, he divorced his wife. Since then, that man's gone out and just become a whoremonger and miserable.

You can bring things upon yourself by forcing *your own will*. God is not going to stop anyone from forcing their own will, if they want to force it. Lots of times we ask: What will God allow? *God will allow anything but destroy the world!* Read through the Bible: He's allowed murder, adultery, fornication, homosexuality, idolatry, sacrifice of children. People will say, 'Surely if there's a God He wouldn't allow that.' God has left it to be 'free choice.' Everyone of these things can be taken and twisted. That's why it has to be in the right way with the right spirit.

Who takes care of the ministry for disfellowshipment? *I would have to say that it should be the ministers who should take care of a situation like that if it involves a minister.* But if it also involves a congregation, then it has to also involve the congregation at the same time. I don't know any other way to handle it. That would stop an awful lot of things, too, if it were handled that way.

I was disfellowshipped from Worldwide, *after I resigned!* As a matter of fact, when I was in Worldwide, if it would have gotten down to the congregation, they would have said 'no, we're going to keep him.' There has been abuse of disfellowshipment down through the ages.

1-Corinthians 5:11: "But now, I have written to you not to associate with **anyone who is called a brother**, if *he be* either sexually immoral, or covetous..." Covetous is really something—think about that for a minute—that is out for grasping greed to take advantage of other people.

I never will forget, there was a minister—a friend of mind—pastoring in the Midwest and he came to the Feast at Squaw Valley and we were in Salt Lake and we all went over to Squaw Valley at the same time. He came by, stopping at our place, and we went off the way of the Salt Flats over toward Nevada. As soon as you get through the Salt Flats on the west side of Utah, you enter into

Nevada. As soon as we got there, he pulled over and stopped and said, 'Come on, let's go in this restaurant.' He was almost shaking to get to that slot machine. I will never forget that! He stood there playing all these slots. It just registered in my mind that I don't think we should be playing slot machines and gambling and stuff like this.

I can't see Christ preaching in Reno and say, 'Let's go over here and we'll throw a few slugs down this slot machine, let's see if we can win a little money to pay our way around Galilee.' I can't see that!

Some people might call me 'straight laced' because I don't gamble. I remember when Gerald Waterhouse was stuck trying to preach that it was okay because one of the leading ministers would always run up to Reno and gamble. I guess he got called on the carpet for preaching against gambling. Then the word came out that if you took a little money and used it for recreation—not much different than golf and spending a couple hundred bucks—and play the slots and cards.

Of course, Gerald Waterhouse was one who would tell us what it was going to be like in the world tomorrow, who's going to rule this, do that, and do the other thing. He was in trouble and he couldn't get after me. He came to check on me and as we were driving I said, 'Yeah, Gerald, that's right. What you're telling me is right and when Jesus Christ returns that He is not going to destroy Reno, Nevada, and Las Vegas, and all these other gambling places, because you have to have someone who knows what their doing and in charge to run it right. He's not going to destroy the mafia because they know how to do it better than anybody else.'

He was so mad! You could just see it! He just about crunched his teeth right off his jaw! But he didn't say a word.

"...or an idolater..." (v 11). What is an idol? This is talking about a spiritual brother, people in the Church. What did they do in the Worldwide Church of God? *They made an idol out of the man!* How long is God going to put up with that?

"...or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such a person *you are* not even to eat" (v 11).

Let's get it in perspective, v 9: "I wrote to you in an epistle not to associate with the sexually immoral; and *yet, you can* not altogether *avoid contact* with the sexually immoral of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or idolaters, since you would then have to go out of the world" (vs 11-12). We're talking about people within the Church. Those people *not* in the Church, you can't get away

from them. Even within the Worldwide Church of God, they created a lot of alcoholics, because they condoned excessive drinking. You can't have that either. We're to have temperance in whatever we do. If a person cannot control their alcohol or liquor, don't drink—it's that simple!

Verse 10: "And *yet, you can* not altogether *avoid contact* with the sexually immoral of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or idolaters, since you would then have to go out of the world." That's a true statement! When Paul is talking about 'not to keep company' he's talking about those not in the Church.

Verse 11: "But now, I have written to you not to associate with **anyone who is called a brother...** [spiritually *in* the Church] ...if *he be* either sexually immoral, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such a person *you are* not even to eat. For what *responsibility* do I have to judge those who are outside *the Church?*...." (vs 11-12).

This is where we're getting into *judgment*. We cannot judge those without; it's none of our business to judge those without. I think we'll understand a little bit more about judgment when we understand this: the basic question is: ***If*** you make a judgment concerning someone, is it your business or authority to do so? If it is, then you can! If it isn't, then it's none of your business.

I think that becomes very clear. You can't judge those out in the world. There's no way you can judge them. You do not know their heart. I do not know their heart. I cannot read their mind. I don't know if they're extortioners or adulterers. I can tell some who are homosexual, but I can guarantee you can't tell all who are homosexual. You don't know who is a liar or cheat. You can have one of the finest clerks you ever met checking out your groceries, and you may pick up the paper one day and read that he has stolen, embezzled.... You can't judge their heart, you don't know.

"...Are not you yourselves to judge those who are within?" (v 12). ***Yes!*** When it comes to the congregation called together to make a judgment to put someone out because of sin.

Verse 13: "But God judges those who are outside. So then, put the wicked person out from among yourselves."

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?**" This tells you something else—doesn't it? Here they were suing each other. If you've ever had to go to court because of being

sued, what happens? You have the plaintiff and you have the defendant and there are barriers and bitterness between the people! Obviously, that would carry over into the Church, wouldn't it?

Verse 2: **“Don't you know that the saints shall judge the world?...”** Now, think on that statement for a minute. It does not say, ‘do you not know that the ministers shall judge the world?’ It does not say, ‘don't you know that Christ only is going to judge the world.’ He says here, **“Don't you know that the saints shall judge the world?...”** When is he referring to this? He says, ‘don't judge the world, because those who are without God judges.’ He's saying in v 2 about a future time when we're ruling with Christ.

We will see when that is given. We'll see later that he says ‘judge nothing before the time.’ Revelation 20:4: “And I saw thrones; and they that sat upon them, and judgment was given to them...” That's when we're going to judge the world, not before then, but *when judgment is given unto to you!* If you were a judge in the world, and a member in the Church and someone was brought before you in a judgment and you sentenced him, then you have the authority to judge that one who is without, because you are also a judge of the world, and a judge of the world is also a part of the system that God has set up in the carnal world.

I know that it gets a little ‘ticky-tacky’; it would be very difficult. I might say that that would only be a theoretical thing, because I know of no one in the Church who is also a judge sitting on a bench actively judging right now. It's kind of like: How do you keep the Sabbath in the North Pole? Theoretical question. I know of no one trying to keep the Sabbath at the North Pole.

1-Corinthians 6:2: “Don't you know that the saints shall judge the world? And if the world is to be judged by you, are you unworthy of the most trivial of judgments?” He's saying that if the world is going to be judged by you—obviously, when you inherit the Kingdom of God—are you able to judge even the smallest matter even now within the Church. That's what Paul is saying. That's what he means by that statement.

Verse 3: “Don't you know that we shall judge angels?...” I don't know what that is going to consist of, brethren. I don't know of any place in the Bible that tells us anything about judging angels with the exception of this one verse. What does it mean? *Stick around for the resurrection and we'll find out!* I don't know. I'm not even going to attempt to answer the question.

“...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). What does this tell us about a church member? *A church member is to have:*

- a spirit of understanding
- a spirit of fairness
- a spirit to be able to make a judgment on how to settle disputes

Not like church members are suppose to be ‘dumb sheep’ sitting quietly doing nothing. That's quite a responsibility—isn't it? If you had difficulties and problems between yourselves and it became so bad that you had to say, ‘Hey, we need to solve this with the Church.’ “...if you have judgments *concerning the* things of this life, *why* do you appoint *as judges* those who have no standing in the Church?”

Verse 5: “Now I say *this* to your shame....” He's trying to shame them with these contradictions. What he's saying in so many nice words, is ‘Look, you're a bunch of sinning, fighting, squabbling dodos. That's what he's saying nicely.’

“...*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). If you read this little report, there's still one going before the unbelievers—right? And a problem of disfellowshipment and slander—right? *Yes!* And it started way back in 1979. Isn't it a shame that you have stand up and show how evil the other person is, before the unbelievers!

- What do the unbelievers think of God?
- What do the unbelievers think of Christians?

If you're supposed represent Christ, and supposed to love each other...

(go to the next track)

{ vs 7-8 are cut off from the recording; added in because of the comment }

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).

‘Hey I don't know anything about this. Don't bother me, I don't want to hear it. It must have been something to walk into that Corinthian congregation.

Verse 9: “Don't you know that the unrighteous shall not inherit *the* Kingdom of God?

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). Nothing needs to be said to elaborate on that; that is clear as can be.

Verse 11: “And such were some of you... [past tense; before conversion] ...but you were washed... [How is that? *With the blood of Jesus Christ!*] ...you were sanctified... [How is that? *With your calling and the Holy Spirit!*] ...you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.” That’s as clear as can be.

I don’t know how anyone can read the Bible and have—especially here in the United States with metropolitan churches. Do you know what a metropolitan church is? *A church that is run for and by homosexuals—male and female!* And a lot of the Universal Churches are the same way. I don’t know how they can claim to do anything toward the people of God when you read this.

Verse 12 is a very ‘ticky-tacky’ verse, and it’s almost universally true that someone who does not know the Bible goes here and tries to justify almost anything they do.

Verse 12: “All things *that* are lawful *are permitted* to me...” That’s quiet a statement— isn’t it?

- Therefore, I can be a robber—correct? Therefore, I can be an adulterer—correct?
 - Therefore, I can be an extortioner—right?
 - Therefore, I don’t have to keep the Sabbath—right?
 - Therefore, I can eat unclean foods—right?
- It says,

“All things *that* are lawful *are permitted* to me...” **NO!** That’ isn’t what it means! It means *all things are lawful are lawful unto me!* Not unlawful things. Obviously, ‘sin is the transgression of the Law.’

“...but all things *that are lawful* are not beneficial...” (v 12). Was is lawful for Paul to take the tithes and offerings of the Church? *Yes!* He said that he had the authority (1-Cor. 9). Did he take it? *No!* He thought he would do them more good by not taking it. Later he apologized for it; he said, ‘I shouldn’t have done it because I did you wrong. Forgive me this wrong.’

“...all things *that are lawful are permitted* to me, but **I will not be mastered by anything**” (v 12). In other words, he’s not going to make a little pet cause out of some little thing. That’s what a lot of religionist do, they take one little thing and make a pet cause out of it. He’s not going to be brought

under the power of any.

Verse 13: “Foods *are* for the belly, and the belly *is* for foods; but God will destroy both it and those. Now, the body *is* not for sexual immorality...” It gets into the realm of sex and the proper use of sex.

Some people go around an say, ‘The human being is a sexual creature; so therefore, any expression of this is good.’ But that’s not the way it works! The body is not for fornication. The body is not some sort of sexual apparatus designed strictly for sensual pleasure.

“...but for the Lord...” (v 13). That’s really a profound statement. Your mind, your whole body, ***was made for the Lord.*** When we understand that we are made after the image of God; when we understand the tremendous blessing that God has given to us to be able to re-create ourselves through our own children, and to be able to have the creative powers that human beings have, and that God made this to be a receptacle for His Holy Spirit, that’s really something to think about.

The body was made for the Lord, “...and the Lord for the body” (v 13). You can also allegorize this:

- the Church is the body
- the body of the Church is going to be Bride of Christ was made for the Lord

You can read it both ways and be absolutely true. Your physical body and everything about you as an individual is made for God; and God for you, to put His Spirit in you; same way with the Church. *The Church was made for God;* and the body of the Church belongs to the Lord. This also helps us understand a little bit more how the Church should be handled.

Verse 14: “And God has also raised the Lord *from the dead*, and will raise us by His *own* power. Don’t you know that your bodies are members of Christ?....” (vs 14-15). See how the analogy fits right in there.

- if you’re the member of Christ
- if you have the Holy Spirit of God

“...Shall I then take the members of Christ and make *them* members of a harlot? **MAY IT NEVER BE!**” (v 15). That is in an individual sense, an individual member, *or* on a church basis. What is the great false religious system called? *The great whore! The harlot!* (Rev. 17).

Verse 16: “WHAT! Don’t you know that he who is joined to a harlot is one body?....” People have misunderstood this Scripture, too. Does that mean that if you marry an adulteress or an adulterer,

you're bound to them for life? *No!* That means that during the act of sex you're of one body. That's what it's talking about.

"...For He says, 'The two shall be one flesh.' But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit" (vs 16-17). That's why God doesn't want all this inner mixing of all this strange religious doctrine.

I heard another new one from out of the Church of God that New Jerusalem is not going to come down to the earth, but it's going to hover 150 miles above the earth. It says in Zech. 14 very clearly—you read it—that Jesus, when He returns, 'in that day *His feet shall stand above the Mt. Olives 150 miles*. If he's going to come to only 150 miles above the earth, He would have to say that—right? But it doesn't! They're being crossbred with all kinds of false doctrine. That's what it means.

1-Corinthians 10:19: "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. 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 19-22).

Here's the same statement, v 23: "All things *that are lawful are permitted* to me, but not all things *that are permitted* are profitable. All things *that are lawful are permitted* to me, but all things *that are permitted* do not edify." Every time these two instances are used, Paul uses it right in connection with something that he has previously stated that is wrong.

1-Corinthians 6:17: "But **he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit**.... [That's what we should be together as a congregation—*one spirit!*] ...Flee sexual immorality. Every sin that a man may commit is outside the body... [every other sin] ...but the one who commits sexual immorality is sinning against his own body" (vs 17-18).

They finding that Alzheimer disease and Down Syndrome gene is chromosome 22. They also show that Down Syndrome children have three chromosome 22 instead of two.

Fornication and idolatry go hand-in-hand. The second commandment says that those who bow down to idols, worship and serve them, that they will be cursed to the third and fourth generation. The only thing I can say is, brethren, that if there is righteousness—which there is; and if God is righteous—which He is; then somehow there's got to be a standard, that is a living standard, that God

has set in motion to uphold His Word. God is not going to be mocked in anything.

I can see that more and more. I can understand that more and more. Just like I saw a program 'Let's pass out condoms to the whole world and stop AIDS,' and one woman stood up and said, 'Why can't you just say *no!*' She's the only one I heard with any sense. All the others were just blithering!

I think, brethren, that we need to understand the tremendous blessing that God is giving us being in His Church. We need to press upon our children the blessing that they have received being of a family that is in the Church and having God's blessing. Don't take your blessing—as I've told my children—of health, sound mind, sound body, ability and the fact that you do have any attractive countenance and think you're some 'gift to the world' and go out here and become vain and stupid and blow it by taking drugs. I say:

'What you need to think about is how you're going to multiply this blessing and pass it on to your children. Just think what your children will be with God's blessing upon you and then double that on your own children.' That will be fantastic! That's what needs to be taught to these kids. Even kids in the world, God would bless kids in the world if they just keep themselves clean. He would bless them physically, because God is no respecter of persons. Anyone who does righteousness will be blessed (Deut. 28). That is so!

And get to the point where God blessed all of Israel at the beginning of Solomon's reign. Half way through the Queen of Sheba came up and she just couldn't stand it. It took her spirit away. Everyone was handsome and beautiful, everything was gorgeous, and the wealth and plush and marvelous, and it just took her breath away from her.

That's the way it should be with human beings if they would just follow God. 'Oh no, we have to have freedom of choice.' That's the way it is. If you told people what God was going to stop and shut down and what He is going to teach, you would have people ready to fight Christ right this minute.

Verse 18: "...Every sin that a man may commit is outside the body, but the one who commits sexual immorality is sinning against his **own body**"—the next generation.

Dr. Cameron—the one who is against AIDS and homosexuality—said, 'It is very tragic! Homosexuals are on a destructive course for their own bodies, minds and lives. When they get old there's nothing! They end! Where, if you're married

and you have children, part of you continues in your children.’ If you sin against your own body now, then you’re also sinning against your own children in the future.

Verse 19: “WHAT! Don’t you know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, which you have *within you* from God, and **you are not your own**? For you were bought with a price. Therefore, glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s” (vs 19-20).

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

Scriptural References:

- 1) 1 Corinthians 5:3-5
- 2) Matthew 18:15-22
- 3) 3 John 5-10
- 4) 2 John 6-11
- 5) 1 Corinthians 5:11, 9-13
- 6) 1 Corinthians 6:1-2
- 7) Revelation 20:4
- 8) 1 Corinthians 6:2-17
- 9) 1 Corinthians 10:19-23
- 10) 1 Corinthians 6:17-20

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Jeremiah 7
- 1 Corinthians 7; 9
- Revelation 17
- Zechariah 14
- Deuteronomy 28

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Transcribed: 4-7-13

Epistle of First Corinthians XII

Lessons of First Corinthians

An Overview of First & Second Corinthians

Fred R. Coulter

Many times we can learn an awful lot from the Bible by delving down into the minute, by going down into each verse and do a word study word-for-word going back to the original Greek or Hebrew and understand it from a minute point of view. There are other times when we can learn more by having an overview, when we pull ourselves back a from the minute and look at many things.

In the book of 1-Corinthians there are a tremendous number of lessons for us to learn, and I think it will help us also to answer many of the questions as to why the Church of God today is in the condition that it is. And also why the world, with its religions, is in the condition that it is in. The seeds of these things are right here in the book of 1-Cor. We may get into some parts of 2-Cor. just to cover a few things. But there are a tremendous amount of lessons for us to learn.

First of all, one of things that we all would like to assume when we read in the Bible that the Church is the Body of Christ, and that there is one Body. Some people assume that there is one organization that is the only church. You're really stuck with a lot of problems and difficulties, because so many churches claim that. Obviously, they can't all be right.

So then, how are we going to find how these things began, what the truth is concerning what Jesus told us and how things will be?

Matthew 10 will help us understand the setting in which the Church at Corinth was begun, and how it affects us today. We would all love to have everything beautiful, nice, peaceful, kind, loving and everything just perfect. But there is no such thing as perfection in this world because of the 'law of sin and death' in us, and because of human nature, and because this is not God's rule or reign or kingdom.

Because of that, Jesus said, Matthew 10:32: "Now then, whoever shall confess Me before men, that one will I also confess before My Father Who *is* in heaven." That's kind of a very broad thing—isn't it? What do you mean 'confess' Jesus? Today we have so many people claim the name of Jesus, is Jesus really confessing them before the Father? *That's what we going to find out today!*

Verse 33: "But whoever shall deny Me

before men, that one will I also deny before My Father, Who *is* in heaven." Then we find in Titus, the first chapter, that people deny God being 'abominable in every work.' So, there are other Scriptures we need to tie in there to make this in the way of our understanding, so that we can understand it the way that Jesus wants us to.

Verse 34: "Do not think that I have come to bring peace on the earth; I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. 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*" (vs 34-36). That's really a startling statement because that flies in the face of what a lot of people think, that once you're a Christian that everything is good, rosy, merry, kind and wonderful, and we just go on in blessed happiness forever and ever.

Well, this statement is more true than the latter one. This is what happens in the lives of Christians, than the lives of Christians trying to survive also in the world.

Verse 37—the key: "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." This tells us that Jesus wants us to have the one-to-one contact with Him and God the Father. That's a vital key in understanding where the Church of God is today in its relationship with God.

We're going to see the book of First Corinthians, as we go through here, that Paul always stresses that direct connection between you and God. So therefore, that becomes the most vital thing in our lives. That becomes the most vital thing that the Church needs to preserve for all of those who are in the Church.

Anything that becomes between you and God—however completely, obliquely or indirectly—to deteriorate your relationship with God then is something we all need to be aware of and alert for. That's why today, and also down through history, ***God is more concerned with that connection***

- than He is with buildings
- than He is with numbers of supposed

members

- than He is with conformity to a hierarchy
- than He is with who is in charge

Maybe that will help you understand some of the problems that we're going to get an overview on in 1-Cor. God is more concerned with that individual connection and relationship between each person and God the Father and Jesus Christ. Everything that is in the Church, everything that is done in the Church, needs to fall into up-building of that relationship between the individual and God. We have to have that love for God and be willing to take whatever comes along.

Verse 38: "And the one who does not take up his cross and follow Me is not worthy of Me. The one who has found his life shall lose it; and the one who has lost his life for My sake shall find it" (vs 38-39). Those are some tremendous promises, but they are the opposite extremes—aren't they?

We do have decisions to make and things to do. That's partly the reason we find ourselves where we are in the Church of God today. People have had to choose between Jesus Christ and a man, or between Jesus Christ and an organization. We will see that the very seeds of these things were already planted the Church of Corinth as we find in 1-Cor.

Acts 18 goes back and shows where the Church at Corinth began. I'm going to show that Paul came to Corinth and then he was with Aquila and Priscilla. Acts 18:4: "And he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and persuaded *both* Jews and Greeks." Let's see the setting and see where the sword was drawn, right here, as Jesus said.

- Paul didn't start out with a church of peace
- Paul didn't start out with a church of docile, humble, obedient people just falling at his feet and kissing his ring

Paul started out with a tremendous battleground. When we understand that on the one hand we have a world that is totally pagan with all the Roman and Greek customs, which is 99.9% of the entire world. Not like we look at it today with all the various so-called Christian groups, but totally pagan.

Then on the other hand you have the Jews, whom Jesus said—in rejecting Him—were as bad as if not worse than all the pagans over here on the other side. That's kind of a tough environment to be in a Church, but nevertheless, Paul did.

Verse 5: "Now, when Silas and Timothy came down from Macedonia, Paul was stirred in his spirit *and* was earnestly testifying to the Jews *that* Jesus *was* the Christ." I'm sure he got the same reaction that is given by a lot of the Jews today.

Verse 6: "But when they set themselves in opposition and were blaspheming, *Paul* shook *his* garments *and* said to them, 'Your blood *be* upon your own heads. I am pure *of it*. From this time forward I will go to the Gentiles.'" What a 'wonderful, peaceful' way to start a Church, throwing down the gauntlet and telling them that 'your blood is on your own head! I'm going to go to the Gentiles.'

To a Jew that is one of the most obnoxious things that you can say. Just get the picture of what happened in Corinth for the foundation of the Church.

Verse 7: "And after departing from there, he went into *the* house of a certain one named Justus, who worshiped God, whose house adjoined the synagogue." In other words, his house came right up to the building where the synagogue was. He went out the door of the synagogue and into the house of Justus to continue the church services.

- Can you imagine what an uproar that that caused?
- Can you imagine the feelings that were there?

Think of what Jesus said, 'I came to send a sword, not peace.' We'll see that's how the Church at Corinth began, which also was the hotbed of the seeds of their own problems in the future.

Verse 8: "But Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed in the Lord with his whole house; and many of the Corinthians who heard believed and were baptized." So, Paul came into the synagogue, preached several Sabbaths, split the synagogue right down the middle—half of them went out one door and into the other to continue with Paul. Even the chief ruler of the synagogue left and was with Paul.

If you know anything of how the Jews react, this created a terrible and fantastic problem. It kind of reminds me of what I read in the paper this morning. The Orthodox Jews, in order to enforce the Sabbath, are having riots on Friday night to close down the movies.

I can't, in my own mind, reconcile that the Orthodox Jews are not breaking the Sabbath by rioting to close down the movies going on Friday night. I mean, if one is sin and labor, then the other has got to be sin and labor. When you get into these human arguments and you get into trying to justify all these things, you find yourself in a horrible predicament. That's exactly where Paul found himself.

Verse 9: And the Lord said to Paul in a vision in *the* night, 'Do not be afraid; but speak, and do not be silent... [do not hold back] ...for I am with you; and no one shall set upon you to mistreat you because I have many people in this city.' And he remained *there* for a year and six months, teaching the Word of God among them. Now, when Gallio was proconsul of Achaia, the Jews rose up against Paul with one accord..." (vs 9-12). Here we have an Orthodox Jewish insurrection and riot against Paul because he split the congregation.

This is how the Church at Corinth began. It remained in an uproar all through the time that Paul was the apostle to the Corinthians. Let's see what Paul told the people in Asia, just across the Aegean Sea from Greece; same kind of situation around there. Wherever Paul went in to the synagogue, there were believers and went out and raised up their own church or met in someone's home or in another building right close by. It caused a tremendous amount of problems with the Gentiles and with the Jews.

After the churches have been established and after Paul has done all the things that he has done, let's see the atmosphere that Paul was leaving these people in:

Acts 20:16: "For Paul had decided to sail by Ephesus... [It was a little ways inland from Miletus] ...because he did not want to spend time in Asia; for he hastened in order to be in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost, if possible. Now from Miletus, he sent to Ephesus *and* called for the elders of the Church. And when they had come to him, he said to them..." (vs 16-18).

Notice the testimony and the warning that Paul is giving, even the elders: "...You know how, from the first day I came to Asia, *and* all the time I was with you, I served the Lord with all humility and *with* many tears and temptations, which came upon me through the plots of the Jews; *and* how I did not keep back anything that was profitable, *but* preached to you, and taught you publicly and from house to house'" (vs 18-20).

That doesn't mean that, as the Jehovah Witnesses go from house to house, but he was teaching in various homes of the various brethren where they would gather together; obviously, because of the problems with the Jews. It appears here that Paul also had to hold Sabbath services in someone's house because the Jews would come and riot if they knew where they were holding their meetings. So, he would go from house to house.

Verse 21: "Earnestly testifying, both to *the* Jews and *the* Greeks, repentance toward God and

faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. And now behold, I am bound in the spirit, *and* am going to Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall happen to me there; except that the Holy Spirit fully testifies in every city, saying that bonds and tribulations await me. 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. And now behold, I know that you all, among whom I have gone about proclaiming the Kingdom of God, will see my face no more; wherefore **I testify to you on this day...**" (vs 21-26). This is a record; this is being recorded.

I kind of, in my own mind in going through this, equated this to Deut. 30. Remember, just before they went into the 'promised land' Moses stood up and he read the Law the second time for all the Israelites. He went through and explained all the things that they were to do when they went into the land. In Deut. 32 it talks about when Jeshurun waxes fat he will be corrupted and corrupt himself; talking about what would happen when the nation of Israel once they got in there and settled down, and so forth. That's precisely what happened.

Remember in Deut. 30 He said, 'I set before you life and death, good and evil; I call heaven and earth to record against you this day...'

Paul says right here that "...**I testify to you on this day...** [so, this is a profound meaning] ...that I am pure from the blood of all, for I have not held back from preaching to you all the counsel of God" (vs 26-27). He's done everything that God has wanted him to do.

Verse 28: "Take heed, therefore, to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers..." This tells us an awful lot! The Holy Spirit is the one that makes a person an elder or minister or an overseer.

"...to feed the Church of God, which He purchased with His own blood" (v 28). This tells us a lot of things about the Church of God. It is the Church of GOD, not the church of whoever the minister is, the elder is, the council is, whomever the pope may be. It is the Church of God, again that one-to-one relationship between the individual and God. We're going to see a little later that there are problems with that one-to-one relationship because of sin and people, and also problems because of ministers that we're going to see right here.

Verse 29: "For I know this... [How did Paul know this?] ...that after my departure grievous wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock." This tells us that there was a lot going on; a

lot of undercurrent going on in the Church.

Verse 30: “And from among your own selves men will rise up speaking perverse things... [things that Jesus didn’t teach; things that were not in the Scriptures; things that were not of God, though done in the name of God] ...to draw away disciples after themselves.” So, he’s telling them clearly, ‘When I leave the Church is going to disintegrate and divide. We’re going to see in 1-Cor. all the seeds that were there that did it.

Verse 31: “Watch, therefore, remembering that *for* three years I ceased not to admonish each one night and day with tears. And now I commit you, brethren, to God... [he didn’t say that he committed them to the pope or anybody else] ...and to the Word of His grace, which is able to build you up and to give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified.” (vs 31-32). That’s quite a warning— isn’t it?

In doing an overview we’re going to cover and see how absolutely cracked the foundation of the Church at Corinth was. Not only the way that it began, but because of what they did and because of human nature.

1-Corinthians 1

1-Corinthians 1:10: “Now I exhort you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and *that* there be no divisions among you... [here they were, they had lots of divisions] ...rather, *that* you be knit together in the same mind and in the same judgment. For my brethren, it has been declared to me concerning you, by those of *the house* of Chloe, that there are contentions among you” (vs 10-11).

We’ve lived in a time when we were going to Sabbath services in other congregations and there would be contentions and things and fightings as it were between the people and the minister verbally. And there would be a group over here and a group over there. We’ll see that’s exactly how the Church at Corinth was.

Verse 12: “Now this I say, since everyone among you says, ‘I am of Paul’; or, ‘I *am* of Apollos’; or, ‘I *am* of Cephas’; or ‘I *am* of Christ.’ Has Christ been divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized into the name of Paul?” (vs 12-13). Of course, none of those things are true; we’re to follow Christ.

There are also those who say, ‘We will follow Christ,’ but they end up not following Christ. They end up following a man, and when you read in Gal. 1 when people follow a man. They end up with a passel of problems.

Then Paul shows that one of their biggest problems was that they were using their own human wisdom to come to the understanding of the Truth of God. You can’t do that! You can’t use your own human wisdom to come to the understanding of God. The whole legacy of Catholic theology with their monasteries and their nunneries and different schools show the same thing. They study all of the human philosophies and all the pagan philosophies to try and understand God. The seeds of that were sown right here in Corinth.

Then Paul tells them, v 26: “For you see your calling... [v 27]: God has chosen the foolish things of the world, so that He might put to shame those who are wise...” He hasn’t called many wise men; the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God, and by the foolishness of the cross of Christ, God is preaching the Gospel to the world.

As we can see as we’re going through, that we have the beginning of synthesizing or the syncretism of bringing together *human* thoughts, *human* ‘religion’ into the things of Christ to try and make a better ‘religion,’ which took them away from the Truth of God.

1-Corinthians 2

Paul had to really come on strong with them and tell them that it is not by the wisdom of men that the understanding of God comes, but it has to be revealed by the Holy Spirit. Again, that one-to-one connection between the individual and God, and also between the minister and God.

How can a minister teach the people if he does not maintain that relationship with God and grow in grace and knowledge himself? How can a minister—as Paul would say, ‘be a minister’— unless he delves into the Word of God, teaches the Word of God, has faith himself? *He can’t be! He can’t be a minister unless he does!* Those things have to be revealed of God’s Holy Spirit.

1-Corinthians 2:9: “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.’” We went though that section in detail in loving God and how important that is.

Verse 10: “But God has revealed *them* to us by His Spirit...” These things have to be revealed by the Spirit of God, through His Word; not the good things of the world that we may like or not like, or try and bring it all together. That just sows the seeds of discord and brings in a lot of carnality and stupidity into the Church, and that’s what happened in Corinth.

So, he’s telling them the only way it’s going

to be is with the Spirit of God. God has to reveal these things to us. God has to show these things to us. It's a combination of loving God, God's Spirit, the Word of God, and being taught the Word of God and letting God's way work in your heart, mind and being because you have put Christ ahead of all (Matt. 10). That's the only way you're going to get knowledge, Truth, understanding, and knowledge is going to increase. That's the only way that you're going to be in the Kingdom of God, *by looking to Jesus Christ!*

1-Corinthians 3

A very startling chapter, leading to more startling chapters as you go on through. 1-Corinthians 3:1: "And, I, brethren, was not able to speak to you as to those who are spiritual, but as to those who are carnal—even as to babes in Christ. I gave you milk to drink, and not meat; for you were not yet able to receive spiritual meat; and neither are you able now, for you are still carnal...." (vs 1-3). That presents a big problem.

Conversion and growing in grace and knowledge is a steady progression of God's grace, faith, love and your devotion to God. If that isn't there continually, then a lot of carnal things are going to come in. What does it say about the carnal mind?

Romans 8:7: "Because the carnal mind *is* enmity against God..." That enmity means *enemy!* It's an enemy. When you allow all this carnality to breed within a church, then you have all these human devices and things that people rely on:

- human wisdom
- human devices
- human thoughts
- being puffed up
- filled with vanity
- not submitting to the will of God

Verse 7: "Because the carnal mind *is* enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God; neither indeed can it *be*." You still have a lot of people who still want to confess Christ, but they don't want to give up their own way. That's exactly what was happening here.

1-Corinthians 3:3: "...For since envy and contention and divisions *are* among you, are you not carnal? And *are you not* walking according to human *ways*?" I've had quite a bit of time to think about—since we have not been with a great organization and church—to think about the structure of a church. I think I'm beginning to understand more about what needs to be with a church.

Obviously, the bigger it is the more structure you're going to need just to take care of the physical things of the Church. However, I think I have learned that the most important thing is to maintain with a congregation and every individual that connection with the person and God; that the minister doesn't stand between them and God. He's over here on the side helping. That makes a whole lot of difference when you view that that is the way a church should be.

Therefore, God is interested in that individual relationship. Just how it should be structured—so that will always be an assured thing—is what I'm going to ask God to help me learn and understand, because I came from a one-man dictatorship over to a committee of dictators, and left that and now were down to a few people who want to love God and serve Him.

The only thing I can say is that that turns out to be the best of all, because we're not striving. We don't have any of these problems that are here in Corinth. We're down to a few who love God and love each other and uphold each other. As a minister I don't have to crack any authority over anybody, and nobody is out there ready to stab me in the back. It's really a nice situation to be in.

I can see here that when you get a lot of carnal people in a church and you start using all these carnal devices in a church, there will be a whole panoply of problems that have coming through the whole book of 1-Corinthians.

This is the important thing, and notice how Paul points the people to Christ every time, v 11: "For no one is able to lay any other foundation besides that which has been laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now, if anyone builds upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay *or* stubble" (vs 11-12). It shows it's awfully hard to get everyone growing and developing at the same rate, at the same time, and God doesn't expect it to be.

However, let's make sure that we do not build our spiritual life out of "...wood, hay and stubble," because the fire is going to try it and to see what kind of work it is.

Verse 16: "Don't you understand that **you** are God's temple, and *that* the Spirit of God is dwelling in **you**?" Not with buildings!

I remember when we were in a church where we all got excited because we were going 'build a temple to God'—right? Almost, 'this is God's house.' Well, if God is not truly there in Spirit, it doesn't matter if it's the greatest mansion covered with gold from top to bottom. If the Spirit of God is

not there it doesn't matter what kind of building it is.

Remember what Jesus said? That He is 'with the lowly and the humble.' He even said that the whole earth is 'not compared to a person who is of a humble heart and contrite spirit and trembles at the Word of God.

Verse 17: "If anyone defiles the temple of God, God shall destroy him because the temple of God is Holy, which temple you are." That's what's important. How can you defile the temple of God?

- *physically* through sin
- *mentally* through the wrong thoughts
- *lack of faith*
- *lack of love*

You're defiling the temple of God! That's the whole thrust of what we have here.

1-Corinthians 4

Paul gets stronger. He goes on to show them that they were thinking how great they were, how wonderful they were in Christ, with marvelous wisdom that they had. And after all, they had the greatest thing going and we are just so tolerant and loving. We will see that they allowed *many* sins to be in the Church.

1-Corinthians 4:14: "I do not write these things to make you ashamed, but as my beloved children **I warn you**.... [That's strong writing—isn't it?] ...For you might have ten thousand tutors in Christ..." (vs 14-15). Everyone wanted to be a teacher in Christ; a great and marvelous thing. Isn't that what people want to do? *Sure!*

"...but *you do not have* many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I did beget you through the Gospel.... [You don't have as many who are as 'fathers'—not in the sense that the Catholics look at it.] ...Therefore, I am exhorting you to be imitators of me" (vs 15-16). Who was he following? *He was following Christ!* If you're going to follow Paul, you're going to follow Christ. Very simple!

I've heard people that read that and say, 'I'm your minister, therefore, Paul says that you are to follow me; and if you you're going to follow Paul then you have to follow me. I then, as your minister, tell you what to do.' *No!* That's not what it means. Paul doesn't mean that he's setting up any kind of fatherhood or dictatorship here at all. If you truly follow Paul, you're going to truly follow Christ.

Verse 17: "For this cause I sent to you Timothy, who is my beloved son, and faithful in the Lord, who will remind you of my ways that *are* in Christ... [there it is from his own mouth] ...exactly

as I teach everywhere in every church. Now some of you are puffed up, as though I were not coming to you" (vs 17-18). They had all this vanity creeping up.

Just like on television and you watch some of these 'religious' shows. The only thing you can say about a lot of them is that a lot of them are puff, a lot of vanity. That's what was going on here in the Church at Corinth. They were puffed up, filled with vanity.

Verse 19: "But I shall come to you shortly, if the Lord wills; and I will know not *merely* the words of those who are puffed up, but the power. For the Kingdom of God *is* not in words, but in power. What do you desire? Shall I come to you with a rod, or in love and a Spirit of meekness?" (vs 19-21). Those are pretty tough words—aren't they? Paul had his hands full with the Church.

Lots of times we like to read all the wonderful, good things in the Bible and we overlook the book of 1st and 2nd Corinthians, and it's really a troublesome book! Just think, this was the Church of God. Maybe it was out here on the fringe ready to fall apart, but it was still a Church of God.

1-Corinthians 5

We know the problem here; vanity and being puffed up. One was committing fornication with his step-mother. They were going around saying what a wonderful thing. 'We have understanding. This is a nice arrangement. It's not all that bad; we can reason our way around it with our wisdom and goodness. Paul said to kick him out, get rid of him, *deliver him to Satan!* Quite a difference—isn't it?

1-Corinthians 6

What shocking chapter this is: brethren going against brethren before the courts of the land! That's quite a thing!

We left a Church of God that that's all they were doing. They were going to court! Court of the State of California brought against people who were suing them. Rather than sitting down and having judgment and understanding, they ended up 'going to law before the unbelievers' and dragging everything through the courts. What an obnoxious mess that was to God! What an obnoxious mess that was to people who wanted to believe in God.

Yet, at the same time, with the next breath, say 'WE are the Church of God.' Well, not exactly. May be, but you really have some problems. These sound like modern day problems, but there were problems back then, too.

This is really a tough chapter, too; 1-Corinthians 6:9: “Don’t you know that the unrighteous shall not inherit *the* Kingdom of God? 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). Why would Paul say that unless that’s what was going on in the Church?

Can you imagine why Paul was in such doubt concerning the Church at Corinth? With all the problems that are there? I want to emphasize again. What is it that God is really concerned with more than anything else?

- That you are right with God!
- That you are under the grace of God!
- That your fellowship is with God the Father and Jesus Christ, then with each other!

That is all based on love and the grace of God!

1-Corinthians 7

We have Paul’s answer to one of their letters. 1-Corinthians 7:1: “Now concerning the things that you wrote to me, *saying*, ‘*It is good for a man not to touch a woman*,’... [in other words, avoid fornication and all that sort of thing] ...*I say this*: Rather, to avoid sexual immorality, let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband” (vs 1-2). That is true down through history. There’s no way you can change that; it is absolute fact!

All of the things of the monasteries and nunneries of the different religions—not only Catholic, but of Buddhism, and all of the other religions—prove exactly the same thing. So, Paul had to go through and in this chapter show how a marriage should be. It was all right to marry. There were problems that people were thinking, as Paul said, the time was short; but he pointed out that the most important thing is the keeping of the commandments of God. If they wanted to marry there would be no problem in it, but it should be right and proper before God.

1-Corinthians 8

We come to a problem that was very unique then; much different than what we have now. You have to understand that any meat that they ate was sacrificed before an idol, because that’s where all the slaughtering took place, if you lived in the city.

Obviously, if you lived in the country, you could kill your goat or your lamb and eat it right

there. But remember, they didn’t have refrigeration. They didn’t have the kind of transportation we have now. We can get up from here and in an hour we can go 40 miles away to the restaurant of our choice. They didn’t have that privilege then.

If you get on one of these little donkeys. That was their fastest transportation. Everything was close in, everything was confined. Everything in the way of meat they had to slaughter and eat it that day. If it weren’t too hot of a day they could carry it over to the next day if they had some cool place to store it. So, when these things were sacrificed before an idol, Paul was saying, ‘We know an idol is nothing, it’s only a physical thing. It is not God! There’s nothing magical in it. It doesn’t have anything to it, so if you have eat meat that has been sacrificed to it, it isn’t going to harm you. However, if someone points out that this is sacrificed before an idol, don’t eat it for their sake. It talks about the liberty they had with it, and so forth.

1-Corinthians 8:3: “But if anyone loves God, he is known by Him.” again, it shows that connection between God and the individual.

Verse 6: “Still, to us *there is* one God the Father, from Whom *are* all things, and we *are* in Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by Whom *are* all things, and we *are* by Him.”

There again is the key. Notice that every chapter Paul points back to God, back to Christ, back to this relationship and the individual and God. He is doing all that he can to maintain that.

1-Corinthians 9

This shows that Paul had to power to collect the things of the people—whether it be tithes or offerings, food, or whatever—as God had provided. He preached to them free of charge.

You know the old saying: When you give something to someone free, they don’t appreciate it. That’s exactly what happened here in the book of 1-Cor. He gave the Gospel to them free, and said, ‘No, don’t give me anything; I’ll take from the churches over....I’m going to let you bypass that because I want you to really learn of God’s way. He actually admits later on that this was a mistake on his part to do so. But, it’s the same thing. Once you start handing out things and giving it away, people don’t appreciate it—do they? *No, they don’t!*

1-Corinthians 9:18: “What then is my reward? That in preaching the Gospel, I may make the Gospel of Christ without expense, so that I may not abuse my authority in the Gospel.” Can you imagine how sensitive he was, that he didn’t want to, but yet, he should have.

Verse 19: “For although I am not under bondage to anyone...” He was trying to say, ‘I’m going to do this so that no one is going to come and tell me what to do just because you give certain things to the Church.’

“...I have made myself a servant to all, so that I might gain the more. Now, to the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain *the* Jews; to those who are under law, as under law, that I might gain those who are under law; to those who are without law, as without law (not being without law to God, but within law to Christ)... [showing again, law and back to God; everything back to God.] ...that I might gain those who are without law. To the weak, I became as weak, that I might gain those who are weak. To all these, I have become all things, so that I might by all means save some” (vs 19-22).

Then he says, ‘We are all in a race and we have to endure to the end; he keeps himself under his own discipline.

1-Corinthians 10 is very interesting. Let’s see some more of the things that are given and we see the tremendous warning that Paul gives.

(go to the next track)

1-Corinthians 10

Paul starts out by showing that even those Israelites were baptized unto Moses through the cloud and the sea, and they ‘all followed that Rock, and that Rock was Christ.’ Notice again, he’s pointing them to Christ. Every chance he gets. He’s not pointing them to himself. He’s not pointing them to the authority of Timothy or Titus or Silvas; he’s not doing any of that. ***He’s pointing them always to Christ!***

But with many of them, God was not well pleased. He overthrew them in the wilderness. Go back and read the book of Numbers and you will see all the things that the Israelites went through, it just takes your breath—all the problems that they went through, all the sins that they did; right in the presence of God. We think, ‘If we would have had that fire by night and that cloud by day we would have been so good and so obedient and so wonderful!

Well, the point that Paul is making is, though they had that and they should have done the things to please God, ‘you Christians have the Spirit of God within you and what are you doing?’ Is God not closer if you have the Spirit of God within you, than standing on the earth and seeing the pillar of fire and the pillar of cloud? *Yes!* This is what he’s saying here, and he’s making it really a tremendous point of correction here.

1-Corinthians 10:6: “Now, these things became examples for us, so that we might not lust after evil things, as they also lusted. Neither be idolaters...” (vs 6-7).

He’s saying here to “...flee idolatry.” (v 14) People were starting to bring in their little idols: ‘we need this or that, or a nice statue of this, a cross over here would be nice. Oh, this is lovely, good, wonderful and religious.’ Today the Catholics have it that if they kiss the cross—especially if it’s one the pope has blessed—it’s wonderful, great! NO! It’s idolatry! It’s stupidity! Here the seeds of that are sown—right here!

Verse 7: “...as *were* some of them; as it is written, ‘The people sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play.’ Neither should we commit sexual immorality, as some of them committed, and twenty-three thousand were destroyed in one day” (vs 7-8). That would be an awesome thing.

Verse 9: “Neither should we tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted *Him*, and were killed by serpents. Neither *should we* complain against *God*, as some of them also complained, and were killed by the destroyer. Now, all these things happened to them *as* examples, and were written for our admonition, on whom the ends of the ages are coming” (vs 9-11).

Not only was that true during the day that Paul wrote it, but it is also a prophecy for us. If the end of the age was coming upon them at that time, what do you think is coming upon us today? *The end of the age!*

Verse 12: “Therefore, let the one who thinks he stands take heed, lest he fall.” Obviously, the inner-mixing of all these ‘religious’ ideas with the teachings of Christ were leading to this point that they were ready to fall.

Verse 13: “No temptation has come upon you except what is common to mankind. For God, Who *is* faithful, will not permit you to be tempted beyond what you are able *to bear*; but with the temptation, He will make a way of escape, so that you may be able to bear *it*. Therefore, my beloved, flee from idolatry” (vs 13-14).

Then Paul brings out a very important thing. He says that you cannot mix the pagan ‘religions’ and the religion of God. Yet, that’s exactly what the Catholics have done. I could read to you books and reams of what the Catholics have done to do that. Here is the seed where it began. He says that because the bread that we eat ‘is that not the fellowship of Christ?’ And the cup that we drink, ‘is that not the fellowship of Christ?’

Verse 20: “But that which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons, and not to God...” It may look beautiful, nice, and a wonderful looking ceremony, but it’s not to God; it’s to demons!

“...and I do not wish you to have fellowship with demons. 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” (vs 20-21). You can’t do it! Even though you have liberty to do a few things, you cannot crossbreed and synchronize all these ‘religions’ into one and make it nice.

The Catholics go so far as to say that the bread that they bless and the cup that they drink is actually the literal flesh and blood of Jesus Christ, and that by the command of the priest: by the priest must come from heaven and Christ must go in that wafer and Christ must be their bodily, therefore, the priest is superior to Christ.

That’s the end of the doctrine that we started here. Quite a thing, isn’t it? Yet, we see how it is fully developed by Satan! That’s quite a warning!

1-Corinthians 11

Another warning. We have problems of women’s lib here, where the women were cutting their hair real short; men were wearing their hair long. We’ve gone through that in past times with the Church, when the whole society was involved with long hair for men and short hair for women. Then the question came up: What is long? What is short?

Paul gives the answer right here, 1-Corinthians 11:14: “Or does not even nature itself teach you that if a man has long hair, it is a shame to him? But if a woman has long hair, it is a glory to her; because the long hair has been given to her instead of a *veil* to cover *her* head. But if anyone is contentious *over this issue*, we have no such custom, neither *do* the Churches of God” (vs 14-16). There’s another correcting statement right in there.

Notice that this church must have been filled with so many pockets of dissidents, so many pockets of people going their own way and thinking their own thing. Chapter after chapter—there are 16 chapters in 1st Cor. and 13 chapters in 2nd Cor.—every one is covering a problem. Hardly has he said, ‘Brethren, you’re faithful. Your love is spoken of abroad and the world.’ He did in Ephesus, Philippians and Colossians—hardly any correction at all. But here in Corinth what a dirge of correction.

Notice all these things were the seeds sown that were not only just in Corinth, but I’m sure throughout the whole Roman Empire so that that

beast-type ‘religion’ of Roman Catholicism would rear it’s ugly head. Here we have everything.

Once again, concerning the Passover, the people were getting together and they were having a debauchery, drunken revelry for the Passover. Paul said that when you get together ‘it’s not to eat the Lord’s Supper.’ Yet, today we still have people saying it’s the Lord’s Supper. You are not getting together for the Lord’s Supper. You are getting together for the Passover. Then he warns them again concerning the Passover. Remember, we found in the seventh chapter where he says the ‘time is short upon whom the ends of the ages have come.’

Concerning the bread and wine of the Passover, v 26: “For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you *solemnly* proclaim the death of the Lord until He comes.” So, they were expecting it to be any time. It’s not as often as you want to; it’s often as you do yearly—until the Lord comes—you show His death.

Verse 27: “For this reason, *if* anyone shall eat this bread or shall drink the cup of the Lord unworthily, he shall be guilty of the body and *the* blood of the Lord.... [again, a strict warning] ...But let a man examine himself, and let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup accordingly because the one who eats and drinks unworthily is eating and drinking judgment to himself, not discerning the body of the Lord” (vs 27-29).

1-Corinthians 12

Paul comes through and shows how we are bound together in the Body of Christ by one Spirit. It’s the reverse of what we have been taught in the past. We have been taught, in the past, that if you are only in this one corporate structure, baptized in this one organization, then are you the Body of Christ.

Well, I could probably pick up the Directory of Sabbath-Keeping Churches and I could show you out of that one book at least 50-100, because there are over 400 of them listed in there, which claim because they do this, or they do that—because you have sacred names, or they believe in Israel, or understand this or that—that they themselves are *the only one* where the Spirit of God is. Everybody else is wrong.

Remember, 1-Cor. 8 says that ‘whosever loves God is known of God.’ He didn’t restrict it. Same way here. ***We are all part of the Body of Christ by the Spirit of God***, not by the corporate organization.

- Again, he points everyone to Christ.
- Again, he points them to the Father

After the Church is formed and structured, then he says concerning how it should be structured and laid out, 1-Corinthians 12:27: “Now you are *the* Body of Christ, and *you are all* individual members. And God Himself has placed certain *ones* in the Church: first, apostles; secondly, prophets; thirdly, teachers; then miracles; then gifts of healings; helps; governments; various languages” (vs 27-28).

After you have all of this, v 29: “Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all perform miracles? Do all have gifts of healing? Do all speak in *different* languages? Do all interpret? But earnestly desire the more *edifying* gifts; and yet, I show you a way far surpassing *all these*” (vs 29-31).

1-Corinthians 13

The most important thing is loving God; following God’s way. 1-Corinthians 13:12: “For now we see through a glass darkly, but then *we shall see* face-to-face; now I know in part, but then I shall know exactly as I have been known. And now, these three remain: faith, hope *and* love; but the greatest of these *is* love” (vs 12-13).

This is one of the crescendos in the book of 1-Cor. He’s saying after all of this:

- put away the carnality
- put away the wisdom of the world
- put away the fighting among yourselves
- put away going to court to try and solve your problems
- put away arguing over the Body of Christ
- put away the disposition of who is who
 - ✓ who’s the greatest
 - ✓ who’s the best
 - ✓ who you are following

And get down to loving God because that’s the most important thing!

1-Corinthians 14

Paul gets into the talking in tongues and all the confusion that was going on in the Church; what a terrible situation that was. Let’s see what this church was like:

1-Corinthians 14:26: “What is it then, brethren? When you assemble together, each of you has a psalm, has a doctrine, has a language, has a revelation, *or* has an interpretation....” Can you imagine all the clamoring going on to get all these things through in a church service? It was bedlam! It was confusion!

“...Let all things be done for edification. If anyone speaks in a *foreign* language, *let it be* by two, or three at the most, and *let that be* in

succession; and let one interpret” (vs 26-27). Then he shows the confusion that was here

Verse 33: “For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all the Churches of the saints. Let your women be silent in the Churches...” (vs 33-34). Does this mean that women are to just walk and as soon as they enter the door of the church zip up their lips and not say anything? *No!* It doesn’t mean that, but I’ve seen that applied. I’ve seen women rebuked publicly when, in an open forum, ask questions, because:

Verse 34: “Let your women be silent in the Churches, for they are not allowed to speak; but they are to be in subjection, exactly as the law says. And if they wish to learn anything, let them ask their own husbands at home. For it is a shame for a woman to speak in church” (vs 34-35).

What does that mean? Obviously, going through the ‘tongues, the psalms, and the screaming and yelling, you had a group of women over here going through everything, and it wasn’t simply a matter of just asking a question. They were taking over the whole church. So, Paul said, ‘Stop it, it’s over with, we’re not going to do it.’ It was a wild church!

1-Corinthians 15

Starts out showing the resurrection of Christ, how that He was buried, put in the grave for three days and three nights, seen by over 500 of the brethren all at once. There are some who believed that there was no resurrection.

- What is the basis of the Church of God founded on? *Jesus Christ!*
- What as one of the things that was the most important part of Jesus Christ? *That He died and that He was resurrected!*

You can go into the tomb of Buddha, Mohammed, many of the saints in the Catholic Church—and a lot of those bones are from chickens and sheep, not from human beings—but when you go the grave of Jesus Christ you don’t find the bone because He is not dead, He is living!

1-Corinthians 15:12: “But if Christ is being preached that He rose from *the* dead, how *is it that* some among you... [In the Church at Corinth where they were having tongues, psalms, having all of the problems that we saw in the Church.] (then there’s this little group over here): ...are saying that there is no resurrection of *the* dead?”

Then Paul goes on showing that the whole basis for your belief is that, v 17: “...if Christ has not been raised, your faith *is* vain; you are still in your

sins.” Then his ministers are found to be false witnesses of God because we said He was raised.

Paul talks about the resurrection of Christ, the resurrection of those who are resurrected when Jesus returns. Quite a thing! That’s the whole basis of what you believe. If you don’t believe in the resurrection, and you don’t believe in *your* resurrection that’s going to occur at the return of Jesus Christ, why even bother being a Christian? That’s what Paul is saying. Go off and be some pagan that doesn’t believe in anything. Don’t bother your mind with Christ.

Verse 33: “Do not be deceived; evil companionship corrupts good behavior. Awake to righteousness, and do not sin, for **some of you do not have the knowledge of God.** I say *this* to your shame” (vs 33-34). Right there in the congregation at Corinth. Then he explains how the dead are raised and so forth.

1-Corinthians 16

Has to do with the gathering of all the goods to take to the poor saints who were in Jerusalem and Judea.

2-Corinthians

There are several things I want cover in 2-Corinthians, showing how they solved some of their problems temporarily. They didn’t solve them all; and how that God was able to help them and comfort them in their different problems, and so forth. The key thing I want to cover in 2-Corinthians is to show how this evil was still progressing within the Church.

2-Corinthians 2:17: “For we are not like the **many**, who for *their own* profit are corrupting the Word of God...” Many where? *Within the Church!* Pseudo Christians outside which corrupt the Word of God. That’s what we have today. People who take a verse here and take a verse there, corrupt everything that God has done in the name of God. What can be more diabolical than in the name of God corrupt the Word of God? *I can’t think of anything!*

“...but we speak with sincerity, as from God, *and* before God, *and* in Christ” (v 17).

2-Corinthians 3 shows how glorious the New Covenant is.

2-Corinthians 4

I just want to cover this part right here, just to show what Paul was still aiming at in the Church at Corinth.

2-Corinthians 4:2: “For we have personally renounced the hidden things of dishonest gain, not walking in *cunning* craftiness, **nor handling the Word of God deceitfully**... [Quite a statement!]

...but by manifestation of the Truth, we are commending ourselves to every man’s conscience before God.” There again, between the person and God!

Verse 3: “But if our Gospel is hidden, it is hidden to those who are perishing; in whom the god of this world [Satan the devil] ...**has blinded the minds of those who do not believe, lest the light of the Gospel of the glory of Christ, Who is *the* image of God, should shine unto them**” (vs 3-4). That’s really a fantastic statement—isn’t it?

The rest of chapter four shows how we have to overcome.

2-Corinthians 5:19: “Which *is*, that God was in Christ, reconciling *the* world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them; and He has entrusted to us *this* message of reconciliation”—through the grace of God we are saved.

1-Corinthians 6:14: “**Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers...**” I’ve had this explained to me many different ways. What are we talking about in a church situation? By having so many people in a church:

- who didn’t believe in the resurrection
- who didn’t take the Passover properly
- who were having fellowship with demons; the things sacrificed to idols in that way
- who were crossbreeding the religion of God with the wisdom of men

That’s what he’s saying here.

“...For what do righteousness and lawlessness *have* in common? And what fellowship *does* light *have* with darkness? 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?....” (vs 14-16). Those are really quite some statements—aren’t they? *Yes, they are!*

This whole Church at Corinth was sitting there fractured, ready to completely fall apart. I’m sure that when Paul died—just like he said in Acts 20—different ones rose up and it completely disintegrated as far as being a church recognized by God, but grew in the world as that pseudo-Christian thing that we have today, being either Greek Orthodox or Roman Catholic.

2-Corinthians 7 shows the repentance that took place and how they let that one who committed the fornication back into the Church.

2-Corinthians 8 shows how the collecting for the food to be taken on down to Jerusalem.

2-Corinthians 9:6 summarized it: “But this *I say*: the one who sows sparingly shall also reap sparingly; and the one who sows bountifully shall also reap bountifully. Each one as he purposes in his heart, *so let him give*, but not grudgingly or by compulsion; for God loves a cheerful giver. For God *is* able to make all grace abound toward you so that in every way you may always have sufficiency in all things, *and* may abound unto every good work” (vs 6-8).

2-Corinthians 10

A highlight chapter. It talks about the difference between trying to be ‘religious’ with a carnal mind and following Christ.

2-Corinthians 10:1: “Now, I Paul am personally exhorting you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ.... [I want to emphasize how he points them to Christ.] ...On the one hand, when present with you I *am* base; but on the other hand, when absent I am bold toward you. But I am beseeching *you* so that, when I am present, I may not have to be bold with the confidence with which I intend to show boldness toward some, who think that we are walking according to *the* flesh” (vs 1-2). In other words, we’re doing this according to carnal ways.

Verse 3: “For although we walk in *the* flesh, we do not war according to *the* flesh.” That’s an important thing! You cannot overcome human nature by just doing physical things. All of the lust of the mind, the vanity, the imagination and the carnal mindedness comes from *within*!

Verse 4: “For the weapons of our warfare *are* not carnal, but mighty through God to *the* overthrowing of strongholds.” That’s where sin and carnal nature is ***strongholds*** in our mind!

Verse 5: “Casting down *vain* imaginations, and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought into the obedience of Christ; and having a readiness to avenge all disobedience, whenever your obedience has been fulfilled. Are you looking at things according to their appearance? If anyone is persuaded in his *own* mind that he is Christ’s, let him reconsider this concerning himself; for exactly as he *is* Christ’s, so also *are* we Christ’s” (vs 5-7).

Why did Paul have to make that statement? *There were people saying that Paul was not in Christ!* Since Paul was not in Christ ‘you ought to follow us because we’re better apostles than Paul is.’ So, he says that those things *have to cast down*!

2-Corinthians 11:3: “But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so

your minds might be corrupted from *the* simplicity that *is* in Christ.” It is simple if it’s taken that way:

- that you love God
- that you keep His commandments
- that you have the Spirit of God

—and that connection between you and Jesus Christ is always maintained in the love of God and the love of brethren. Nothing could be more simple than that.

Verse 4: “For indeed, if someone comes preaching another Jesus, whom we did not preach, or you receive a different spirit, which you did not receive, or a different gospel, which you did not accept, you put up with it as *something* good. But I consider myself in no way inferior to those highly exalted *so-called* apostles” (vs 4-5). This is not talking about Peter. These are the hotshot *false* apostles that he’s talking about.

Verse 13: “For such *are* false apostles...” Why would he mention false apostles if they weren’t coming around the Church. Not like today. They don’t have photographs, identity cards, television, telephones, communication like we do. So, someone comes in and he looks spiritual, sounds spiritual, uses the name of Christ and does a couple of miracles and ‘Oh, an apostle of God!’ *No way!*

“...—deceitful workers who are transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. 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” (vs 13-15). Boy! Some statements! Really quite a desperate situation.

2-Corinthians 12 talks about his visions and his thorn in the flesh.

2-Corinthians 13:5—notice how he ends this: “Examine yourselves *to see* whether you are in the faith; prove your own selves. Don’t you *of* your own selves know that Jesus Christ is in you? Otherwise, you are reprobates.”

I don’t recall ever talking to any people in the Church of God in that way. You can see what a tremendous problem they had; many, many, many problems within the Church at Corinth. All of these have been preserved for us in 1st and 2nd Corinthians, so we could touch on every one of these things. This gives us how the whole system of false religion reared itself up in the name of Christ, though it was pagan, and all the seeds were sown right there during Paul’s time. You can imagine what happened just before Paul died.

Let’s see what Paul said here concerning

those and what happened in the churches. 2-Tim. is one of the last books that Paul wrote.

2-Timothy 4:7: "I have fought a good fight; I have finished the course; I have kept the faith. From this time forward, a crown of righteousness is laid up for me" (vs 7-8). He knew that he was at the end, but what happened to his churches in Greece and in Asia? It is very shocking. He told Timothy:

2-Timothy 1:13: "Hold *as the standard for doctrine* the sound words that you heard from me, in *the* faith and love that *are* in Christ Jesus. Guard the good thing that was committed *to you* by *the* Holy Spirit that is dwelling in us. You know this, that all those who *are* in Asia have rejected me..." (vs 13-15).

I want you to think about that for a minute. I want you to go back and just do your own overview in the book of Acts. How many churches did Paul raise up in Asia? What did he say? "...You know this, that all those who *are* in Asia have rejected me..."

"...of whom are Phygellus and Hermogenes..." (v 15). Didn't Paul say that there would be 'wolves' come up among themselves? Think! Paul, though he did all this and wrote the Scriptures of God, every one of those churches turned their backs on Paul, except:

Verse 16: "May the Lord grant mercy to the household of Onesiphorus because he frequently refreshed me and was not ashamed of my chains. For when he was in Rome, he searched for me very diligently and found *me*. May the Lord grant to him that he may find mercy from *the* Lord in that day and how much he served *me* in Ephesus, you know very well" (vs 16-18). He was gone! Every one had gone!

He says in another place that 'Titus has gone into this world.' Paul was left alone. The forces of good will not triumph over the forces of evil until Jesus Christ returns. The most important thing you can do is, through the love of God and the keeping of His commandments, maintain that relationship between you and God!

Let God add to that what He desires. I hope this has been helpful to see the overview here in 1st and 2nd Corinthians and to learn the lessons of what happened, and how it sowed the seeds for all the problems in the churches today and everything that has transpired *so that you can be faithful in God the Father and Jesus Christ!*

Scriptural References:

- 1) Matthew 10:32-39
- 2) Acts 18:4-12
- 3) Acts 20:16-32
- 4) 1 Corinthians 1:10-13, 26-27
- 5) 1 Corinthians 2:9-10
- 6) 1 Corinthians 3:1-3
- 7) Romans 8:7
- 8) 1 Corinthians 3:3, 11-12, 16-17
- 9) 1 Corinthians 4:14-21
- 10) 1 Corinthians 6:9-10
- 11) 1 Corinthians 7:1-2
- 12) 1 Corinthians 8:3, 6
- 13) 1 Corinthians 9:18-22
- 14) 1 Corinthians 10:6-7, 14, 7-14, 20-21
- 15) 1 Corinthians 11:14-16, 26-29
- 16) 1 Corinthians 12:27-31
- 17) 1 Corinthians 13:12-13
- 18) 1 Corinthians 14:26-27, 33-35
- 19) 1 Corinthians 15:12, 17, 33-34
- 20) 2 Corinthians 2:17
- 21) 2 Corinthians 4:2-4
- 22) 2 Corinthians 5:19
- 23) 2 Corinthians 6:14-16
- 24) 2 Corinthians 9:6-8
- 25) 2 Corinthians 10:1-7
- 26) 2 Corinthians 11:3-5, 13-15
- 27) 2 Corinthians 13:5
- 28) 2 Timothy 4:7-8
- 29) 2 Timothy 1:13-18

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Titus 1
- Deuteronomy 30; 32
- Galatians 1
- 1 Corinthians 5; 16
- 2 Corinthians 3; 7; 8; 12

FRC:bo
Transcribed: 4-7-13

First Church of Corinth

Fred R. Coulter

With all that's going on in the Churches of God today, it is just amazing how so many things are coming at us that it's awfully hard to know from day-to-day, and in some cases hour-to-hour, what's going to happen. I think what we need to do is back off from some of the personalities and ask: What is God doing? *God is the One Who is doing it!*

I know that it struck in my mind when I gave a sermon about the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, how that the soldiers were casting lots over Jesus' garments. I thought to myself, those soldiers didn't know that God was making them do that. They probably had their own thoughts and they didn't have a clue that God was making them do that.

Like with this latest thing in Worldwide that's happened with David Covington writing and saying that 'the show is over here,' we need to back off and ask:

- Why did God inspire that to be done?
- What is God doing with this, with the different things that are taking place?

I thought what we might do is take a survey, since I jokingly said—when asked what church era are we in?—the First Church at Corinth.

Let's take a survey of 1st and 2nd Corinthians. This is not going to be an in-depth study, but this is going to be just a survey to try and identify some of the things that Paul went through, because there's nothing new under the sun. What has happened in the past will happen in the future. What we're really doing is going through a repeat cycle; and I think it's much like what the Church went through in the first century, and it's all being repeated again for us; in a little different way, but the same principles are involved.

This is how it is in many of the Churches of God today. I could not believe it in one of the meetings that I had; very similar to what we're going to read here:

1-Corinthians 14:23: "Therefore, if the whole Church is assembled together in one place, and all are speaking in *unknown* languages, and unlearned persons or unbelievers come in, will they not say that you have lost your minds?" That's exactly what's happening. People look around at the Churches of God today and say, 'You're all nuts!' Even someone put online, 'When are we all going to believe the same thing?'

Verse 24: "But if all prophesy... [inspired

speaking; not that you're a prophet foretelling the future] ...and an un-believer or unlearned person comes in, he is convicted by all, *and* he is discerned by all. And in this way the secrets of his heart are exposed... [in other words preaching a message of repentance] ...and so, bowing down on *his* face, he will worship God, declaring that God is indeed among you" (vs 24-25).

That's what needs to be. Is God in us in truth? *or* How much pretense is there? Paul is really showing that there's an awful lot of pretense in what you're doing.

Verse 26: "What is it then, brethren? When you assemble together, each of you has a psalm, has a doctrine, has a language, has a revelation, *or* has an interpretation..." Today we get all of these things though the mail, papers that are written, the Internet. I have things sent to me from all around the world about all kinds of different doctrines, and it's just like this.

"...Let all things be done for edification" (v 26). What he's saying is there's no purpose in any of this unless it's to uplift and up-build and teach with the Word of God.

Verse 27: "If anyone speaks in a *foreign* language, *let it be* by two, or three at the most..." Pentecostals all get up and stamp their feet and clap their hands, throw them up in the air and fall backward and roll on the floor—mass confusion. That's why Paul says that 'God is not the author of confusion.'

Most people don't know it, but the Greeks actually believe in the speaking in tongues with the pagan gods, which was demon possession. So, it was quite a common thing. You go back and read in Acts 16 how this one woman who had a spirit of divination and she would speak in oracle. Paul is trying bring some sense to it.

Verse 28: "But if there is no interpreter, let him be silent in *the* Church..." If there is someone to tell the Church what this is, in a foreign language, then don't stand up there and keep speaking in tongues. That's what he's talking about.

"...and let him speak within himself and to God. And let the prophets speak, two or three *in succession*; and let the others discern [judge]" (vs 28-29). In other words have it done decently and in order.

Verse 30: "But if anything be revealed to another *who is* sitting by, let the first one be silent."

Don't stand up in the middle of church and say, 'I've got a revelation.'

Verse 31: "For your *prophets* can all prophesy one by one... [I'm sure that when they had a study like we're doing here and that's what we did before. Everyone of us talked about this and that before we began, one by one] ...so that everyone may learn and may be encouraged." That's the whole purpose in it. If there's anything we need to do today is to learn to be comforted.

Verse 32: "And *the* spirits of *the* prophets are subject to *the* prophets. For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all the Churches of the saints" (vs 32-33).

1-Corinthians 15:12—here is one of the problems they had: "But if Christ is being preached that He rose from *the* dead, how *is it that* some among you are saying that there is no resurrection of *the* dead?" That's astonishing— isn't it? Right in the congregation of God that someone would say there is no resurrection of the dead.

If you think that's bad, v 34: "Awake to righteousness, and do not sin... [That ought to be the motto of the Church today; everybody wake up out of their sleep and sin not.] ...for some *of you* do not have the knowledge of God.... [In the Church of God! This always a hard one for me to understand, but I've seen it, that in the Church of God there are people do not have the knowledge of God. In modern phraseology: *that blows my mind!*] ...I say *this* to your shame."

Let's see another problem that Paul had. These problems are extant today. **2-Corinthians 2:17**: "For we are not like the many... [bombarded one after another] ...who for *their own* profit are corrupting the Word of God..." They were actually changing it, corrupting it.

There is an author who actually took the Scriptures in one column and then took all the Gnostic writings and put them in another column and showed how that they were counterfeiting the Scriptures. Just like we have today with these New Age versions.

2-Thessalonians 2:2: "That you not be quickly shaken in mind, nor be troubled—neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by epistle, as if from us..." There were actually forgeries of Paul's epistles.

Since we see the pattern that happened back in the first century is being repeated, if we can understand what they did then, then we can be prepared for what they are doing now and be ready.

2-Corinthians 2:17: "...corrupting the Word of God; but we speak with sincerity, as from God, *and* before God, *and* in Christ." That's what

everyone who is teaching needs to do—right there, there it is, very clear, very plain!

I want to emphasize it because it is happening more and more. Everyone has a doctrine, everyone has an interpretation, everyone has something that they think that they know.

2-Corinthians 4:1: "Therefore, having this ministry, according as we have received mercy, we are not fainthearted. For we have personally renounced the hidden things of dishonest gain, not walking in *cunning* craftiness... [having your own agenda] ...nor handling the Word of God deceitfully..." (vs 1-2). How can a person handle the Word of God deceitfully? *By not letting the Scriptures interpret the Scriptures!* We're told in Isa. 28 that it is 'precept upon precept; line upon line; here a little, there a little.' That has even been twisted and distorted out of all context to show that that doesn't mean what it means.

The lies and deceit that is happening with the Word of God is something. The Word of God is the Truth of God. But you take the Word of God and you improperly put it together, what do you have? *A false doctrine that looks true, because it came out of the Bible!* This is how they're able to get all these things down. I tell you that it's very important that we know the Scriptures of God, really truly.

"...but by manifestation of the Truth, we are commending ourselves to every man's conscience before God. But if our Gospel is hidden, it is hidden to those who are perishing; in whom the god of this world has blinded the minds of those who do not believe, lest the light of the Gospel of the glory of Christ, Who is *the* image of God, should shine unto them. For we do not preach our own selves..." (vs 2-5).

If there's any one thing that I can say to anyone who is going to teach: don't teach *yourself*, don't preach *yourself*. **Preach Christ! Preach the Word of God** honestly, rightly dividing the Word of God. If you're not, you're just creating another First Church at Corinth. "...but Christ Jesus *the* Lord, and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake" (v 5).

2-Corinthians 10—this is where we get a very profound Scriptural Truth: ***You cannot solve spiritual problems with physical means! or physical solutions!*** If there is a spiritual problem in a church, you can't correct it by restructuring. You can restructure all you want, but unless you repent first it isn't going to do any good.

Here is the problems that they had, 2-Corinthians 10:1: "Now, I Paul am personally exhorting you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ. On the one hand, when present with you I am base; but on the other hand, when absent I am bold

toward you. But I am beseeching *you* so that, when I am present, I may not have to be bold with the confidence with which I intend to show boldness toward some, who think that we are walking according to *the flesh*" (vs 1-2). That's how they were walking; doing everything by carnal means.

Verse 3: "For although we walk in *the flesh*, we do not war according to *the flesh*. For the weapons of our warfare *are* not carnal, but mighty through God to *the* overthrowing of strongholds, casting down *vain* imaginations, and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought into the obedience of Christ" (vs 3-5). That is a summary of how we need to grow and overcome.

I think that if there's any time that we really need to know the Scriptures and think with the Scriptures and live by the Scriptures, *now is the time!*

Verse 12: "But we dare not join ranks with or compare ourselves with those who are commending themselves; for those who measure themselves by themselves, and compare themselves with themselves, have no understanding"—are not wise. That is exactly what has happened everywhere in the Church. It's just tearing down the brethren. It's just tearing everything apart.

We do need to make judgments to understand what is right. We do need to make those, that is absolutely true. But where there are just 'glorying in men' and commending one another and 'how good you are' and 'how wonderful you are' and 'how smart you are,' and all this sort of thing, it just tears down the whole church. Then they rise up to the level of the top of their boots, and that's it! They can't pull themselves up by their bootstraps.

Paul lays the groundwork, and this is really quite a tremendous epistle—1-Corinthians. I remember when I started to do the series in 1-Corinthians and got up to chapter six and quit, because it didn't apply to anyone I was speaking to at the time. I didn't want to do something that would kind of beat the brethren over the head.

Now I see it's all out there, every bit of it right now. Even had one minister said, 'I can't even understand why 1-Corinthians is in the Bible, none of our churches are like that.' Give it time; look where they are!

1-Corinthians 1—Paul lays the groundwork here:

- v 1—He reminds them that's he's the apostle,
- v 2—send it the Church who are called saints

Verse 3: "Grace and peace *be* to you from God our Father and *the* Lord Jesus Christ. I thank my God always concerning you, for the grace of God that has been given to you in Christ Jesus; and that you have been *spiritually* enriched in Him in everything..." (vs 3-5). Notice how immediately he starts pointing to Christ! He's beginning to give the solution to all the problems that we're going to cover.

"...*spiritually* enriched in Him in everything, in all discourse and knowledge, according as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you; so that you do not lack *even one spiritual* gift while you are awaiting the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ Who will also strengthen you to *the* end *that you may be* unimpeachable in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.... [He gives all of this hope right at the beginning.] ...God *is* faithful, by Whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord. (vs 5-9). From there on he has to start dealing with the problems.

Verse 10: "Now I exhort you, brethren..." He's pleading with them; that's what it needs to be. You can't come in with all the Gatling guns loaded and start mowing everybody down. That doesn't work.

"...by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing..." (v 10). How are we all going to speak the same thing when we are all divided? Why are we divided? We are today; the Church of God is scattered, divided, opinionated, indoctrinated. Why? *Because they're not applying themselves to the Word of God to really know the Truth!* Think of it, brethren, we've got the whole Bible! What a time in history that we can have the whole Bible. We can know the Word of God. Never before has there been a time like this with the education, with the number of Bibles, with all the study aides and everything that we have.

I think it's interesting that at the same time we have the whole Bible to know the Truth, Satan is coming on with his New Age versions, he's coming on to destroy and subvert the Bible. But I also think that as these false versions come out that God is also going to reveal more and more Truth from His Word that we can fight all of it with the whole Truth of God. It's going to happen!

That's the whole thing. Unity is only going to come with the Spirit of God. Unity is only going to come with the Truth of God; that we understand it the way that God wants us to understand it. When we get rid of all of our own private interpretations.

Peter says that the Bible is of 'no private interpretation.' I'm sure that he meant the Old and the New Testaments, because he was in on

canonizing the New Testament. God didn't leave it to the Catholics in 300_{A.D.} to canonize the Bible. It was done by Paul, Peter and John, and when John died the Scriptures were complete.

Paul is beseeching "...that you all speak the same thing, and *that* there be no divisions among you..." (v 10). How are we going to take this diverse group of people and help them understand the Truth of God? It would be easier in a small congregation if it were just *one* congregation. But where you have so many congregations and so many Churches of God scattered out all over the world, it becomes very difficult, because there are different levels of understanding. There are different degrees of dedication. There are different degrees of faith and belief. Everyone needs to be *pointed to Christ* just like Paul starts out here. That's where it is.

- Instead of seeking the reorganization, *seek Christ!*
- Instead of seeking how to have a Church, *seek how to love God and each other!*

Then all of those other things will come as God wants it, but we must all be in unity with God the Father and Jesus Christ, because that's where the unity begins. That's what Paul is telling us here.

"...rather, *that* you be knit together in the same mind and in the same judgment" (v 10). What kind of mind are we to have.

This is how we can have the unity, Philippians 2—quite an interesting epistle, because there is no correction at all, except at the end: 'I beseech you—two people he names—to get along.' That's all there is.

Here's how we have the same mind, Philippians 2:5: "Let this mind be in you, which *was* also in Christ Jesus." That's the mind we need to have; Christ in us the hope of glory' (Col. 1:27). Notice that He didn't exalt Himself. He gave up being God. So, lest any of us think we have given up an awful lot, what have we given up compared to what Christ had given up? *Nothing!*

We need to think about that because there are going to be some tough times ahead. What are we going to do with the tough times ahead when all the physical things are gone *if you don't have Christ in you* and have the mind of Christ? It's going to be very devastating to you.

Then it tells what he did. Let's see how we can be of the same mind, be of the same judgment, which means we are to *judge*. How are we to judge? *We're to 'judge righteous judgment' by the Word of God, by Christ in us!*

Colossians 3:14—Paul always ends up with

this solution concerning the love of God: "And above all these things *put on* love, which is *the* bond of perfection. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts..." (vs 14-15). Christ is going to rule in our heart. It's very important, because the heart has to do with not only the thought but also the emotion. It has to be the very core of your being.

"...to which you were called into one body, and be thankful. Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly..." (vs 15-16). That's where we're to be rich. Tie that in with what God said to the Laodiceans: 'You say that you are rich and increased with goods and have need of nothing.' Obviously, they didn't have Christ in them.

"...in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. 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" (vs 16-17). That's how we can achieve this being perfectly joined together in the same mind and the same judgment.

Then Paul begins to unleach, 1-Corinthians 1:11: "...that there are contentions among you. Now this I say, since everyone among you says, 'I am of Paul'; or, 'I *am* of Apollos'; or, 'I *am* of Cephas'; or 'I *am* of Christ.' Has Christ been divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized into the name of Paul? I thank God that I did not baptize any of you, except Crispus and Gaius, lest someone should say that I baptized *new converts* into my *own* name" (vs 11-15).

Just to show you how things are, I was talking to a woman on the phone and she said, 'Are you an alcoholic? I heard you were an alcoholic.' *No! I'm not an alcoholic! I've drunk sometimes beyond moderation, but I'm not an alcoholic, and I don't drink very much at all!*

It's the same thing here. Everybody is comparing and divided. Then Paul said, v 17: "For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the Gospel..." Then he goes through and shows about preaching Christ, the foolishness of God is greater than the wisdom of God and catches the *wise*—Greek 'sophian' plural of 'sophos' from which we get the word *philosophy*. Tie that in with Col. 2 where he says, 'Don't let any man spoil you with philosophy or vain deceit.'

Verse 23: "But we proclaim Christ crucified.... [which should be preached] ...To *the* Jews *it is* a cause of offense, and to the Greeks *it is* foolishness; but to those who are called—both Jews and Greeks—Christ *is* God's power and God's wisdom" (vs 23-24). That tells us where we need to

get our understanding.

Verse 25: “Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men. 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 highborn *among you*. Rather, God has chosen the foolish things of the world, so that He might put to shame those who are wise; and God has chosen the weak things of the world so that He might put to shame the strong things. And the lowborn 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” (vs 25-28).

That’s where it all is, brethren. In the world, what are we? *Nothing!* They were all glorying in the flesh, saying how good they were, how much then understood and all of this. Paul said, ‘No, that’s part of the problem you have.’

Verse 30: “But you are of Him in Christ Jesus, Who was made to us wisdom from God—even righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption; so that, as it is written, ‘The one who glories, let him glory in *the Lord*’” (vs 30-31). Paul says, ‘I am only going to preach Christ.’

This is going to be a quick survey so that we can touch on all the difficulties that were there that we see in the Church today, so that we know that it has been experienced in the past. Here is why the problems come:

- they don’t rely on God
- they try it with *their own* ideas

1-Corinthians 2:9: “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.*’”

What he’s leading up to is to show that all of these interpretations and prophecies that people come up with that are not from God, that are not from Christ, are not based on love. That’s what he’s leading up to when we get to the end of the book. It’s for them that love God!

If there’s any one thing, if there’s a message from God today in all that’s going on, God wants to know, ‘Do you love Me? Do you love Me with all your heart, all your mind, all your soul, with all your being?’ That’s what God wants to know! There’s nothing more important in the world than that. That’s what God wants us to seek.

- seek His love
- seek His understanding

There will come a time that it will seem like that you have entered into your *second calling*. What do I mean by that? *There will come a time when you, through prayer and yielding to God and asking for His love, that God is going to grant you His Spirit and convict you in heart and mind very deeply, very emotionally, and you know that you have a new level of relationship with God the Father and Jesus Christ!* That’s what I call the *second calling*. I gave a whole sermon on that concerning the love of God.

It will happen when you are praying, studying, and God with His Spirit opens your mind to understand *the greatness* of His being, and the tremendous love that He has for you—for *you individually!*

God has the power and capacity to perfectly love everyone in the whole world. But He has *chosen you to perfectly love you*—every one of us! This is the solution to the whole problem that the Church is in today; rather than striving to find out, to understand this prophecy that it says here that God will reveal them to us if we love Him. Rather than striving to manipulate and do things, we all need to humble ourselves and come to Christ. We all need to know that *we don’t have anything we didn’t receive*.

Verse 10: “But God has revealed *them* to us by His Spirit...” This is what is important: ***God’s Spirit gives us the understanding!*** It is the Spirit of Truth that will call to remembrance all things that Jesus taught, and will lead us into all things that we need to understand in the future. It isn’t going to come by

- striving
- running
- mental intellect

It’s going to come ***by the love of God***; no other way! That’s what Paul is saying here. The natural man cannot understand that.

1-Corinthians 3:1—this is what I find almost wherever I travel. It’s amazing! “And, I, brethren, was not able to speak to you as to those who are spiritual, but as to those who are carnal—even as to babes in Christ. I gave you milk to drink, and not meat...” (vs 1-2). Some people are satisfied with just the milk—skimmed milk at that—and very small portions of it, *spiritually speaking*. Unfortunately, they become the first casualties.

“...for you were not yet able *to receive spiritual meat*; and neither are you able now, for you are still carnal. For since envy and contention and divisions *are* among you, are you not carnal? And *are you not* walking according to human ways?” (vs 2-3). Brethren, that’s what’s wrong with the Church today, wherever you go.

- Do you find carnal-mindedness in the ministry?
- Do you find carnal-mindedness in the brethren?
- Do you find carnal-mindedness in the where they're trying human solutions to try and work things out?
 - ✓ *Yes!*
- What does that lead to?
 - ✓ *Strife!*
 - ✓ *Division!*
 - ✓ *Envy!*

Then you start following a man!

Verse 4: "When someone says, 'I am of Paul,' and another one says, 'I am of Apollos,' are you not carnal?... [then he makes it clear]: ...Who then is Paul? And who is Apollos?..." (vs 4-5). Anyone who wants to be a teacher:

- Who are you?
- What are you?
- Did God put you there?
- Are you really a teacher?
- Should you be?

If you are, here's the only attitude that we can have, v 6: "I planted *and* Apollos watered, but God gave the increase." God is doing the work in each one. The Work of God is not an organization on television. That may be part of a work of God, but ***the true work of God is the maturing of Christ in each one of us***, which is *the most important thing to be done right now!*

That is the greatest and most important work that Christ is doing. God has called us with the greatest calling that has ever been; to rule and reign with Christ:

- He wants us to learn
- He wants us to know
- He wants us to grow

Verse 7: Therefore, neither is he who plants anything... [no big deal; it doesn't mean that he should be run over with a bulldozer either] ...nor he who waters; for ***it is God Who gives the increase***. Now he who plants and he who waters are one, but each shall receive his own reward according to his own labor" (vs 7-8). This is talking about those who labor in the vineyard of Christ. If you're a teacher, you are responsible for those you are teaching.

- How are you teaching them?
- Are you teaching them the love of God?
- Are you merchandizing them?
- Are you causing fear and intimidation?
- Are you ruling with authority?

- Are you teaching in love?
- Do you know the Scriptures?

All of those things are very important! I say this because there are some people out there now that say that everybody is a teacher; there's no such thing as ordination; there's no such thing as laying on of hands; it's only voting. They say that whomever is a teacher can be a teacher.

It's important. They will listen, but you have to give them the Truth of God. We have to be careful how we are building.

Verse 9: "For we are God's fellow workers; *and* you are God's husbandry..." Most important thing to know: ***everyone that God calls is His, belongs to God the Father and Jesus Christ!*** And the purpose of the teacher, who is called to teach, is to teach them that we all grow to the fullness of Christ. They are not, as some ministers would say, 'my people.' No, they are not! ***They belong to God!***

Look what happens when people take that carnal approach: 'these are my people. I preached and I called them; they came because of what I taught.' ***NO! God called them! God taught them repentance!*** Who leads people to repentance? ***God does!*** With His Spirit He convicts them; that's what it is. If we understand that, then we can all love each other. We can all serve God. God is doing the work.

Verse 10: "As a wise architect, according to the grace of God that was given to me, I have laid *the* foundation, and another is building upon *it*. But let each one take heed how he builds upon *it*." This is what we see today.

Verse 12: "Now, if anyone builds upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay or stubble. the work of each one shall be manifested; for the day of *trial* will declare *it*, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall prove what kind of work each one's is. If the work that anyone has built endures, he shall receive a reward" (vs 12-14).

That's what we need to strive for: *gold, silver and precious stone*; not the wood, hay or stubble. Stubble is the worst. Stubble can even self-ignite if it's hot enough. When it ignites it's POOF! There's nothing but powder, nothing left! We're all going through trials. I don't know of a single person who is not going through a trial—do you? It is a fiery trial!

Here's the important thing, v 16: "Don't you understand that you are God's temple, and *that* the Spirit of God is dwelling in you?" In other words he's telling them what we would say today: ***quit playing church!*** God's Spirit is in you!

Verse 17: "If anyone defiles the temple of

God, God shall destroy him because the temple of God is Holy, which temple you are. Let no one deceive himself. If anyone among you thinks *himself* to be wise in this world, let him become a fool... [in Christ] ...so that he may be wise *in God's sight*. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God..." (vs 17-19).

That's what I said of this latest solution that Covington brought out, it is a tremendous exposure of what is going on in Worldwide, that is true, but it's still 'the wisdom of this world' to restructure in a carnal way. It's a first step, but there needs to be the repentance!

"...for it is written, 'He entraps the wise in their own craftiness'" (v 19). Isn't that true? Every scheme! Every device! Comes back and gets them just as sure as the sun rises and sets. God is merciful; He doesn't come and do it with a blaze of fire. He does give everyone space of repentance. He gives them time and forbearance. That's why it's important if we see someone that we can help we are direct with them. We don't attack them. We don't attack their person. We be direct to them. You might look at some of the brethren that you know and just ask them:

- Have you found Christ?
- Do you know God?
- What are you doing these days?
- Are you griping and complaining?

or

- Are you turning to God?

That's what he's saying here.

Verse 20: "And again, 'The Lord knows the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain.' Therefore, do not let anyone boast in men; for all things are yours, whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or *the* world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come—all are yours; and you *are* Christ's, and Christ is God's" (vs 20-23).

So, there's the whole summary of everything, right there. That's what we need to do, brethren. That's what we are trying to do with what we do in the Christian Biblical Church of God; and it's everybody involved. All the brethren are helping others.

That's why we send a 'Care Package.' We are saying God loves you. We love you. This is important. Help other brethren. This is what you need to learn. They need to understand the love of God more than ever before. {note sermon series: *Love of God*}

1-Corinthians 4:7: For what makes you superior *to others*? And **what do you have that you did not receive?**.... That is something to really

think on, put away in the back of your mind and let it always be there, and let Christ rule your mind with this. There isn't one single thing that you have in this whole world—physical or spiritual—that God did not give you!

Why should we get all uppity-uppity and all this sort of thing. We don't need to. That doesn't mean that we back down in the face of difficulties and problems. *No!* We stand up and take care of them. The full authority of Scripture is there to do it. But we don't say how great we are. We don't say, 'Oh my, look at this, that or the other thing,' because whatever we have we have received. The only way that we can continue to receive anything from God is to understand that **He alone** is going to give it.

- *He alone* is going to give us understanding of His Word!
- *He alone* is going to give us understanding of the events that are in the future!
- *He alone* is going to watch over us and protect us!
- *He alone* can give the strength in the face of whatever difficulty that there is!

Even the trials that we have come from God—every one of them! There's nothing that we have that we haven't received

"...But if you also received *it*... [which is a stupid question] ...why are you boasting as if you did not receive *it*? (v 7)). In other words, you yourself as an individual, inherently have all this on your own. *Never happen! Not so!*

If you truly love God then you'll understand that. You'll love each other and help each other. That's what God wants!

(go to the next track)

In the face of all the great wickedness that was going on there, isn't it something that people that brag in their sins? Now they're bragging about that they ate unleavened bread during the Days of Unleavened Bread and 'God didn't strike me dead.' *Maybe God is merciful!* 'I went to church on Sunday with all these Presbyterians down there and had a wonderful time, and God didn't strike me dead.' *God is merciful! But don't tempt God!* 'Why, I've committed adultery for 40 years and I'm still preaching the Gospel.' *You've tempted God too far!*

1-Corinthians 5:6: "...Don't you know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? Therefore, purge out the old leaven, so that you may become a new lump, *even* as you are unleavened.... [It's all based on the sacrifice of Christ is what he's saying.] ...For Christ our Passover was sacrificed for us. For this reason, let us keep the Feast..." (vs 6-8). We won't go into that except for that it is the

congregation that makes the decision collectively, altogether. When there is a grievous sin within any fellowship or congregation, the brethren who were there are to make the decision collectively, together, to put that person aside. It is not a unilateral thing done by a minister, which can become a political thing. Everyone together; that's how Matt. 18 works.

1-Corinthians 6—here we have going to court and all this sort of thing, hardly able to make any judgment, so Paul kind of chides them and says, 'Look, can't you even put those who are least esteemed in the Church and let them make the judgment?

You know what I've found, brethren? When the brethren are all taken in together—whenever we do anything it's a congregational thing; we sit down and we talk about it—and everybody has input. It's not a matter of voting, it's a matter that if we do it that way then God's Spirit gives us the understanding and then we all agree. If we don't all agree, then we just put it aside, because God hasn't given us the understanding what we need to do. That's how it should work. And it works wonderfully.

At the Feast of Tabernacles in 1993 we had about 120 there for a Bible study, just an open Bible study, and we started talking about how God looks at the Protestants and Sunday-keeping. Everybody had some input based on Scripture. I was amazed! I said, 'Brethren, if I ever had a problem to bring up and there needed to be a judgment made, this is exactly how it should be done, and I have full confidence that you could make the right judgment.' They would! That's why it's important that we understand the Word of God.

Here in Corinth they were going to court. Does that sound like something we've been through in the Church today? *Yes!*

Then Paul says, because they were so bad, 1-Corinthians 6:9: "Don't you know that the unrighteous shall not inherit *the* Kingdom of God? 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. 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" (vs 9-11).

Then he gives the admonition, v 15: "Don't you know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make *them* members of a harlot?..." Think of that spiritually; apply that spiritually with what has happened in the Church today; where the Churches

of God, especially one prominent one we know of, has run out there and have taken of the cup of mother Babylon and said, 'My isn't that nice.'

Paul says, "...MAY IT NEVER BE!" (v 15). This applies physically and spiritually!

Verse 18: "Flee sexual immorality. Every sin that a man may commit is outside the body, but the one who commits sexual immorality is sinning against his own body." Now there are dozens of venereal diseases and things out there. It's bad news!

What they've done in San Francisco is that they have so many men seeking prostitutes that they set up this to entrap them: they bring them in and say it's going to be a thousand dollar fine or you can get off the hook for \$500 and attend a class, and you'll have nothing on your record for soliciting to get a prostitute. So, they take the class. What they do, they have these old, hardened prostitutes come up there and tell them about the drugs, about the brutality of it, show them the needle marks in their arms. They have big slides of pictures of various genitalia—male and female—all covered with disease and rotting away. You know what they found, not one re-arrest!

Paul is saying the same thing here. The only defense against it is to run away. Then he says, v 19: "WHAT! Don't you know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, which you have *within you* from God, and you are not your own?... [you belong to Christ; none of us are our own] ...For you were bought with a price. Therefore, glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" (vs 19-20). That's the total love and dedication that God wants us to have.

If you want to know about divorce and remarriage, I cover all of 1-Cor. 7 in the sermon series: *Divorce and Remarriage*.

1-Corinthians 8:1—there are a couple of things here very important for us to understand today. "Now, concerning things sacrificed to idols, we know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffs up, but love edifies." That where a lot of the teachers, especially the 'under-archy' teachers who put themselves up and say, 'Well, I've been deceived by these ministers, and I've run into so many rotten ministers, and I know more than they do, so I'm going to teach.'

If you do, understand what God says to you. "...Knowledge puffs up, but love edifies." You better do it with the love of God. Maybe God will overlook you putting yourself up to be a teacher; maybe He will help you in what you are teaching if you seek Him. But don't be presumptuous as Deut. 18 says, 'If you presume to speak a word that God has not said for you to speak, *know that you are in trouble with God!*

I read that and I hear and fear. That has just been sitting on my mind like a big weight for about the past month, because I go out and see everybody is every which way but loose, and everything that's going on in the Church of God just kind like the rustling of leaves with the wind blowing—*there goes the Church of God!* "...Knowledge puffs up..." and you'd better be sure that it's right.

- *knowledge puffs up* with sacred names
- *knowledge puffs up* with usurping the thing with the calendar
- *knowledge puffs up* if you're able to teach

Here is the thing, v 2: "But if anyone thinks that he knows anything... [let's apply this to ourselves] ...he knows nothing yet to the degree that he ought to know." Can we really truly say that we know everything there is to know? *We haven't even gotten started!* The Word of God is inspired by the *mind of God!* There is so much in here, I myself just kind of feel a desperation that there is so much here to learn and there's not the time to really learn it in the way that we need. We need to keep that in mind.

Verse 3: "But if anyone loves God... [there's hope; notice how many times it comes back to the love of God] ...he is known by Him." That's what we want to know. We want to know that God loves us.

1-Corinthians 9 has been covered in the sermon *Christian Financial Responsibility*.

This is just a survey because I want to convey to you what I've learned and feel and what you've learned and what you've conveyed to me about what's happening the Churches of God so that we can make some sense out of it; so that we can help the brethren that we know that are kind of out there like these dry leaves being blown back and forth.

1-Corinthians 10 talks about how the children of Israel were baptized unto Moses and did drink of that same spiritual Rock, which was Christ.

1-Corinthians 10:5: "But with many of them God was not pleased..." Could that be part of the problem in the Church today? That God is not well pleased?

- Is He well pleased when we see all of this stupidity going on?
- Is God pleased when there are five days of Passover?
- Is God pleased when different ones are twisting and turning the Scriptures?
- Is God pleased when everyone is out seeking his own?

- Is God pleased when the brethren are being merchandized?

NO!

"...for their dead bodies were strewn in the wilderness. Now, these things became examples for us, so that we might not lust after evil things, as they also lusted. Neither be idolaters, as *were* some of them; as it is written, 'The people sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play.' Neither should we commit sexual immorality, as some of them committed, and twenty-three thousand were destroyed in one day. Neither should we tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted *Him*, and were killed by serpents" (vs 6-9). How can we tempt Christ?

- By standing up and saying His Word doesn't apply!
- That we can now learn from all of the institutions of the world what the Word of God says!
- Going out and sinning!

That's tempting Christ!

Verse 10: "Neither *should* we complain against *God*, as some of them also complained, and were killed by the destroyer. Now, all these things happened to them *as* examples, and were written for our admonition, on whom the ends of the ages are coming. **Therefore, let the one who thinks he stands take heed, lest he fall**" (vs 10-12).

Let's think on that Scripture! That's very important today—*isn't it?* *Yes!* That's why there are so many divisions and things in the Church, because a lot of people think they are standing, or they think they have this new doctrine—whatever it may be. The fall is coming! God is putting everybody on a very short leash nowadays; it's not going to last. Those days are over. Kidding around and living in sin in the name of God is over! God is not going to tolerate it or be in forbearance anymore with it.

There is hope, v 13: No temptation has come upon you except what is common to mankind...." All the problems in the Church of God today are common, that have happened in the Church. Every trial you are going through, and I've gone through a lot of trials so I know what I'm talking about. God provides a way to escape! If we complain, if we gripe, if we go to God like Job did and be very bitter and talk back to God, He is not going to provide that way of escape very quickly.

"...For God, Who *is* faithful, will not permit you to be tempted beyond what you are able *to bear*..." (v 13). If you have a trial that's really difficult, you go to God and ask for the strength; ask Him to help you understand it. There have been problems that I've just had to go to God and say,

‘God, I don’t know; I just don’t have a clue; I don’t understand what to do; I don’t understand how to solve it.’ I can’t solve it! Everything I try and do falls flat on its face.

When you come to that point that’s exactly where God wants you to be, because then you can begin trusting in Him. Then you really pray about it and your prayers have some meaning to it. Then God begins to work out the solution step-by-step. When that happens it increases your faith and increases your confidence in God all that much more.

This is true, claim this promise, “...but with the temptation, He will make a way of escape, so that you may be able to bear it” (v 13).

Verse 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. 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” (vs 20-21). If you do that you provoke God!

1-Corinthians 11—I just might say this concerning hair length for women, and I know some are going to get upset. But everywhere I go, even in the Church, but more so in the airports when I’m just walking around minding my own business, I see all these women with these Babylonian haircuts—that’s what I call them—where they’re all just really short. There’s one nice thing about hair it will grow!

Then I look around and see all these men with long hair, too. I cannot understand why all of these male musicians must have long furry great heads of hair that look unreal. Not all of them, but a good number of them.

Read what it says: ‘It’s is not good that a woman have short hair.’ If it’s so short that you can’t tell whether it’s long or short, then it’s too short. Same way with a man, if it’s so long that you can’t tell whether it’s long or short, it’s too long.

1-Corinthians 11:31—this is what is important. This has been a great mistake, which the Church has taken upon itself to do: “Now, if we would examine ourselves...” Everyone has to be responsible for him or her self to make the judgment. We can preach the Word of God and say, ‘Here it is,’ but you have to make the judgment what you’re going to do.

“Now, if we would examine ourselves we would not be judged” (v 31). In other words, if you take the Word of God and let the Word of God judge you, and you judge yourself and say, ‘That applies to me, I’m going to repent and change,’ then God doesn’t have to judge us. That’s what it means.

Verse 32: “But when we are judged, we are

chastened by *the* Lord, so that we will not be condemned with the world.” Important principle to learn! I don’t want to be judged of God, and I don’t want to be condemned of the world. I know you don’t either, so we need to take the Word of God and understand it that way.

1-Corinthians 12 talks about differences of administrations, but it’s the same Spirit that is working.

1-Corinthians 12:4: “Now there are differences of gifts, but the same Spirit.” What is a gift? *Something that is given!* I mean, that’s real simple! Who determines the gift? *God does, because He gives it!* This is the problem with the under-archy and all the self-appointed teachers; ‘well, I have a gift.’ How do you know? *If you do, that’s fine!* I’m not trying to judge anyone, but be careful what you do.

Verse 5: “There are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are differences of operations...” (vs 5-6). That’s what we have today with the different Churches of God—there are differences of operations.

“...but it is the same God Who is working all things in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for *the* benefit of *all*” (vs 6-7). Why does God give these different gifts? *That’s to profit the church as a whole!* So, let’s look out for the broadness of the Church of God beyond where we may be today.

Verse 8: “For to one, a word of wisdom is given by the Spirit; and to another, a word of knowledge according to the same Spirit.” These are all gifts that can be and should be in those who are the teachers, and can be in those who are also what we call ‘the brethren.’

But then he says a little later on, ‘Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers?’ *No!* I don’t know of anyone who has all of the gifts; they just don’t: knowledge, faith, healings.

God has given some good healings to us recently, and they happen. I tell you what, the most difficult anointings are those that are impossible. The woman in Salt Lake with breast cancer and her breast was as black as coal. God healed her. When I anointed her I just felt completely so inadequate. The end of the earth kind of thing. What am I going to do? She’s on her deathbed. You could smell the death; you could smell the cancer. She was all emaciated, wracking in pain and saying, ‘Would you anoint me? God can heal me.’

What are you going to do? We had the whole church pray and fast and I came up and anointed her. When I did I just laid hands on her and said, ‘God, You know. If it’s Your will to heal her,

heal her. And if not, then take her quickly and end the suffering.’ In ten days she was completely healed.

We had a woman back in Virginia who had incurable liver cancer. They said they could not even operate. She called and asked for an anointed cloth and you know that it all has to be what God can do. There are certain things we can do, so I sent her the book *Cure For All Cancers*, which I recommend to anyone who has that to get it. It has a lot to do with parasites, and it shows you how to take care of your body.

I sent her the book and anointed cloth, and three months later she went back to the doctor and had another checkup and the doctor was astonished! There’s only just scar tissue left, the cancer was completely gone. **God can heal!** And at the same time, there are certain things we can do, so don’t give up on God and healing.

Look what happened to the Church when they said, ‘We’re not healed by His stripes, you all go to the doctor.’ Remember what happened? **BAM! God’s judgment came just like that!** They started dropping dead; God’s judgment upon them!

I had another man who had prostrate cancer and went into the doctor and he said the blood levels show that ‘you have cancer on the scale of 2.85.’ Which means that a complete prostrate operation, removal of the lymph glands and a catheter to take care of the urination. He called for an anointed cloth and I sent it to him and sent him the book *Cure For All Cancers* and two months later he went back and the count is down from 2.85 to .65.

There combined, if we operate with the Spirit of God and do the things that we know we can do—which are perfectly in keeping with bringing our bodies back into balance:

- God will bless us!
- God will be with us!
- God will heal!

If it’s His will not to heal you, then you die in the faith. That’s the whole purpose of life—is it not? We need to face the reality of that. Not all have healings; not all have miracles and discerning of spirits, different kinds of languages and interpretations. Today, most people know English, so that’s why we don’t have a lot of ‘tongues.’ But when it’s necessary, God will give it. But we’re not going to go out there and generate it by beating drums and blowing on saxophones and knocking people over backwards. It won’t happen.

Verse 13: “For indeed, by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body...” Always remember that

Christ is the Head. We can all do what God wants us to do in the way the *He* provided.

Verse 27: “Now you are *the* body of Christ, and *you are all* individual members. And God Himself has placed certain *ones* in the Church: first, apostles... [this is not in order of hierarchy but by order of chronology—some, not all] ...secondly, prophets; thirdly, teachers; then miracles; then gifts of healings; helps...” (vs 27-28).

Notice where ‘church government’ is; way down there. It’s not the first important thing. If Christ cannot rule in your heart, then no church government is going to make it.

“...governments; various languages. *Are* all apostles?... [No!] ...*Are* all prophets?... [No!] ...*Are* all teachers?... [No!] ...*Do* all perform miracles?... [No!] ...*Do* all have gifts of healing?... [No!] ...*Do* all speak in *different* languages?... [No!] ...*Do* all interpret?” (vs 28-30). No! That’s why he asks all of these questions.

I’m convinced of this: the more that we strive to love God and understand, the more that God will make those gifts available to do the things that God wants. I’m firmly convinced that’s how God is going to open the door to do things: to preach the Gospel publicly again. Television is going to be controlled. Radio is going to be controlled. We still have a certain freedom of press.

When there are miracles and healings you don’t need to spend any money for advertising. It will be just like Christ when He was out there, they came from everywhere! But I don’t think we’re ready for that, yet. It isn’t going to happen if we go to God and demand it. He’s going to give it because we love Him and because we want to do what God wants us to do—that’s how it’s going to be! The whole thing comes down to 1-Cor. 13, which I will leave to the end.

Verse 31: “But earnestly desire the more *edifying* gifts... [It’s okay to desire it, but don’t put yourself forward to take it.] ...and yet, I show you a way far surpassing *all these*.” A better way than being some big mucky-muck; a better way than healing; a better way than miracles; a better way than all of these things that people look to; that which people can see how much you love God.

1-Corinthians 13:1—notice, Paul is talking to himself here: “If **I** speak with the tongues of men...” He’s saying ‘I’; he’s not saying ‘you.’ Most of the time ministers will say, *you*. You, brethren, are the problem.’ When it should be, ‘You ministers are the problem’ most of the time.

Paul is saying here, “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” (v 1). Just so much noise! Have you been where there is nothing by noise and vain jangling?

1-John 4—this is important for us to understand in relationship to this. Sometimes you read some Scriptures and have you ever had it where it just lays you low, and then all of a sudden God says to you, ‘You apply it to you.’ It hit me this way.

1-John 4:16: “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. By this *spiritual indwelling*, the love of God is perfected within us...” (vs 16-17). Can we understand how far we have to go to have our love made perfect—*perfect* love? I tell you, we’re not going to endure the days ahead unless we grow in it and have that love perfected in it.

“...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; rather, perfect love casts out fear...” (vs 17-18). That’s powerfully important for us to understand. I don’t think any of can say we’ve arrived at that point. But I think we can say, with God’s help and with God’s love, that hopefully we are growing to that and have the love of God perfected in us.

“...because fear has torment...” (v 18). Everyone of us who is in the Church of God—minister, elder, brethren, it doesn’t matter—all the troubles that we are going through now there is torment, there is fear, there is emotional upset. All of these things just come crushing right down on you—right? *Yes!* I’ve experienced it! You’ve experienced it! Everyone of us has experienced it!

“...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). That’s where to start! Get on your knees and say, ‘Oh, God, I know You love me, help me to love You.’ And here’s the test; here’s what cuts you to the quick:

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?” There it is!

I never will forget the wonderful baptism that we had. The man whom we baptized prayed and said, ‘God, may there be love within the four walls of my house.’ That really hit like a ton of bricks. One of the greatest problems we have today is a loving husband and wife, loving our children and loving each other—those whom we can see.

What I want every one of us to do—and I’m pointing the finger toward me, too—name those people that you really need to love. Sometimes they

don’t respond back. You can’t be responsible for what they do or do not do. What you do is ask God to put it in their mind that they will respond back the best way possible. If they don’t then you’ve done your part.

Now, let’s apply that to 1-Corinthians 13—Paul is talking to those who are teachers; he just finished in chapter 12 talking about the teaching. Then he says, ‘If I don’t have love it doesn’t make any difference what I speak’ (v 1).

Verse 2: “If I have *the gift of* prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing.” That’s saying a lot—isn’t it? It’s profound! This is what the Church of God needs to do—every one of us individually. If we do it individually then it will happen collectively. It’s not going to happen together unless we do it individually.

Verse 3: “And if I give away all my goods, and if I deliver up my body that I may be burned, but do not have love, I have gained nothing. Love is patient *and* is kind...” (vs 3-4). It’s difficult, when there are difficult problems, to be kind? Sometimes kindness is correction! Sometimes kindness is saying, ‘Check with the Word of God and see what you’re doing.’

“...love envies not, does not brag about itself, is not puffed up. *Love* does not behave disgracefully, does not seek its own things...” (vs 4-5). No secret agendas. That’s one of the biggest problems. People today want to be satisfied; everyone is seeking his or her own, rather than seeking what God wants.

“...is not easily provoked...” (v 5). I tell you, if you have a temper think on that. That one gouged me many times; still does.

“...thinks no evil...” (v 5). We’re to be ‘wise as serpents and harmless as doves.’ But this means that you are not motivated by evil—that’s what it’s talking about. You’re not motivated by evil thoughts. That doesn’t mean that you can’t see something that is evil and say that it’s evil; know that it’s evil. That means that you are not motivated by evil thoughts.

Verse 6: “Does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the Truth. *Love* bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.... [that will see you through everything] ...Love never fails....” (vs 6-8). ***The love of God never fails!***

“...But whether *there be* prophecies, they shall cease...” (v 8). This has nothing to do with God’s prophecies. Jesus said that ‘heaven and earth will pass away, but My words shall not.’ This means

human prophecies: everyone has a psalm, everyone has a prophecy, everyone has an interpretation.

Have we seen human prophecies fail? We could line them up by the page full. Yes, they will. What has happened with every one of these things? *They were given with no love!* Given in fear, intimidation, and hellfire and brimstone. It's okay to preach with hellfire and brimstone, but if you don't hold out the love of God what have you accomplished? *You have instilled fear, not love! You intimidated, rather than repentance!* The whole key is to bring to repentance.

"...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; but when that which is perfect has come, then that which is in part shall be set aside. 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 8-11).

If I could appeal to anybody anywhere, please put away childish and foolish things in the Church of God. Grow up in Christ! Then you will have the unity of Christ and the love of God!

Verse 12: "For now we see through a glass darkly, but then *we shall see* face-to-face; now I know in part, but then I shall know exactly as I have been known." I wrote that in a letter and I had been thinking what it would be like

- *to know* God
- *to see* Him as He is
- *to look Him* right in the eyes
- to thank Him for everything that He has done
- *to tell Him directly*—face-to-face—"I love You."

and

- to have Him tell you, 'I love you.'

That is going to be a profound thing, brethren! That's what we need to focus on. All this other stuff is just going to have to go by the wayside. We have to work our way through it, but I think that you know by reaching out and letting them know that this is what they need to focus on. If they have problems, put it in Christ's hands. If you have difficulties, put it in Christ's hands. Pray for each other, love each other, help each other! That's what He wants so that we can be known as we are now known.

Verse 13: "And now, these three remain: faith, hope *and* love; but the greatest of these is love."

1-Corinthians 14:1: "Pursue love..." That's what it means in the Greek. That's what to pursue.

All these other things don't matter. That's what so important.

Here's how it's going to come; it's going to be with God's Spirit. That's how unity will be. When we all ask God to grant us His Spirit—that we can love Him and love each other—there's unity. God gives us the same mind to think as Christ does. We get along. I don't—and I'm not going to, brethren—go around and correct a lot of people. I'm just not going to do it.

If things need to be handled rather strongly in certain areas with certain individuals, fine; then whatever needs to be, needs to be. But on the other hand, if we can do like Paul and appeal that you love God, that you set aside your carnality, that you look to Christ and be filled with His Spirit, then all these things will start dropping by the wayside. All of this carnality will start dropping off like so many scales. And we can grow truly in the love of God.

Here's why God has the Church, Ephesians 4:11—you've heard this before, but I tell you never have really needed to know this before: "And He [Christ] gave some as apostles..." I don't know who is an apostle today; the last thing any ought to do who are teachers—I prefer to be called a teacher and minister—I don't think we should assume to be prophets or apostles. Evangelist is a function. If you are evangelizing, you're functioning as that. Same way with pastors and teaching.

Verse 12—here's the whole thing: "For the perfecting of the saints, for *the* work of *the* ministry, for *the* edifying of the body of Christ." That is to teach it and exhort it in love. If you do that, and every one of us go to God and say, 'God, help me to understand You and Your love; help me to grow and overcome' you just don't need to be beaten over the head every week with sermons of correction. It's just not necessary. Let's grow in love. That's what he's talking about here.

Verse 13: "Until we all... [every one of us] ...come into the unity of the faith..." It's not something that's going to be done by command. It's not something that's going to be done by organization. But as we grow in the love of God.

"...and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto *the* measure of *the* stature of the fullness of Christ" (v 13). That's quite a goal! That's where God wants us to go! That's what He wants us to do! He doesn't want to hold back from anyone! He wants us all to grow to that, to "...*the* measure of *the* stature of the fullness of Christ." I think on that Scripture and it just blows my mind to try and contemplate what that means—*the fullness of Christ*. Do we even grasp it? Let's pray that we will more and more in the future.

Verse 14: “So that we no longer be children, tossed and carried about with every wind of doctrine by the sleight of men in *cunning* craftiness, with a view to the systematizing of the error [to deceive].” Boy, have we not lived through that! That’s why we need to know the Scriptures.

Verse 15: “But holding the Truth in love, may in all things grow up into Him Who is the Head, *even* Christ.” That’s the whole purpose of where we need to aim, and all these problems that the Church is going through—like the First Church at Corinth—is very distressing. You can’t go out there and command it to go away, because it’s not. God is out there revealing all of this so that we can all be correcting ourselves with the Word of God and looking to God the Father and Jesus Christ to love, grow and overcome. Let’s see if we can strive for that.

- 1 Corinthians 7
- Deuteronomy 18
- 1 Corinthians 9

Also referenced:

Sermon Series:

- *Love of God*
- *Divorce and Remarriage*

Sermons: *Christian Financial Responsibility*

Book: *Cure All Cancers* by Hulda Regher, Ph.D (amazon.com)

FRC:bo

Transcribed: 4/22/13

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

Scriptural References:

- 1) 1 Corinthians 14:23-33
- 2) 1 Corinthians 15:12, 34
- 3) 2 Corinthians 2:17
- 4) 2 Thessalonians 2:2
- 5) 2 Corinthians 2:17
- 6) 2 Corinthians 4:1-5
- 7) 2 Corinthians 10:1-5, 12
- 8) 1 Corinthians 1:3-10
- 9) Philippians 2:5
- 10) Colossians 3:14-17
- 11) 1 Corinthians 1:11-15, 17, 23-28, 30-31
- 12) 1 Corinthians 2:9-10
- 13) 1 Corinthians 3:3-10, 12-14, 16-23
- 14) 1 Corinthians 4:7
- 15) 1 Corinthians 5:6-8
- 16) 1 Corinthians 6:9-11, 15, 18-20
- 17) 1 Corinthians 8:1-3
- 18) 1 Corinthians 10:5-13, 20-21
- 19) 1 Corinthians 11:31-32
- 20) 1 Corinthians 12:4-8, 13, 27-31
- 21) 1 Corinthians 13:1
- 22) 1 John 4:16-20
- 23) 1 Corinthians 13:1-13
- 24) 1 Corinthians 14:1
- 25) Ephesians 4:11-15

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- Acts 16
- 1 Corinthians 1:1-2
- Colossians 1:27; 2
- Matthew 18

Greatest Liberty of God 1-Corinthians 8 & 10

Fred R. Coulter

Have you ever had one of those days when a lot of different things come together, and they all crystallize and make some sense. We were watching this video where Oprah Winfrey had several of these religionists on there, including Garner Ted Armstrong. The real heart and core of what is wrong with the world today, which ties in exactly with some of the things I'm going to talk on today.

The biggest problem that people have is that they want to worship God in *their* way, rather than worship God in the way that God says He should be worshiped. In doing so, they have the wrong God to begin with, and they have the wrong approach to God. That's why there's so much confusion in the world.

In effect they are all breaking the first commandment, because they do not worship God in the way that He should be. They start out having the wrong God. That's very simple, but it's absolutely true! That's why God has the first commandment, 'You shall have no other gods before Me'; which leads up to the next question:

- What is the greatest *thing* that person can have in his or her life as a human being?

I don't mean a material thing. I use *thing* in the broadest sense of the term.

- *Love of God!*
- What does the love of God require?
- What is the greatest thing that you can have or possess in this life?
- *Relationship with God between you and God directly!*

That has got to be the greatest, most basic thing that you can possibly do. There can be nothing greater, *absolutely nothing greater!*

What would be the most paramount thing, if you were the devil, to do—understanding that if a person had that one-to-one relationship with God the Father—to the human race? *Break that relationship! or Make that relationship impossible!*

Every human being has a desire to worship God innately, or a greater power innately. Atheists are made because of what the religionists have done, and the atheists can see that what the 'religionists' have done is degradation to the human race. Therefore, since these 'religionists' supposedly believe in God and represent God, 'if that is God therefore, I don't believe there is a God.' That's one

of the bases of atheism. Another is more diabolical, so you can manipulate people because of what you use and do and teach to them.

What is one of the most diabolical things that can happen to an individual? Think about this relationship between you and God. The greatest freedom, the great liberty, the greatest thing you can have in life is that relationship between you and God—God loves you and you love Him, and it is direct, one-to-one. The only Intermediary is Jesus Christ Who made that way possible.

Even Jesus said, 'I tell you from henceforth do not pray and ask Me to ask the Father for you, but you ask the Father directly, for the Father loves you!' (John 16). Knowing that is true, what then can be one of the most diabolical things that can happen to an individual?

- *Break someone's spirit!*
- *Break your faith?*
- *Placing someone between you and God!*
- *Denounce God is God!*

Your actions end up doing that, but the most diabolical thing, meaning taking advantage of your faith and your belief and do something to you in relationship to God?

- *Put a false god in front of God!*

If this were a bulls-eye you would be just outside the bulls-eye, kind of nicking the bulls-eye all around. Right smack in the middle is the most diabolical thing can be done to a person is:

- ***in the name of God cut them off from God, by having the wrong religion, claimed as the right religion!***

That has got to be the most diabolical! Absolutely the most diabolical! Because of what you think, because of what you've been taught, that you are *doing right* to the right God.

The pure pagans it doesn't make any difference. They worship demons and things like that; it's a great spirit way out there. Even though they may be more degenerate in the way that they live and so forth because of *their religion*, at least it hasn't be as diabolically perpetrated on them as what I just mentioned here.

I just started reading this book: *Fifty Years in the Church of Rome* by an ex-priest—Charles

Chiniquy. Another book that goes along with it: *The Assassination of Abraham Lincoln*. Another book that goes along with that was written by Raymond McNair, *Assent to Greatness* referring to the historical things of the development of the United States. Unfortunately, he did not understand the Catholic conspiracy and they're just at the point, right now, to take over the United States and to destroy Protestantism.

The assassination of Abraham Lincoln was a pope/Jesuit/Catholic plot—all of the participants were Catholic. They harbored and protected them when one of the major conspirators was found after he fled the United States, went to Canada in a monastery by Jesuit priests, was given money, was sent from Canada to London under a different name. He went to a Catholic refuge place there in London, was given money and eventually ended up in the pope's army in Rome. That's when the pope had the 'papal states.' One of the things that the pope has always wanted back is the 'papal states.'

I encourage you to get those books. The diabolical plot has been brought upon people to cut them off from God. You have control over them. There was one statement in Worldwide Church of God that was made that was one of those that turns on a little bell—DING!—when something is said from the pulpit. It was made by Herbert Armstrong himself: *If there's any one thing the Catholic's have right, it is authority from the top down!*

I have personally heard him say that, sitting in the congregation, and my thought when I heard it was: *Why does the Church of God have to use the devices of Satan in its Church?* That was my reaction to it, even though I understood what he said and the way he said it, I also understood that what I thought was right, *we don't have to use the devices of Satan the devil to keep the Church together*. It's the Church of GOD, and God keeps it together! Why use the devices of Satan? i.e. supposedly the government of God.

When you diabolically make people break the first commandment you lock them into following and worshipping a man! And in order to enforce that then you have to stop their thinking process by putting "chains of darkness upon your mind"—Chiniquy says.

That's what the Catholics do in control with the priests; what they do with confession, communion—especially the first confession and communion—to where the word of the pope is the law of God. That's where the crossbreeding came in Worldwide and why there was so much trouble in it. Herbert Armstrong became the Word of God and anyone who was transgressing against him was transgressing against God.

Gerald Waterhouse told the whole congregation that if Herbert Armstrong were 95% wrong he would uphold Herbert Armstrong instead of you. The Bible proves that that is not true.

- God did not uphold David in his sin.
- God did not uphold Solomon in his sin.

There the "chains of darkness" were being put upon the people in the Worldwide Church of God through fear; exactly the same tactics as the Catholics! I didn't realize how the Catholics did it until I started reading this book, though I knew that they were wrong. It helped clarify quite a few things in my mind.

Let's go to 1-Corinthians 8 and we will see how this works. What is the job of a minister? Maybe this will help you understand—and I think I more clearly understand what is happening to the Church of God today—because the lesson in the Church of God today is the greatest sin that a minister can do is ***cut a person off from God by having some sort of rule or hierarchy to whom people must go instead of to God!***

The greatest blessing and freedom that a person has is *between that person and God!* No one is to violate that! Therefore, the job of the minister is to:

- Raise up churches? *Partly!*
- Increase the number in the flock? *Partly!*
- Rule over the people? *No! Christ rules over the people!*

Someone asked me what kind of church structure do you think you ought to have? I said that I really hadn't come to understand that, yet, but I'll tell you what we have with our little group: We have God, us and I'm the minister, and I exercise no authority over people! I show them what God says, that He exercises over you. That's coming the closest we can get.

Obviously, the more people you have you have to have some kind of organization. However, when than organization gets to the point that it cuts off being in contact with God and your relationship with God and causes you to let the church hierarchy—I use that in the broadest and narrowest sense combined—to cut off that relationship with God, then you are entering into the first step of having another god before you.

Isn't it amazing! You go along for a long time and wonder why this and why that. Therefore, God is more interested in that relationship so that

- He does not care about the size of the Church

- He does not care about the number of people attending or not
- He does not care, except that the people of God be led in the right and proper way to worship God

That relationship is between the person and God! That gives you the greatest liberty that you can possibly have in this life; the highest attainment that you can attain to in this life! It helps clarify in my mind.

Now, however God wants it to go down the road, even though I don't know exactly what God is doing, I think God has at least me and you—and wherever God is dealing with anyone else—exactly where we need to be at the time of our understanding and growing toward God. I hope that this is going to be seen more clearly as we go down the road.

1-Corinthians 8 touches on a couple of very important things. Then I'm going to skip over chapter 9 and go to chapter 10, because 8 & 10 connect a little better as far as the topic is concerned.

1-Corinthians 8:1: "1. Now, concerning things sacrificed to idols, we know that **we all have knowledge**. Knowledge puffs up, but love edifies." We have knowledge as to what day is the Sabbath. Orthodox Jews have knowledge as to what day is the Sabbath. But by force of arm and by power of might they are going to force everyone to keep the Sabbath. That's knowledge and it puffs up to destroying your neighbor. That's why Paul says, "...Knowledge puffs up, **but love edifies**." He's saying that not all knowledge is edifying.

Verse 2: "But if anyone thinks that he knows anything, he knows nothing yet to the degree that he ought to know." That's a true statement. The older you get the dumber you realize you really are. The less you really know that you know, even though you know more than you knew. You understand that there's greater knowledge that you have yet to learn, which you don't know, so the more you learn the less you know.

Verse 3: "But **if anyone loves God, he is known by Him**." That's very important. That is the key. If that connection is made all of the rest of commandment-keeping will follow. Sooner or later it will follow. But that is the key thing.

He starts and prefaces this chapter, because he's going to get into a little bit of liberty; if taken the wrong way it is going to cause people trouble.

Verse 4: "So then, concerning the eating of things sacrificed to idols..." You're looking at a hunk of lamb or a hunk of beef, whatever it may be, was offered in sacrifice to an idol. You need to

realize that everything that was killed was offered to an idol. That's why a lot of people want to be vegetarians (Rom 14). They say everything is offered to an idol so we don't want to eat meat at all because it's offered to an idol. This became an tremendous problem. Can you imagine in the pagan Roman Empire this was a great problem.

We live in a society where we have pseudo-Christians, part-Christians, and some understanding of Christianity around, so it doesn't present the same problem today, but that was a great problem then. How am I going to eat? If I go out and eat in a restaurant it in association with the temple, because that's where restaurants were. They didn't have delivery services, or McDonald's to go to, or Burger King or the supermarket and you could walk in there and it's all refrigerated. They didn't have refrigeration.

How long do you think meat would stay fresh in that society with no refrigerators? *Not very long, a day or two at the most*, unless you had a nice cool place or a basement to put it. So, they sacrificed the animals in the morning and ate them that day, and they sold them. They sold part of it in the meat markets right next to the temples—those things sold in the shanties—and they also had restaurants where you could walk in and eat—what we would call restaurants today. It was more like a little barbeque thing and they would have the different animals that they had and had tables where you could sit down.

But it was in the shadow of the pagan temple. So, it would present a problem, wouldn't it? *It would!* If you trying to come away from idolatry, and you're trying to come out of a pagan system, and the only way you could eat meat was to buy it from the shanties where it had been sacrificed to an idol, or if you wanted to go out and eat and didn't have time to prepare a meal and you went to one of these little restaurants, then it was right in association with the temple and someone's going to come along and say, 'Oh, guess where I saw you? What were you eating?' Now you have the background.

"...we understand that an idol in *the* world is nothing..." (v 4). As far as God is concerned, an idol is nothing in the world. It is not living! It is not God! It is made of stone, wood or plaster, gold or silver—it is nothing!

"...and that *there* is no other God except one.... [you don't have to be superstitious] ...For indeed, even if there are *those* which are called gods, whether in heaven or on earth, as there are many gods and many lords" (vs 4-5). All you have to do is just read or understand some of the Greek mythology of all these pagan nations. They had gods

for everything, running everywhere, going everywhere.

Just to show you how people think, I had to go into a stationary store and they were working on a building right outside next to it. They had a ladder, and the ladder covered two-thirds of the sidewalk. I'm walking along and walked under the ladder and I go into the store and walk back out and walk under the ladder. As I came back out and was underneath, I thought if I were a Catholic pagan I would not walk under that ladder because it would be seven years bad luck or whatever. When I got to the light I turned around and was watching the people coming down the sidewalk and they'd go around it—not go under the ladder.

Before I could walk across the street and get in the car, there were three people who walked under the ladder, came back around and walked back under it again, so they wouldn't be caught going under the ladder.

When people give credence to gods and idols you get involved in superstitions, and you believe all of this stupidity. Paul is saying, 'All of that is bunch of stupidity. Though they say there are gods, many in heaven, many on earth, they are nothing—there is one God to us!'

Verse 6: "Still, to us *there is* one God the Father, from Whom *are* all things, and we *are* in Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by Whom *are* all things, and we *are* by Him." He taught that direct connection with God and the true greatest liberty that we ought to have.

Verse 7: "However, not all *have* this knowledge. But some, with consciousness of the idol, until now eat *it* as a thing sacrificed to an idol, and their conscience, being weak, is defiled." Your conscience has got to be bolstered by right and true knowledge.

For example: What is one of the liberties that we have today concerning the Sabbath Day? What is one of the liberties we do? *We drive to assemble!* We have one of the liberties to go in one of these little restaurants over here when we're hungry and buy something to eat. We are not condemned, because of the necessity of the times and the age in which we are living. Absolutely no different than those people there where they ate the meat though it was offered to an idol. However, if you conscience before God did not have enough knowledge to understand that and you began to doubt God, and you began to have lack of faith because of that, then you better not do it. Whatsoever is not of faith is sin. It shows the latitude in that relationship with God. That's why we are to grow up in Christ, not to go out and sin—

obviously not to go out and sin—so that we have conscience toward nothing else in a way of deity, *but God!*

You can imagine how hard and difficult it was for these people coming out of that society, being told about all of their gods and lords and everything like that, to really comprehend this. It would be very easy for a new convert to be weak in his faith toward God. This is what Paul is talking about.

Verse 8: "But meat does not commend us to God; for we do not have any *spiritual* advantage if we eat, nor do we come short *spiritually* if we do not eat. But beware, lest this freedom of yours becomes a stumbling-block to those who are weak" (vs 8-9). We do have a certain amount of Christian appearance toward others that we need to maintain in relationship to their knowledge.

You're not going to the knowledge that every person or every other Christian may or may not have. I'm sure there are certain things in your life that you have set as a standard before you and God that you alone do or do not do in relationship to the Sabbath, in relationship to how much you eat or don't eat, how much you drink or don't drink, and you are not sinning before God.

However, someone else seeing you and judging by their standards of what they have set for themselves before God—which is right *in their conscience* to God—may see you do something that may not be right in their conscience toward God.

Just using the example of buying something to eat on the Sabbath. It may not be right in their conscience, because they have said they're not going to do any business at all for anything on the Sabbath—period! Years ago there were recipes on how to have scrambled eggs Sabbath morning but cooking them Friday afternoon. Have you ever eaten cold, refrigerated eggs? There are Jews to this day who will not light a furnace, because it says 'you shall not kindle a fire on the Sabbath.'

You've heard jokes about the kosher hotel in Jerusalem. There will be a Jew standing there in the elevator when you walk in and he will say, 'punch # 4, please.' So, you punch #4 and it goes up to the #4 and he gets out. He would not punch that button on the Sabbath because it was 'kindling a fire.' But he would stand there and wait for you to come and punch it for him. That person made obeying God by *tradition* such a strict thing that they cannot even think. God expects us to think. We have choices to make.

Verse 10: "For if anyone sees you, who have knowledge, sitting to eat in an idol-temple..." Same

thing. If someone you just told about the Sabbath that you're not to conduct business on the Sabbath; you're not to buy and sell on the Sabbath. So, he begins keeping the Sabbath and lo and behold one of the Sabbaths you invite him to say and let's go to McDonalds and have a hamburger. 'Aaaa you're buying a selling on the Sabbath!'

Same thing here when they went to eat in the temple. You've forsaken Zeus! You've forsaken Artimus! You've forsaken Mars, Thor—the whole thing! *We're going to there to eat!* What kind of double-minded person are you? Well, you're not double-minded. You know that an idol is nothing, a god is nothing; there's only one true God. So, if you go there and sit there and eat, and you have no conscience at all toward these stupid idols made by men's hands, it's not going to defile you. But if you're still kind of quasi superstitious, and you think that Thor may have some power or whatever, and yes, that these are sacrificed to the idol, then you're in trouble.

Then we'll see that there's one other thing that gets involved in it. You can't go wholeheartedly, and go running through the pagan temple yelling and screaming and saying it's nothing and sit down and eat all the food.

"...will not his weak conscience be emboldened so as to *cause him* to eat things sacrificed to idols?" (v 11). That is with conscience that he can now, through this idol and the eating of this thing—crossbreeding the old paganism and Christianity—that he would do it with conscience to the idol.

Verse 11: "And will the weak brother, for whom Christ died, perish on *account of* your knowledge?" That's an interesting question— isn't it? Think on that! That says an awful lot.

Verse 12: "Now, when you sin against the brethren and wound their weak consciences in this way, you are sinning against Christ." You have to consider that person in relationship to Christ.

Verse 13: "Therefore, if meat causes my brother to stumble, I will eat no flesh—not ever—so that I may not cause my brother to stumble."

I know a real good example of that. I remember years ago when I first went out into the field up in Oregon. There were some Seventh Day Adventists who were baptized into the Church of God. If you know good, hard-line Seventh Day Adventists, what are they? *Vegetarians and teetotalers!* So, in order for these people to be indoctrinated well within the Worldwide Church of God at that time, they were invited over to a dinner by the minister, who proceeded—he had given a

rousing, stinging sermon the Sabbath before about teetotalers who should not be teetotalers and vegetarians who should not be vegetarians—to set before them—who had been vegetarians for over 20 years—steak and wine.

If they did not eat it then would be going against the Word of God. It just about drove those people totally out of the Church. That's what Paul is talking about here. You don't do those things. If they're vegetarians, invite them over and fix a veggie meal. If they're teetotalers, serve juice or water. That's the closest example that I can give of what is the teaching here.

However, you don't carry this thing to its ultimate extreme. Just as an aside: What have we since learned about meat eating? *Too much meat is bad! Too much drink is bad!* The absolute irony of what happens—talk about God having His judgment—ten years later the minister who did that was forced to quit drinking himself because he was a debauched alcoholic! When he quit he was drinking over two quarts of vodka a day!

God has a way—doesn't He? God has a justice that works out—doesn't He? Sooner or later! However, you don't want to carry these things too far, because if you take your liberty and you go to far then you cross over the line that way, too.

I think this is going to be one thing that I'm going to be really highly alerted to in the future. Notice how Paul always points them to God and Christ—*always!*

1-Corinthians 10:1 "Now, I do not wish you to be ignorant *of this*, brethren, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea. And all were baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea. And *they* all ate the same spiritual meat. And *they* all drank *of* the same spiritual drink; for they drank from *the* spiritual Rock that followed *them*. And that Rock was Christ" (vs 1-4).

Note: Matt. 16:18 about Jesus being *the Rock* and upon *this Rock—Himself—Petra*, He would build His Church. 'Petra' has nothing to do with Peter. And the diabolical lie of the Catholic Church has to be repeated every Mass—doesn't it?

Let's go on because this gets into some things that if you go too far with some of the things that the pagans do, then you get back into crossbreeding the religion. And when you get back into crossbreeding, then you get into demonism, and you get into sin and idolatry.

Verse 5: "But with many of them God was not pleased, for their dead bodies were strewn in the wilderness. Now, these things became examples for

us, so that we might not lust after evil things, as they also lusted. Neither be idolaters, as *were* some of them..." (vs 5-7). When they got three days out into the wilderness, 'Oh, what are we going to drink, God?'

It would have been very simple. All they would have had to have done was say, 'Moses, at the time of the evening sacrifice or at the time of the evening prayer, can we all get together and ask God to provide some water for us?' Do you think that God would have had the incident there at the *waters of bitterness* where they had the great fight, the knock down drag out argument and finally God had to tell Moses to take the tree and throw it into the water and the waters will be made sweet.

Even after seeing all of those miracles and all the things that were done, I mean, human nature is something else. Human nature is absolutely implacable! That's why there is nothing externally that you can do to change human nature.

I saw the tail end of the movie about W.C. Fields, and since we talked about alcoholics, W.C. Fields was a complete, total alcoholic. He was drinking 2-1/2-3 quarts of gin per day. They tried to take him into the hospital and dry him out, but he would not. He said, 'No one is going to take my drink from me.' So, the doctor says, 'You're going to die if you drink.' He said, 'I do not care. I will not get along without my drink.' And, of course, he died!

He wouldn't change! Absolutely refused to change! So, you can take him out of the society, put him into a hospital, take away his drink, tell him he's going to die, and you would think that would pierce his soul just enough to say, 'Yeah, I've got to quit.'

That's why there's nothing external you can do to change the mind! The mind must choose! And God gave us that sacred right to choose! We can choose good; we can choose evil. *We* have to make that choice!

That's what the people did in the wilderness; they made the choice to do it *their* way. With "...many of them God was not pleased, for their dead bodies were strewn in the wilderness. Now, these things became examples for us, so that we might not lust after evil things, as they also lusted..."

(go to the next track)

Verse 7: "Neither be idolaters, as *were* some of them..." What was one of the first things that happens when you cut off that relationship between you and God? *You commit idolatry, either of another*

human being or of a human being and idols! That's exactly what we were talking about when we first began about those people on that Oprah Winfrey show; that they all wanted to worship God in their own image, their own way, their own methods, rather than saying that 'God is God, He made us all, how does God say to worship Him?' Isn't that simple?

They're implacable! Absolutely implacable! 'What if I'm a Buddhist and I'm trying to find God through Buddhism? *You're not going to find God through the bones of Buddha! He's dead!* They still know where his grave is; he's dead! The bones are there!

The grave of Jesus Christ is empty; ***He is risen!*** Quite a contrast—isn't it? Now you know why the devil wanted the bones of Moses. Make a great religion out of the bones of Moses.

The story of Pompeii and Herculaneum was on television and it showed that they had in one of these towns over there—just to show you how people get carried away with their idolatry—they had in a round vial, hermetically sealed so it wouldn't rot or spoil, the blood of one of the people that they sainted. They would swing this back and forth so the people would kiss the bowl where the blood was on the inside.

But if you would go over and tell these people that what they're doing is insane, you would be run out of town, stoned and killed, thrown over the cliff. Those things lead to idolatry. That's what the whole system of Mystery Babylon the Religion has gotten into; not just Catholics. This whole thing of the harmonic convergence has almost every pagan religion in the world involved: Catholicism, Hinduism, Mayanism, Peruvianism, Egyptology, the whole thing. It's amazing!

Where is the condemnation of Israel for what they did; they worshiped on all the high hills—*harmonic convergence*. It doesn't matter how many people get down and think good thoughts or positive thoughts, ***unless God decides it's going to happen, it isn't going to happen! It will not!*** These things lead to idolatry.

"...as it is written, 'The people sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play.'.... [that's what happens when you have idolatry; it gets around to debauchery, foolishness, drunkenness and illicit sex] ...Neither should we commit sexual immorality, as some of them committed, and twenty-three thousand were destroyed in one day." (vs 7-8). You talk about something that will take your breath away, when you see that happen.... You talk about the goriness of TV, well don't travel in Sinai with God leading you

out of Egypt and then rebel against Him. It's going to be a gory mess.

Verse 9: "Neither should we tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted *Him*, and were killed by serpents." When you have knowledge and understanding and that connection with God, don't go out and do those stupid things.

I think by the time I get done reading this book—*Fifty Years in the Church of Rome*—and sit back and pray about and think about all the things that we've gone through, I think I can begin to make a little more sense out of it. There were people who were setting up idols in the hearts of people to cut them off from God, which led to alcoholism, fornication, and divorce; and all of that is because of idolatry of a human being.

Think about it! Maybe if we look at it that way, maybe if we look at the experiences that we have gone through, we're looking at some of the things that the Church has gone through because the leaders and the people who knew better were leading the people astray. So, there was the correction that came.

Verse 10: "Neither *should we* complain against *God*, as some of them also complained, and were killed by the destroyer." In saying this, that was murmuring, complaining against God! They were not trying to point out something that was wrong that needed to be corrected, they were saying that God was wrong and that He needed to be corrected. That's the kind of murmuring they were doing.

'Who was able to give us water in the wilderness; Who gave us flesh out here; God took us out here to kill us and all our children.' That's not the way to approach God.

Verse 11: "Now, all these things happened to them *as* examples, and were written for our admonition, on whom the ends of the ages are coming. Therefore, let the one who thinks he stands take heed, lest he fall" (vs 11-12). Nobody get all self-righteous.

The comment was made and put out in print—and I'm not trying to beat up on Herbert Armstrong—"I'm so close to God that Satan has no hold on me at all." BAMO! He got it; *that's tempting God!* How many people believed it? Why did they believe it? *Because they were cut off from that relationship with God!*

Any minister that stands in the pulpit and says that you have to check with a minister before you know what is right and wrong before God, *is cutting you off from God!* You have to know from

your own Bible. And if he's going to teach you anything it better be from the Bible, and it better be the Word of God or God is going to start putting the chains of darkness upon you with the idolatry of following a man, which then leads to the idolatry of physical things.

Remember when we had Pentecost down in the Seventh Day Adventist Church? *That's exactly what has happened to the Seventh Day Adventist Church!* Now they are bringing in Christmas trees—which is an idol; statues of Jesus—howbeit not made of marble, but cut out of paper—to teach the little kiddies. *Let's stay true to God!*

Verse 13: "No temptation has come upon you except what is common to mankind. For God, **Who is faithful...**" *God is faithful* and that is what you should always look to. I guarantee you, every time you or I trust in a man, what's going to happen? *You're going to be disappointed!* Why? *Because man is not God!* God is faithful, so we look to Him.

He "...will not permit you to be tempted beyond what you are able to bear..." (v 13). Sometimes we don't think we're able; sometimes we don't know or understand what God is working out in our lives. Sometimes it's very difficult to go through, but God is able; God will deliver us!

"...but with the temptation, He will make a way of escape, so that you may be able to bear *it*." (v 13-14). See what *their* liberty was getting them into. They were coming back and getting into idolatry; getting into things that they should not be doing.

Just like the Seventh Day Adventists today, bringing the Christmas tree into the Church. Having Christmas for the kiddies. 'Of course, we don't do it like the pagans, but it's a nice family thing and we remember Christ.'

All these justifications sound so nice, but are not true. What happens when you go that far?

Verse 15: "I speak as to those who are wise; you judge what I say. The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not *the fellowship...*" (vs 15-16). *Communion* is an unfortunate translation (KJV) from the Greek, and it comes from the Catholic background of even the Protestants who translated this New Testament.

"...of the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not *the fellowship* of the body of Christ?" (v 16). Note 1-John 1—which says, 'truly our fellowship is with His Son and the Father'; that's where our fellowship is.

Verse 17: "For we, being many, are one

body *and* one bread, because we are all partakers of the bread [Christ]. Consider Israel according to *the* flesh. Are not those who eat the sacrifices partakers of the altar?" (vs 17-18). They had the system there.

Verse 19: "What then am I saying? That an idol is anything, or that which is sacrificed to an idol is anything?... [those are just physical things] ...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 19-20). That's what they are doing. They can take perfectly clean flesh that is good to eat and offer to Baal or Zeus.

I saw this thing National Geographic thing and it's all going to come together—this one-world religion—and it was showing how the different religionists hypnotize themselves with the spirits, especially the Hindus with hooks in the back and be lifted up with these hooks and do terrible horrible things; eat glass, put spears down their throat, puncture their cheeks and nose and scourge themselves—all of this in the name of 'religion.' Just absolutely stupid! That is to demons.

That's why so much of this rock music and everything is so bad, because it's primitive music by heathens who have created modern rock music for the same purpose of getting in contact with the spirits of which this harmonic convergence that they have is an outgrowth of this whole movement in they United States. It all fits together. "...they sacrifice to demons, and not to God; and I do not wish you to have fellowship with demons."

When you start crossbreeding the religion, you start crossbreeding the practices. Then you end up worshiping demons because you cut yourself off from God and you have idolatry.

Verse 21: "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." You cannot do that. That's why God has to call us. That's why we have to be faithful to God. It's typical of Americans. Americans are, I would have to say, very naïve and innocent people. They see a lot of these pagan things and haven't grown up in a pagan, idolatrous country. What do they do? *They say, 'Oh, that's sweet, that's nice, that's quaint; look what they do!'* And they get sucked right up into it. I tell you, we Americans are just uncanny that way.

Verse 22: "Now, do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? Are we stronger than He? All things *that* are lawful *are permitted* to me, but not all things *that are permitted* are profitable. All things *that* are lawful *are permitted* to me, but all things *that are permitted* do not edify" (vs 22-23). That's referring

to, obviously then, all lawful things are lawful to him.

- It's not lawful to commit adultery
- It's not lawful to commit idolatry
- He told them to flee idolatry.
- He just told them that they can't drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons.
- He just told them that they can't eat of the Lord's table and the table of demons.

So, what he's talking about here obviously is that *all lawful things are lawful*. "...but all things *that are permitted* do not edify."

Verse 24: "Let no one seek that which *benefits* himself; but let each seek that which *benefits* the other." In other words, don't go out and do your own thing for the sake of doing it and say 'everybody else be damned.' You consider the other person.

Verse 25: "Every *lawful* thing that is sold in *the* market you *may* eat, without asking questions for the sake of conscience, for the earth, and *all* its fullness, *is* the Lord's" (vs 25-26). If it's slaughtered before an idol of Zeus, that doesn't contaminate the physical meat.

Verse 27: "Now if an unbelieving person invites you *for a meal*, and you desire to go, eat all *lawful things* that are set before you, without asking questions for the sake of conscience." Obviously then, it doesn't mean to eat pork, because it's talking about the things that are lawful. It doesn't mean to take strychnine, otherwise you will die.

What if you're invited to go to lunch and most of the people there are Catholics. You don't stand on the table and denounce the Knights of Columbus when they pass the butter and the bread. If they're all eating pork and shrimp and things like that, you just bypass it, and don't say, 'You dumb Catholics, don't you know the Bible says you're not to eat those things?' No! I imagine they're all going to run up to you and say they want to be converted to your religion right now. Never happen! You just bypass it.

One of the best ways to bypass it is to say, 'You know, I just don't eat that kind of thing because it's not good for *my* health.' Most of them will say, 'Yeah, fat is not the best thing in the world, but I think my doctor told me not to, but it does taste good. Pass the salami!'

Verse 28: "But if anyone says to you, 'This has been offered to an idol.'..." In other words, they know that you're a believer and they know that you

do not follow the idols anymore; they come and deliberately provoke you and say, 'this was sacrificed to an idol,' and in their mind they're saying, 'now what are you going to do?' Say, 'Oh, it is? I'll bypass that.' That's what he's talking about.

"...do not eat *it*, for the sake and the conscience of the one who showed *it to you*, for the earth, and *all* its fullness, *is* the Lord's. But conscience, I say, not your own, but that of the other *person*. For why is my freedom judged by another *person's* conscience? And if I partake with thankfulness *to God*, why am I spoken evil of for *eating that for which I give thanks*? Therefore, whether you eat, or you drink, or you do anything, do all things to the glory of God. Be without offense to both Jews and Greeks, and to the Church of God" (vs 28-32).

Can you imagine how delicate that church in Corinth was that you would have to say, 'Be without offense to both Jews and Greeks, and to the Church of God'? That must have been a touchy church. Everybody on edge, and he's trying to smooth it out and make it acceptable. I imagine that after Paul died that church just flew apart in all kinds of directions.

Verse 33: "According as I also *seek to please* everyone in all things, not seeking my own profit, but the *profit* of many, in order that they may be saved." That shows the attitude of the Apostle Paul.

That's what we need to do. That helps stop a lot of antagonism and hostility if it can be done. However, there's still the choice that a person has to make. You cannot force religion down people; you can't stuff it down their throat, because the Truth of God is so powerful. A lot of people can't take it. Besides, God has got to call them!

I'm going to read you some excerpts out of this book, *Fifty Years in the Church of Rome*, to show the type of mentality that breeds idolatry, and one thing will lead to the next. Whenever you are told that a man stands in place of God, and that man's word is the Word of God, it's going to lead to trouble for everybody, unless that person is reading truly the Word of God. Of course, the Catholics are forbidden to read the Bible. Their reading it has led to a lot of trouble. It's the American Catholics who are doing the reading more than anybody else.

All the efforts of the principals and the colleges and the convents tend to prove to the pupil that his intelligence is his greatest and most dangerous enemy.

How many times have we been told in the past that you can't trust your own mind? *If you yield to God and God's Spirit, you can trust God!*

That is like an untamed animal, which must be constantly kept in chains.

That's what you have to do with the carnal mind. If you don't have the Spirit of God and you aren't yielding to God, you're always having to beat yourself up to make yourself obedient. That's the whole trust of Catholic religion. You do it by works.

Every day the scholar is told that his reason was not given him that he might be guided by it, but only that he may know the hand of the man by whom he must be guided, and the hand is none other than the pope's.

All the resources of language, all the most ingenious bits of wisdom, all the passages of both the fathers and the Holy Scriptures bearing on this question are arranged and perverted with an inconceivable art to demonstrate to the pupil that his reason has no power to teach him anything else than that which must be subjected to the supreme pontiff of Rome who is the only foundation of truth and light given by people to guide the intelligence and to enlighten and save the world.

Remember, this was written just about the turn of the century (1900). He spent 50 years in Rome, and during the time that he was growing up the pope had the papal states and was indeed the ruler of the world.

If you have the book by Raymond McNair, *Assent to Greatness*, go back and read that and how the pope split the world between the Spanish and Portuguese by decree. That's why they're so angry at the Protestants, English, Germans and Americans.

Rome and her colleges and convents brings up or raises up the youth from the earliest years. But to what height does she permit a man or woman to be raised never higher than the feet of the pope.

As soon as his intellect, guided by the Jesuits, has ascended to the feet of the pope, it must remain there prostrate itself and fall asleep.

The pope, that is the great object toward which all the intelligence of the Roman Catholics must be converged. It is the son of the world, the foundation and only support of Christian knowledge and civilization, so they say.

This is something! These words are absolutely dynamite!

Let me read about Galileo, the one who discovered that the earth was round and that the earth went around the sun instead of the earth being the center of the universe.

Galileo—on the 22nd day of June 1663 Galileo was obliged to fall on his knees in order to escape the cruel death, which he was to be condemned by the order of the pope.

He goes on showing that all great scientific knowledge has come, not from Catholic countries, but from Protestant countries. He's showing the difference; that Protestant countries were, at that time, the most progressive, the most powerful, the most blessed nations around. At that time they were.

He signed with his own hand the following retraction: "I adjure, curse and detest that the heresy of the motion of the earth."

That learned man had to degrade himself by swearing a most egregious lie, namely that the earth does not move around the sun. Thus it is that the wings of the great eagle of Rome were clipped by the scissors of the pope. That mighty intelligence was bruised, fettered and as much as possible to the Church of Rome degraded, silenced and killed.

He figured it would be better to go ahead and do that. The movie makes a little more light of than what really happened.

But God would not allow that such a giant intellect should be entirely strangled by the bloody hands of the implacable enemy of light and truth, the pope. Sufficient strength and life had remained in Galileo to enable him to say upon arising, "This will not prevent the earth from moving."

Then he waxes a little bit satirical here:

The infallible decree of the infallible Pope Urban VIII against the motion of the earth is signed by cardinals...

He lists all of about six of the great intellectual cardinals.

It says in the name of and by the authority of Jesus Christ in the plenitude of what resides in the vicar, the pope, that the proposition that the earth is not the center of the world and that it moves with a diurnal motion is absurd and philosophically false and erroneous in faith.

What a glorious thing for the pope of Rome to be infallible. He knows infallibly

that the earth does not move around the sun. What a blessed thing for Roman Catholics to be governed and taught such an infallible being. In consequence of that infallible decree you will admire the following act of humble submission of two of two of the celebrated Jesuit astronomers, which they said, "we agree with Newton."

Which says the motions and physics and gravity and everything, 'however, we still agree with the pope.'

Granted the Worldwide Church of God was not into that kind of intellect, but for the Church of God to allow that kind of 'I am the only apostle; I am the only one through whom knowledge is to be given and doctrine to be taught,' *that's not right!*

When I read some of these things, I thought *oh, I can understand*. For the minister to act like the Catholic priest in a confessional, to come into someone's house demand this and that. That's all wrong, brethren! *That's all wrong!* I can see that clearly now.

The greatest thing is that we have that connection with God! And together, in love, we all draw close to God. That's what it's all about, and that's where it's at! That's what it has to be.

Reading this book has really opened my eyes to a lot of things. Though this is against the Catholics, I can see the tools and devices of Satan, once they get a foothold into the Church. Will God allow that? *Yes, He will allow that!* Just read Rev. 2 & 3 and what's happened to the Church of God. ***People allowed men to come between them and God!***

It's the same psychology, like with the Seventh Day Adventist, they had Ellen G. White. The true Seventh Day Adventist will follow Ellen G. White rather than God, though the Bible says clearly the opposite. There is a debate within the Seventh Day Adventists about that. The same thing with the Worldwide Church of God.

When they agreed to agree for the sake of salary and creature comforts then they were doing the opposite of what the Israelites did, though it was the same thing. Only here in the case of the ministry and those in charge in the hierarchy, they had been blessed of God, so they said they would agree to agree so they could retain those blessings and forgot the Scripture which said that 'what gain is it to you if you gain the whole world and lose your soul?' So, they did the exact same thing. They said in their heart, 'If I agree, I will keep my power and position and what I have. If I disagree I'm out; and can God provide for me if I am out?' Rather than saying, 'I'm

going to stand before God for Truth and what is right, and if I'm out from men, praise God!

Rather, what did they do? *They helped create the idol of the apostle, and everyone fell at his feet!* In California with this *English only* thing, they're wanting to be able to speak any language. I think I have a clear insight into some of these things. The Catholics are almost at the point of taking over this nation. Part of their way to do it is to divide the people and bring in their own. Let them keep their own language, religion and they will gain by majority.

The hand of God in prophecy is set and there is no turning it back. And the Americans, blessed of God, for rejecting that horrible system when they left the Church of England and left the Catholic Church have not stood for right, Truth and God. They only went so far. They didn't go far enough in being kind, merciful and understanding they got duped into the 'chains of darkness' and slavery and we're seeing the result of it.

But I understand why the Bible is not read in the schools. It used to be. It used to be McGuffey Readers, that start out "In the beginning God..." Who got it out? *The Catholics and the Jews got into politics and got rid of the Bible and God!* The Catholics didn't like the Protestant God, and the Jews did not like Jesus. That's exactly where it is. It never really crystallized on me until I understood who killed Abraham Lincoln and the reasons why.

Abraham Lincoln got this priest off of charges that the Catholics tried to nail him through a civil court using the ecclesiastical law to nail him. Abraham Lincoln absolutely, by legal means, slew the Catholics. When it was over with he thanked Abraham Lincoln for doing it, but cried and said, 'You are a marked man, the Jesuits will get you.' In the book *the Assassination of Abraham Lincoln*, it is shown that the Catholics have poisoned four Presidents; they have assassinated two.

So, when the first Catholic President [JFK] came on scene, can you imagine what was behind the scenes and going on? I think God decreed that Kennedy would get it. Both of them are evil, murderous, lecherous people. I say it with conviction. I also understand why the law is so complicated, why you can't get anything through the law. There are too many diabolical Catholics and Jews in the legal and judging profession, that you can't get anything straight.

That's why it's so complicated. That's why it's so evil and wretched, because we've turned this society over to a damnable pagan way! We are going down. The hand is set, the clock is running and

there's no turning it back. You aren't going to turn it back, just no, *no way!*

That's why we have to grow in grace and knowledge with Christ. How long it's going to go? *I don't know!* How many years is it going to take? *I don't know!* Sometimes I think it's just around the corner; other times I think we've got a long way to go.

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

Scriptural References:

- 1) 1 Corinthians 8:1-13
- 2) 1 Corinthians 10:1-33

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- John 16
- Romans 14
- Matthew 16:18
- 1 John 1
- Revelation 2 & 3

Also referenced: Books: (found at amazon.com)

- *Fifty Years in the Church of Rome* by Charles Chiniquy
- *The Assassination of Abraham Lincoln* (no author cited)
- *Assent to Greatness* by Raymond F. McNair

FRC:bo
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Epistle of First Corinthians 13 & Proverbs

Fred R. Coulter

I wonder how many times you've heard that the New Testament is God's revelation of love to us? And how many times you've heard that the God of the Old Testament is a harsh God Who takes vengeance, is destructive, and especially they would quote a Scripture in 1-Samuel 15.

If God is a God of love, don't you think that He is concerned for children and infants. Anyone who would destroy infants has got to be unloving, unkind, ruthless, cruel; whatever you want to call it. But here we find a direct order from God:

1-Samuel 15:1: "And Samuel said to Saul, 'The LORD sent me to anoint you to be king over His people, over Israel. And now listen to the voice of the words of the LORD. Thus says the LORD of hosts, "I will punish Amalek for *that* which he did to Israel, how he set against him in the way when he came up from Egypt. Now go and strike Amalek, and completely destroy all that they have, and do not spare them. But kill both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and donkey.'"" (vs 1-3). So, that's an all encompassing order—isn't it?

- Could a God of love order that?
- Is the God of the Old Testament a God of hate, wrath and vengeance?
- Is the God of the New Testament just a God of love?

We know that in 1-John 4 it says that 'God is love.' We also know that in Rom. 13 it says that 'love is the fulfilling of the Law. Based on these many Protestants say that you don't have to keep any law. But let's also keep in mind what we read in the book of Revelation, that when Jesus Christ returns there is going to be wrath and there's going to be vengeance and there's going to be death, and that there is going to be no sparing nor pity.

We also read in the New Testament that sinners are going to be cast into a Lake of Fire. We also read in the New Testament that it's going to be a time of 'weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

Let's go to Hebrews 13 and let's look at a Scripture that is very encouraging, but also is very revealing. Of course, we know that the God of the Old Testament was the One Who became Jesus Christ of the New Testament.

Hebrews 13:8: "Jesus Christ *is* the same yesterday, and today, and forever." So, we're talking about the same God. If we're talking about the same God, is it possible then to find something in the Old Testament where it based on the love of God?

Just to show you that the Jews during Jesus' time understood some of these basic things. Mark 12:28: "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?' Then Jesus answered him, '*The* first of all the commandments *is*, "Hear, O Israel..."'" (vs 28-29). {Note Deut. 6} It's a direct quote from the Old Testament.

"...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 mind, 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.' Then the scribe said to Him, 'Right, 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.' And Jesus, seeing that he answered with understanding, said to him, 'You are not far from the Kingdom of God.' And no one dared to question Him any more" (vs 29-34).

Can we go to the New Testament and then to the Old Testament and see where it is the same God that inspires it and see where it is the same kind of emphasis all the way through the Old Testament? There is one thing that we have to separate from the Old Testament, and that is the different things that contain the history but also interweave between loving God and loving your neighbor.

Basically the only difference between the Old Testament and the New Testament is that the government of Israel was a civil sovereign government, whereas, the Church is an assembly of people who are under the authority of different sovereign governments. Our Sovereign is really Jesus Christ.

The reason that I got onto this and went through this was because of just trying to take the challenge to see if Jesus Christ is 'the same yesterday, today and forever.' How much consistency is there in the things that He inspired in the teachings of the Old Testament and the teachings of the New Testament?

1-Corinthians 13 is called *the love chapter*. We'll go through the whole chapter and then we'll take all these different categories that we find and we will go to one of the supposedly least spiritual

books in the Old Testament, Proverbs, and I will prove to you that every one of the aspects and qualifications of love here are in the book of Proverbs; every single one of them, and in very much the same way that they are here. As a matter of fact, as strange as it may seem, the book of Proverbs amplifies 1-Cor. 13.

This will help you understand what it means when the Apostle Paul said to Timothy, that ‘you’ve had the Holy Scriptures and that from a child you have known them and that they are able to make you wise unto salvation through Jesus Christ.’ That’s kind of turning things around just a little bit the opposite of what we’re used to— isn’t it? Generally we show the amplification and the spiritual meaning in the New Testament. This time we’re going to turn it around and we’re going to show it in the Old Testament.

1-Corinthians 13:1: “If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love... [‘agape’] ...I have become a sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. If I have *the gift of* prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. And if I give away all my goods, and if I deliver up my body that I may be burned, but do not have love, I have gained nothing” (vs 1-3).

Then it shows the characteristics of love, v 4: “Love is patient *and* is kind; love envies not, does not brag about itself, is not puffed up. *Love* does not behave disgracefully, does not seek its own things, is not easily provoked, thinks no evil, does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the Truth. *Love* bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails. But whether *there be* prophecies... [human prophesies; not the prophecies of God because none of those will fail] ...they shall cease; 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; but when that which is perfect has come, then that which is in part shall be set aside. 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. For now we see through a glass darkly, but then *we shall see* face-to-face; now I know in part, but then I shall know exactly as I have been known. And now, these three remain: faith, hope *and* love; but the greatest of these *is* love” (vs 4-13).

If God is love, then let’s go to the book of Proverbs and see every one of these things a step at a time and let’s just see how it amplifies 1-Cor. 13. Let’s just look at some of the Proverbs. What you’re going to see in studying through them is that we’ll

start in one sections and progress toward the other chapters and come back.

“If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love...” (1-Cor. 13:1):

Proverbs 12:13: “The wicked is snared by the transgression of *his* lips... [tongues of men and angels] ...but the just shall come out of trouble. A man shall be satisfied with good by the fruit of *his* mouth, and the reward of a man’s hands shall be given to him” (vs 13-14).

Proverbs 13:2: “A man shall eat good from the fruit of his mouth... [v 3]: He who keeps his mouth keeps his life, *but* he who opens his lips wide shall have destruction.” If you just run off at the mouth, sooner or later you’re going to end up in trouble.

Proverbs 12:16: “A fool’s wrath is known at once, but a prudent *man* covers shame. *He who* speaks truth shows forth righteousness, but a false witness deceit. There are those who speak like the piercings of a sword, but the tongue of the wise heals. The lips of truth shall be established forever, but a lying tongue *is* but for a moment” (vs 16-19).

All this has to do with the tongue of man, the speaking of men. This amplifies and reinforces and really brings out an awful lot there.

Proverbs 14:3: “In the mouth of the foolish *is* a rod of pride... [What always happens with someone who has a lot of pride? *They can’t keep it in!* It’s got to gush out of them like a volcano. It says exactly what’s going to happen here.] ...but the lips of the wise shall preserve them.”

Proverbs 15:2: “The tongue of the wise uses knowledge rightly, but the mouth of fools pours out foolishness.” I can’t think of anything more like that than you have with some of the music and just hearing people blither on and on.

Verse 4: “A wholesome tongue *is* a tree of life...” This ties right in with what Jesus said, ‘by your words you shall be condemned, and by your words you shall be judged.’ You will be justified or condemned by your words. Here’s the tree of life, a wholesome tongue.

“...but perverseness in it crushes the spirit” (v 4). We could get on that and talk about that for a long time. What does sin do to the spirit? It says if you have a breach in the spirit it’s because of the perverseness of the tongue. ‘Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.’

What happens when you have sin always entering into you and living by it? Thinking about it? *It does something to the spirit!* If it does something

to the spirit, is that why God destroys the wicked in the Lake of Fire, because they're irredeemable? How far does a person go before the spirit in them is so perverse that it can't possibly be redeemed? This gives us a little indication here.

Verse 7: "The lips of the wise spread knowledge, but the heart of the fool *is* not so."

Verse 26: "The thoughts of the wicked *are* an abomination to the LORD... [that ties in with the judging of the heart, the thoughts; here we're talking about some very spiritual things] ...but the *words* of the pure *are* pleasant words."

Verse 28: "The heart of the righteous studies to answer, but the mouth of the wicked pours out evil things."

Each one of these as we go along is almost a sermon topic in itself. When you sit down and you think, ponder and meditate. That's why it's so good to meditate on the Proverbs. There are such practical, everyday things, yet, there are so many spiritual meanings in every one of these.

Proverbs 16:24: "Pleasant words *are like* a honeycomb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones." Of course, that's actually what God's Word actually really is for us, the words of salvation. That is true.

What we want to do with this is not only show that 1-Cor. 13 is amplified and expanded upon by the book of Proverbs, but it is also a means for giving us some clues and things to think on, to study and to meditate. Meditation really is an exercise of the mind on things that you should be thinking about, and how then you can discipline and control your mind by just taking one of these Proverbs and sit down and think it all the way through. Then think how you can apply this in your life; every one of these. We're going to cover an awful lot of territory today and we're going to cover an awful lot of Proverbs today.

Proverbs 17:20: "...and he who has a perverse tongue falls into mischief."

Verse 27: "He who has knowledge uses few words... [he's not going to throw it out to other people; that ties right in with 'cast not your pearls before swine.'] ...a man of understanding is of an excellent spirit." You can go through and compare that with a perverse spirit, excellent spirit, etc.

Verse 28: "Even a fool, when he is silent, is counted wise, *and* he who shuts his lips *is* counted as a man of understanding." I suppose you have to at least look halfway intelligent in order for that to be pulled off.

Proverbs 18:4: "The words of a man's mouth

are like deep waters; the fountain of wisdom is *like* a flowing stream." This ties right in with the Proverb that 'the wise speaks as a tree of life.' Here you have the well-spring [deep] of water. 'Out of his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water.' All ties together.

Verse 6: "A fool's lips enter into argument, and his mouth calls for strokes. A fool's mouth *is* his destruction, and his lips *are* the snare of his soul. The words of a talebearer *are* as wounds, and they go down into the innermost parts of the belly" (vs 6-8). That is so true! Talebearers! Gossipers!

Anyone who slanders his neighbor is not going to be in the Kingdom of God (Prov. 15). Then you can just take that whole thing and expand on that, just study through the Proverbs and put it all together; what to say and what not to say. It's better to hold your tongue or say the things that you ought to.

The Bible is such a self-proving book. There is no book like it on earth. If you're seeking the Truth and seeking to prove and inter-relatedly prove the whole Bible with itself, it does it in such a fantastic way, if you follow what you learn. If you don't, something happens mentally that it doesn't make any sense at all. Fantastic! And that's just the way that God made it.

"Love is patient..." (1-Cor. 13:4):

Proverbs 25:15: "By *being* patient [forbearing] a ruler is won over... [Just patient; you wait! What are some of the other Scriptures you can think of?] (Notice the other part of it): ...and a soft tongue breaks the bone."

That is true. You sometimes can accomplish more in the way of penetrating to either husband or wife by saying it softly, something very simple and just let the issue drop. That will penetrate a whole lot more than fighting and arguing. See how practical these Proverbs are?

Verse 28: "He who *has* no rule over his own spirit *is like* a broken down city without a wall." When you really get into the Proverbs these are such living things that you can almost not contain your imagination in thinking about it. When you read one of these just think upon it and think of all the real live examples that you can see or think of, that you're reminded of.

Ecclesiastes 7:8: "Better *is* the end of a thing than the beginning of it... [provided it's right] ...the patient in spirit *is* better than the proud in spirit." Here we get back to the *spirit of pride*.

"Love...is kind..." (1-Cor. 13:4):

You will see that ‘kind’ is a derivative of *charity or grace*.

Proverbs 14:21: “He who despises his neighbor sins...” That’s the opposite if you love your neighbor; there we have New Testament doctrine/Old Testament doctrine. The fact is, it is the same God Who inspired it all.

“...but he who has mercy on the poor, happy is he” (v 21). Isn’t that kindness? *Sure it is!*

Proverbs 19:17: “He who has pity upon the poor lends to the LORD... [In other words, if you give something to the poor, you’re really giving it to God. It’s like loaning it to God, and He’ll give it back.] ...and He will reward his good deed to him.” You can also tie this in with Rom. 12:20.

Proverbs 25:21: “If your enemy is hungry, give him bread to eat... [The Apostle Paul wrote that if you enemy hunger, feed him.] ...and if he is thirsty, give him water to drink, for you shall heap coals of fire upon his head, and the LORD shall reward you” (vs 21-22). There’s kindness—right?

When I went through and studied this, it’s so amazing! This is, what we would call New Testament doctrine.

Proverbs 21:12: “The righteous wisely considers the house of the wicked, *but God* overthrows the wicked for *their* wickedness. Whoever stops his ears at the cry of the poor, he also shall cry himself, but shall not be heard” (vs 12-13). You can think about that as individuals, showing kindness and mercy. You can think about that as nations. As an individual, as a community, as a nation it comes back. In many different ways God spares people from different things.

“...love envies not...” (1-Cor. 13:4):

Proverbs 3:31: “Do not envy the oppressor, and choose none of his ways”—New Testament doctrine.

Proverbs 14:30: “A sound heart *is* the life of the flesh, but envy the rottenness of the bones.” This ties right in with what is called *psychosomatic illnesses!* This also ties in with why a positive attitude in cancer patients is facilitating recovery.

Where does cancer really come from? *It’s a breakdown in the marrow of the bones*, basically speaking, to where you cannot produce the right kind of new blood and antibodies and the breakdown of the blood and the liver. It goes right back to the bones. There are some people who can make themselves sick and actually die because of the mental attitude, and it all gets back to envy and pride—“...rottenness of the bones.”

Proverbs 23:17: “Do not let your heart envy sinners...” Tie that in with Psalm 73—‘fret not yourselves because of evildoers, for they shall soon be brought low. They are like the grass that withers.’ And also Ps. 37.

I think if teenagers could have this understanding that they don’t envy the things that are going on in the world, and all the things that sinners get away with, they’d be a lot better off. This is why I like the Proverbs, come along with one saying and you can have the problem and the solution in two sentences.

Here’s the opposite of it, “...but *be* in the fear of the LORD all the day long” (v 17). There’s the solution, *fear God!*

Proverbs 24:1: “Do not be envious of evil men, nor desire to be with them, for their heart studies destruction, and their lips talk of mischief” (vs 1-2). Tie that right in with Rom. 1:27-30, where they are inventors of evil things.

“Love...does not brag about itself [vainglorious]...” 1 Cor. 13:4:

What we’re going through, in reality, this is what you would call a solid Bible study. When we get done, we’re going to cover so many Scriptures—and that’s differentiated from a sermon where there is more extemporizing as you go along. But a Bible study is where you go from one Scripture to another and let the Scriptures do the speaking.

This ties in a little bit with envy and pride; Proverbs 6:17: “A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood.” These are some of the things that God hates.

Proverbs 11:2: “When pride comes, then shame comes...” Isn’t that always the way? You could take even a heavyweight fight. Here are two vain guys, proud guys. One is going to break the other’s record, and the other really puts the other one down. You can just analyze the whole thing. It also says, ‘pride comes before a fall.’ That’s exactly what happens!

Proverbs 13:10: “Only by pride comes contention... [that’s really quite a statement] ...but with those who take advice *is* wisdom.”

Proverbs 18:12: “Before destruction, the heart of man is haughty...” That’s so true. Some of these things just ring so clear. Isn’t that what happened to Sodom and Gomorrah? Isn’t that what happened with the fall of Jerusalem?

If you want to really read something interesting, read the book of *Josephus* and the fall of Jerusalem. Before it fell they just wouldn’t

listen, they wouldn't hear anything.

Proverbs 20:6: "Most men will proclaim each his own goodness..." Some of these Proverbs are just like it says of God's Word: *Just like a sword!*

Proverbs 25:27: "...nor *is it* glory for men to seek their own glory." Just as it is not good to eat too much honey, it's not good for men to search for their own glory. It's all going to collapse. Honey is good, but honey corrupts when it is cooked. It breaks down. When it's not cooked, it can keep things from corrupting.

Proverbs 27:14: "He who blesses his friend with a loud voice, rising early in the morning, it shall be counted a curse to him."

A lot of these things are just practical, everyday things, even if you don't know the Proverbs. Someone gets up and spouts off like that, it just grates the nerves.

Proverbs 30:8: "Remove far from me vanity and a lying word... [vanity is being puffed up or vainglorious] ...give me neither poverty or riches; feed me my portion of bread."

"Love...is not puffed up" (1-Cor. 13:4:

Proverbs 4:24: "Put away from you a deceitful [froward] mouth, and devious [perverse] lips put far from you."

Proverbs 6:17: "A proud look..."

Proverbs 8:13: "The fear of the LORD *is* to hate evil; I hate pride, and arrogance, and the evil way, and the perverse mouth." It says an awful lot how we can be in God's way.

Proverbs 16:5: "Everyone who is proud in heart *is* an abomination to the LORD; *though joined hand-in-hand*, he shall not be unpunished." Tie that back in with some of the things concerning homosexuals. They have 'Gay Pride Day.' The very time that they have Gay Pride Day and the Gay Pride Parade—supposedly one or two of the great successful things—and they discovered all the AIDS. 'Haughtiness goes before a fall.' You have all those things.

Verse 18: "Pride *goes* before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall. *It is* better to be of a humble spirit with the lowly than to divide the spoil with the proud" (vs 18-19). You're going to be far better off.

Lots of times you seek movies of where it shows thieves and they have the loot. You see this a lot in western movies. They all shoot and kill each other over the loot. Here's a good proverb: *keep*

away from that, don't get involved with it!

Verse 28: "A perverse man causes strife... [Whenever you get around people who are like that, it's always in strife; then you have pride and contention.] ...and a whisperer separates chief friends." I suppose that was the most disappointing things in everything that we've gone through about how whispers separated friends.

Proverbs 18:12: "Before destruction, the heart of man is haughty, and before honor *is* humility."

Proverbs 26:12: "Do you see a man wise in his own conceit? *There is* more hope for a fool than for him." That is just really a jewel of a Proverb.

Proverbs 28:11: "The rich man *is* wise in his own conceit, but the poor man who has understanding will find him out." That always happens! Why then do so many rich people come to such an ignominious end? *Because of pride and conceit!* You tie these two together and you see a wise man in his own conceit, and you see a rich man wise in his own conceit, then he's headed for a fall! It's going to happen. "...but the poor man who has understanding will find him out."

(go to the next track)

"Love does not behave disgracefully..." (1-Cor. 13:5)—acting unseemly.

Proverbs 3:32: "For the crooked... [unseemly, froward] ...man *is* an abomination to the LORD, but His secret *is* with the righteous."

Proverbs 16:20_[transcriber's correction]: "He who handles a matter wisely shall find good, and whoever trusts in the LORD, happy *is* he."

Proverbs 21:4: "A high look, a proud heart, and the plowing of the wicked *are* sin." Sin is more than the transgression of the Law. You have sin in the mind! You can apply that to drug dealers. They tried to arrest this one fellow many times, and couldn't. He was known as the 'King of Heroin' of Oakland, CA. They couldn't get him on drugs, so they finally got him on tax evasion. When he came to court he would have "...high look, a proud heart..." They finally got him.

Hears what we're to do, Proverbs 22:4: "By humility *and* the fear of the LORD *are* riches and honor and life."

Proverbs 30:32: "If you have done foolishly in exalting yourself, or if you have thought evil, *lay* your hand on your mouth. Surely as the churning of milk brings forth butter, and the wringing of the nose brings forth blood, so the forcing of wrath brings forth strife."

I can think back of how many violations of that we've all been through. Didn't every one of those things happen? I think I can answer why God allows a lot of these things to take place among brethren and among churches. Why does God allow them to take place? *Because we haven't learned to overcome sin*, and the least likely place you would expect sin would be *within!* Where do all of the problems always lie? *From within!* Where did the problems lie when Lucifer conspired? *From within!* That's why God allows it, so that we can learn some lessons. This life is a proving ground. And as tough as it is to say, haven't we learned something from all the things that we've gone through? *Yes, we have!* Let's hope that we remember them! Lock them away in our hearts and remember them, lest we go out and make the same mistake again. I hope I'll be very cautious in the future before I go out and make the same mistakes again.

Are the Proverbs saying that we get pretty much what we deserve? *I would have to say yes!* I would have to say that that ties right in with Gal. 6—"as you sow, so shall you reap." I can look back and see some of the things now. I can look back and see some of the mistakes that have been done, and I became the harvest! I can look back and say that I don't want to do any of those things that way again! But with God's mercy, hopefully we don't get what we deserve.

You can take vs 32-33: "If you have done foolishly in exalting yourself, or if you have thought evil, *lay* your hand on your mouth. Surely as the churning of milk brings forth butter, and the wringing of the nose brings forth blood, so the forcing of wrath brings forth strife." You can take that and apply it to the Third Reich and Hitler himself.

One man exalted himself above everybody, exalted the whole nation in pride and arrogance, and what happened? *It came to a swift destruction!* They wielded out swift destruction as they went the other way. You can apply that even to the poor people who are starving. You can say that they had idolatry and wrong gods and they're starving because of that. They also had the wrong government and they're starving because of that. I still imagine that in amongst all of those starving people, there are some of those—one or two here and there—that really have faith in God that He would spare them. That somehow He would reach down in their circumstances and fulfill His promise that if evil comes it won't come near you.

So, I'm sure that there are some who survived just because of that situation. Yes, when we think about some of these things you can apply them many different ways—individually, collectively, as a

nation, the world. You can apply that to when the beast comes on the scene. Just think of all the pride and arrogance that's going to fill the world. It's really going to be something. When it comes it's going to come to total destruction when Christ returns. It can be on a minor scale, like little kids in their own little lives and we're trying to help them to not be filled with pride and vanity. It happens with the whole world.

"Love...does not seek its own things..." 1-Cor. 13:5):

Proverbs 3:7: "Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD and depart from evil." God telling you what to do and you're not going your own way.

Proverbs 10:17: "He who keeps instruction *is* in the way of life... [that's us going your own way] ...but he who refuses reproof goes astray... [If you refuse the reproof of God, what does it say about the correction of God? *Every son that God receives He chastens!*] ...He who hides hatred *with* lying lips, and he who speaks a slander, *is* a fool. In the multitude of words, sin is not lacking, but he who restrains his lips *is* wise. The tongue of the righteous *is* as choice silver; the heart of the wicked *is* worth little" (vs 17-20).

Proverbs 14:31: "He who oppresses the poor reproaches his Maker, but he who honors Him has mercy upon the poor." I think that says something about our country as a nation at this point and what we've done to help people.

Verse 32: "When calamity comes, the wicked are brought down... [Why? *Because he seeks his own way!*] ...but the righteous, even when he is brought to death, has hope." There are some people you can hardly wait till they come to the end of their life, for them to get out of the way.

I saw a documentary on what happened when Stalin died. Within a year there was revolt in Hungary and Poland and we didn't come in there to help them. How many millions of people died because of Stalin? There was hope for some people when he died.

Proverbs 15:27: "He who is greedy for gain troubles his own house..." This will become a living proverb in California because of the lottery; it is absolutely an infectious thing. My wife and I two days last week went to the store. They sell lottery tickets, and we notice the same ones came in both mornings to buy lottery tickets. They sit down and start scratching it out. I asked them how many winners they had, and he said the first three days we had a \$5,000 winner, a \$500 winner, and \$100 winner. People are trying to gain, trying to gain, so

they scratch off these things to find out how much they have, and when they win \$2 or \$5 they go back and buy more. You can just see people being infected by this. “He who is greedy for gain troubles his own house...”

We sat there and thought, how many of these people will try and increase their own financial base and will spend \$100-\$200 more a month just trying to do so. How many of them will get absolutely nothing back. Sure there will be some winners here and there. There’s a *living Proverb* right there!

“...but he who hates bribes shall live.... [That is an absolute truism] ...The heart of the righteous studies to answer, but the mouth of the wicked pours out evil things” (vs 27-28).

Proverbs 17:19: “He who loves transgression loves strife...” Have you ever met anyone who just loves to argue all the time; just absolutely loves to argue? What does it lead to? We had one man who almost came in our group and he loved to argue and just was that kind. Wherever he would go it would cause strife, turmoil, upset and frustration.

Verse 20: “He who has a perverse heart finds no good, and he who has a perverse tongue falls into mischief. He who begets a fool *does it* to his sorrow; the father of a fool has no joy” (vs 20-21). Talk about daily living, things that just happen all the time; there it is right there.

Proverbs 18:17: “The one who is first in his own cause *seems* just, but his neighbor comes and searches him out.”

Isn’t that true? If there’s something that you want to put forth with your own cause, you’re going to seem just. You’re going to make it sound right. Of course, that always happens when people try to cover up crime; they have a reason for doing it and it seems just, right and good.

If you’re not seeking your own way, then do this, Proverbs 21:21: “He who follows after righteousness and mercy finds life, righteousness, and honor.” You cannot have any Scripture that is more spiritual than that. Think about it for a minute. “He who follows after righteousness...”

- the righteousness of Christ
- the righteousness of God
- the justification that comes through faith

“...and mercy...” You’re not seeking vengeance or anything. You’re wanting mercy for yourself and others. What are you going to find? “...finds life...” You can expand that into eternal life. And “...righteousness and honor.”

Each one of these Proverbs—almost every one of them—is almost worth a sermon in itself.

When you go through these you might just want to sit down and study through the Proverbs. You make a real project out of the Proverbs, if you want a huge, long study.

I’ve never done this myself. I’ve done this in the *book of the Law*. I took the Ten Commandments and I wrote one of each of the Ten Commandments on ten sheets of paper. I went through and I categorized all the laws that you find in what you call *the book of Moses*: referring to God, idolatry, taking God’s name in vain, Sabbath, honoring father and mother, etc., and put all the Scriptures to make a complete study out of it.

I would take all those Scriptures on those and put that down under that commandment. This takes a long time, so you have to set yourself a good amount of time to do it. Take the Ten Commandments and go through the book of Proverbs and analyze each verse as you go and mark it down under each one of the categories of the Ten Commandments. I think you will be absolutely amazed how that fits right in with the Ten Commandments. If you want a real study challenge you might do that.

When you get it accomplished you probably will have a nice thick stack of paper and I think you will find it an excellent study.

Proverbs 23:4: “Do not weary yourself to be rich; cease from your own wisdom.” Let God’s blessing be whatever it will be upon you.

Proverbs 28:5: “Evil men do not understand justice, but those who seek the LORD understand all *things*.” If you’re not seeking your own then you’re seeking what God wants.

“Love...is not easily provoked...” (1-Cor. 13:5):

We’re all going to have to take a backseat—or front seat—to this one. I wish that I could fall into that category, so I’m going to be talking to myself as we read this:

Proverbs 14:17: “He who *is* soon angry acts foolishly...” Isn’t that true? When you get angry, if that happens, give yourself a little space. I give myself a little space and I go off by myself and talk to myself about my anger and sit down and think it through before I do anything. The Proverb says that if you’re soon angry you are dealing foolishly. If you have a ‘short fuse’ then give yourself a little space and go off somewhere when you’re angry and think it over before you start dealing. When you start dealing, then you’re going to deal foolishly and then you’re going to have a lot of things that you’re going to have to backpedal more and be sorry for this, that and the other thing. Let’s see if we can add this

characteristic of righteousness to us that we don't get angry as quickly.

Verse 29: "*He who is slow to wrath is of great understanding, but he who is hasty of spirit exalts folly.*" That's always true! These Proverbs are such living things it's incredible. It really gets in there and cuts.

Proverbs 15:1: "A soft answer turns away wrath, but grievous words stir up anger." If you're not easily provoked, just give a soft answer. 'A word softly spoken breaks the bone.' If you get into an argument, try that and see how that works. Back away from it and let it fall where it should.

Verse 18: "A wrathful man stirs up discord, but one slow to anger calms strife." There's a balance, because some people can be slow to anger, but they let things get out of hand. There has to be a balance. Some people are not perturbed with anything.

Proverbs 16:32: "He who is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he who rules his spirit is better than he who takes a city." There's a difference— isn't there? It means to *rule your spirit*. I'm sure that means to have control over your thoughts. You can tie that together with many, many different things.

If you have the Spirit of God and you let Christ rule in your heart (Col. 3:17). If you rule your spirit, then you can tie that in with the Psalm that says 'I the Lord try the reins and the hearts.' So, if you're letting Christ rule in your heart then He's the One doing the controlling and ruling your spirit. If that is so, then you're greater than a warrior controlling a city, or greater than someone who has designed or implemented and built a city.

Proverbs 19:11: "The discretion of a man puts off his anger; and *it is* his glory to pass over a transgression. The king's wrath *is* like the roaring of a lion... [You don't want to get the leaders mad at you] ...but his favor *is* like dew on the grass" (vs 11-12).

"Love...thinks no evil" (1-Cor. 13:5):

There are many people who all they do is go along and add up every evil thing that comes along. They calculate evil, live by evil and so forth. This also has to do without reckoning evil things to your friends or other people around you, because that breeds a lot of suspicion. When you breed suspicion then you destroy love.

What should you do if there's trouble? *You should try and help the person overcome it.*

Proverbs 10:12: "Hatred stirs up strife, but love covers all sins." There's a time to expose sin so

it can be corrected. And there's a time to cover sin. Here it is, if you're not thinking evil then you're thinking to cover it, to cover the sin.

Proverbs 12:20: "Deceit *is* in the heart of those who imagine evil, but to counselors of peace *there is* joy." Out of the evil you're not reckoning it. You're trying to bring peace and you're trying to bring things into a proper perspective.

"Love...does not rejoice in iniquity..." (1-Cor. 13:6):

Proverbs 2:10: "Wisdom shall enter into your heart, and knowledge will be pleasing to your soul; discretion shall preserve you... [this is kind of tying together some of the things that we've already talked about] ...and, understanding shall keep you, to deliver you from the way of the evil *man*, from the man who speaks wicked things, those who leave the paths of uprightness to walk in the ways of darkness, who rejoice to do evil *and* delight in the perversities of the wicked, whose ways *are* crooked, and *are* devious in their paths" (vs 10-15). You don't rejoice in those things at all.

Proverbs 6:18: "A heart that plots wicked imaginations, feet that are swift in running to evil."

Proverbs 8:8: "All the words of my mouth *are* in righteousness..." In other words, if you have that and that kind of talking, then you're not going to be rejoicing in unrighteousness. When something happens to someone because they're evil—even though they deserve it, even though that they have reaped of their own ways—that's nothing to rejoice about. They are suffering and they are also made in God's image.

Proverbs 10:2: "Treasures of wickedness profit nothing... [there are many people who rejoice in the treasures of ill-gotten gain, but it profits nothing] ...but righteousness delivers from death. The LORD will not allow the soul of the righteous to famish..." (vs 2-3). That's a living Proverb we can go by; God will not allow it.

Proverbs 14:9: "Fools laugh at sin..." Rejoicing in unrighteousness; and those things are never going to pay off. They always hurt the person that does it. Then one thing leads to another.

You could almost take all of these things and say that if you are following love and you are following things that God wants, sooner or later all of these things will begin coming together a bit at a time. There's always going to be a loose end out here because of human nature, but these are the goals that we are to strive for. Whereas, if you don't the loose end will come out and get stuck in something and then everything will come unraveled. It will work just the opposite.

God has made it in such a way that it's fantastic. We can trust in God that everything He has said is going to be done, and these are living laws of the mind, the body and the way that we live and are so absolutely true and bound up in *love*. This all is expanding upon that love.

Proverbs 24:16: "For a righteous one falls seven times, and rises up again; but the wicked shall fall into evil. Do not rejoice when your enemy falls, and do not let your heart be glad when he stumbles. Lest the LORD see, and it displease Him, and He turns away His wrath from him" (vs 16-18). Then the obvious conclusion is *put it upon you*. So, don't rejoice in that.

It's kind of like the old saying: *We won WWII, but we lost the peace*. There's a good example of the whole world that follows along here. Don't rejoice in it because they're not any different than any other human being.

"Love...rejoices in the Truth" (1-Cor. 13:6):

Proverbs 4:14: "Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not into the way of evil *men*. Avoid it; do not go in it; turn from it, and pass on!" (vs 14-15). That ties right in with what it says in the New Testament, 'Flee fornication.' There are certain things that you just have to get up and get away from. Just be gone; don't stick around.

Verse 16: "For they do not sleep except when they have done mischief; and their sleep is taken away unless they cause *some* to fall, for they eat the bread of wickedness and drink the wine of violence. But the path of the just... [On the other hand, if we're rejoicing in the Truth of God, the righteousness of God] ...the path of the just *is* as the shining light, that shines more and more to the perfect day" (vs 16-18).

Proverbs 8:7: "For my mouth shall speak truth..."

Verse 5: "O you simple ones, understand wisdom; and, you fools, be of an understanding heart. Hear; for I will speak of excellent things; and the opening of my lips *shall be* right things" (vs 5-6). It is the personification of the wisdom of God or from the Holy Spirit.

Verse 7: "For my mouth shall speak truth; and wickedness is an abomination to my lips."

Proverbs 10:21: "The lips of the righteous feed many, but fools die for lack of wisdom."

Proverbs 11:23: "The desire of the righteous *is* only good; the expectation of the wicked *is* wrath."

Proverbs 12:1: "Whoever loves instruction

loves knowledge..."

Proverbs 14:5: "A faithful witness will not lie, but a false witness will speak lies." Did you know that there's a case before the Supreme Court right now that may change the law concerning perjury when you go to court. A lawyer in defending his client, his client told him that he had done it, but he was going to lie on the stand. He was going to get up on the witness stand and lie.

His attorney said, 'You can't do that. You can't get up there and lie; that is perjury.' You talk about a twist of the law; now this criminal, who was convicted, has another attorney and the attorney is appealing the case because his original attorney was not helping his client, because he wouldn't allow his client to lie.

The bottom line is: Does a lawyer have an obligation to his client above an obligation to uphold the ethics of the judicial system? That's the way they put it. If it is ruled that an attorney has a primary responsibility to his client, that's going to open the floodgates for people to get up and wantonly lie on the witness stand. People do it all the time now, but then it will make it legal. They can say anything and there won't be any justice anywhere.

"Love bears all things..." (1-Cor. 13:7):

Proverbs 10:12: "Hatred stirs up strife, but love covers all sins." Covering all things also means to hold a confidence.

Proverbs 11:13: "A talebearer is a revealer of secrets..." There's a TV show *Murder She Wrote* and the star—Angela Lansbury—was riding in a car with another woman and she was a talebearer and she said, 'I can't stand people that gossip, but... I shouldn't be telling you this, this is in the strictest confidence....' When there's a confidence let it be a confidence.

Proverbs 17:9: "He who covers a transgression seeks love..." Obviously, there are other things involved in it. There has to be repentance. There has to be things to make sure that it doesn't happen again. You could even take this Scripture, where a transgression is so bad, miserable and rotten and then you try and cover it up, then you have a 'sin-gate.'

There was a time when God did not cover the transgression of David—remember that? He did it before the whole society. Then there comes a time when it's the opposite of this. "He who covers a transgression seeks love, but he who repeats a matter alienates friends" (v 9).

Proverbs 19:11: "The discretion of a man puts off his anger; and *it is* his glory to pass over a

transgression.”

“Love...believes all things...” (1-Cor. 13:7):

Proverbs 3:1: “My son, do not forget my law, but let your heart keep my commandments.” Do we believe the commandments of God? *Yes, obviously, we wouldn’t be here if we didn’t!*

Verse 2: “For they shall add length of days, and long life, and peace, to you.... [Obviously, that’s something you have to believe.] ...Do not let mercy and Truth forsake you; bind them around your neck; write them upon the tablet of your heart; and so you shall find favor and good understanding in the sight of God and man. Trust in the LORD with all your heart...” (vs 1-4). That means *believe* in Him and all things that He has said.

“...and lean not to your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths. Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD and depart from evil” (vs 4-7).

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.”

“Love...hopes all things...” (1-Cor. 13:7):

Proverbs 10:28: “The hope of the righteous is gladness...”

- What is the hope of the dead? *The resurrection!*
- Who shall be in the resurrection? *The righteous!*
- Is that not called the day of gladness and happiness? *Yes, it is!*

“...but the expectation of the wicked shall perish” (v 28). They’ll go to the Lake of Fire.

Proverbs 13:12: “Hope deferred makes the heart sick... [that’s why God is going to complete His hope] ...but *when desire is fulfilled it is a tree of life.*”

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

Scriptural References:

- 1) 1-Samuel 15:1-3
- 2) Hebrews 13:8
- 3) Mark 12:28-34
- 4) 1 Corinthians 13:1-13
- 5) Proverbs 12:13-14
- 6) Proverbs 13:2-3
- 7) Proverbs 12:16-19
- 8) Proverbs 14:3
- 9) Proverbs 15:2, 4, 7, 26, 28
- 10) Proverbs 16:24

- 11) Proverbs 17:20, 27-28
- 12) Proverbs 18:4, 6-8
- 13) Proverbs 25:15, 28
- 14) Ecclesiastes 7:8
- 15) Proverbs 14:21
- 16) Proverbs 19:17
- 17) Proverbs 25:21-22
- 18) Proverbs 21:12-13
- 19) Proverbs 3:31
- 20) Proverbs 14:30
- 21) Proverbs 23:17
- 22) Proverbs 24:1-2
- 23) Proverbs 6:17
- 24) Proverbs 11:2
- 25) Proverbs 13:10
- 26) Proverbs 18:12
- 27) Proverbs 20:6
- 28) Proverbs 25:27
- 29) Proverbs 27:14
- 30) Proverbs 30:8
- 31) Proverbs 4:24
- 32) Proverbs 6:17
- 33) Proverbs 8:13
- 34) Proverbs 16:5, 18-19, 28
- 35) Proverbs 18:12
- 36) Proverbs 26:12
- 37) Proverbs 28:11
- 38) Proverbs 3:32
- 39) Proverbs 16:20
- 40) Proverbs 21:4
- 41) Proverbs 22:4
- 42) Proverbs 30:32-33
- 43) Proverbs 3:7
- 44) Proverbs 10:17-20
- 45) Proverbs 14:31-32
- 46) Proverbs 15:27-28
- 47) Proverbs 17:19-21
- 48) Proverbs 18:17
- 49) Proverbs 21:21
- 50) Proverbs 23:4
- 51) Proverbs 28:5
- 52) Proverbs 14:17, 29
- 53) Proverbs 15:1, 18
- 54) Proverbs 16:32
- 55) Proverbs 19:11-12
- 56) Proverbs 10:12
- 57) Proverbs 12:20
- 58) Proverbs 2:10-15
- 59) Proverbs 6:18
- 60) Proverbs 8:8
- 61) Proverbs 10:2-3
- 62) Proverbs 14:9
- 63) Proverbs 24:16-18
- 64) Proverbs 4:14-18
- 65) Proverbs 8:7, 5-7

- 66) Proverbs 10:21
- 67) Proverbs 11:23
- 68) Proverbs 12:1
- 69) Proverbs 14:5
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- 72) Proverbs 17:9
- 73) Proverbs 19:11
- 74) Proverbs 3:1-7
- 75) Proverbs 28:25
- 76) Proverbs 10:28
- 77) Proverbs 13:12

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- 1 John 4
- Romans 13
- Deuteronomy 6
- Romans 12:20
- Psalm 73; 37
- Romans 1:27-30
- Galatians 6
- Colossians 3:17

Also referenced: Book: *Josephus*

FRC:bo

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First Corinthians Fourteen The Tongues Question

Fred R. Coulter

- Why do we have false doctrines?
- Why do we have heresies?
- Wouldn't it be nice if we lived in a world where we didn't have to fight and combat all the deception of the world?
- Wouldn't it be nice if we lived in a world where we didn't have to fight and combat all of the deception in religion?

Especially at this end-time, false doctrine is a plague and a real curse. But there is the also the other side of the coin, which is it makes you get your nose in the Bible.

Note sermon series: *Refuting Sunday-Keeping*, and going through the book *Sunday Facts and Sabbath Fiction* by Russell Tardo. We need these kinds of things so that we really understand the Truth. That's the other side of the coin.

Paul said the same thing in writing the Corinthians. Of course, that church in Corinth was a wild church. I don't think any of us have experienced anything like it.

1-Corinthians 11:17: "Now *in this that* I am commanding *you*, I do not praise you, because when you assemble together, it is not for the better but for the worse." Can you imagine? He's really telling them that they are so bad that when you come together it would really be better if you had stayed at home, because it gets so bad. For first of all, I hear that there are divisions among you... [sects] ...when you are assembled together in the Church, and I partly believe *it*" (vs 17-18). One was of Peter, one was of Paul, one was of Apollos and one was of Christ.

Verse 19: "For it is **necessary** that heresies... [from the Greek 'dei'—it's obligatory] ...be among you, so that the ones who are approved... [of God] ...may become manifest among you." That certainly applies to the broader/greater Church of God today.

The other side of the coin is that you get your nose in the Bible and you understand.

Administration of Death

I've done *The Administration of Death* and it's the first time I put it together quite that way. You will, I hope, understand it even more. But it's sufficient to say that under the Old Covenant it was also a sovereign nation with Israel, and God gave all sovereign nations the right of capital punishment by

death (Gen. 9).

So the reason that the Church does not have the administration of death is because we are to preach in all the world, in all nations; therefore, we become an organization within a sovereign state, like California or America in general.

God does not violate His own laws. Since He gave the death penalty—the administration of death—to the governments of this world, the Church does not have it. So, we cannot possibly be under the administration of death.

There was a group in Florida, near Miami, and the man who ran it was Yahweh Ben Yahweh. This was a group of blacks that believed that they were Israel and this man, who was their leader, was the Son of God. They had good works that they did in the community. They would go into the slum areas and clean them up, make the people behave and get rid of the drugs. The whole group even got a meritorious commendation from the mayor of Miami.

But one of the initiatory rites for the men was that they had to go out and kill a white man that they called 'white dog.' They had a whole rash of serial murders in the Miami area, and other areas in the United States where there were members. There was a nine-state investigation; they had many, many murders.

The way that the one who committed the murder was, in murdering a white man, he was to cut off the ear and bring it to Yahweh Ben Yahweh. So, they finally got all the evidence and shut him down and put him in prison.

Here was a group within a sovereign nation that took upon themselves the *administration of death* according to the rules of their sect. Rightly it was shut down, because God never gave that to any sect or any Church of God. I think it will give a great deal more understanding to you.

Speaking in Tongues

The Corinthians also had the problem of speaking in tongues. You need to understand, every religion in the world, including—Muslims, Catholics, Protestants—have certain sects that speak in tongues. These are demonic apparitions, and the Greeks called it 'the tongues of the gods.' They would be so possessed that they would just utter

gibberish and role on the floor and froth at the mouth. In America we have those that do that; they're the snake handlers.

1-Corinthians 14 talks about that partly, but also having to do with speaking in foreign languages, because there were a lot of different peoples passing through Corinth.

1-Corinthians 14:17—this is for those speaking in an un-understandable tongue: “For you may indeed give thanks well, but the other is not edified. I thank my God *that* I speak in languages more than all of you” (vs 17-18). This has to do with languages.

Paul spoke many languages. He undoubtedly spoke Hebrew, because we know from the book of Acts that's how he stilled the riot of the Jews in Jerusalem when they were ready to get him.

He spoke Latin, because he was a Roman citizen. He spoke Greek because that was the common language of the time. He probably also spoke Aramaic. What other languages he spoke we don't know, but we know that Paul did not lose his senses and just speak in gibberish.

Verse 19: “But in *the Church*... [when the congregation is together] ...I desire to speak five words with my understanding... [talking about those languages that were the demonic gibberish with no understanding] ...*rather* than ten thousand words in an *unknown* language... [that can apply to a known language or to gibberish] ...so that I may also instruct others. Brethren, do not be children in *your* minds; however, in *regard to* malice be babes, but in *your* minds be fully mature. It is written... [in Isaiah] ...in the law, “Therefore, in other languages and by other lips will I speak to this people; but even then, they will not hear Me,” says *the Lord*.” Consequently, *gifts of* languages are a sign... [there's a purpose for it] ...not for those who believe...” (vs 19-22).

If you have a group of people who say they believe in Jesus Christ, they should never have tongues of any kind within the congregation except for a foreign language with an interpreter.

Now let's see the 'sign,' and here was a powerful sign:

Acts 2:1 “And when the Day of *Pentecost*, the fiftieth day, was being fulfilled, they were all with one accord in the same place. And suddenly *there* came from heaven a sound...” (vs 1-2). I want you to understand the parallel between this and the giving of the Law at Mt. Sinai on Pentecost. The trumpet blew and the voice of God came from heaven. It was for all the children of Israel, and they

all understood and were afraid, saying, ‘O God, don't...’ They went to Moses and said, ‘Don't let God speak to us anymore lest we die. Moses, you go do it. You come and tell us.’ The real motive behind it was that ‘if we have a man in between God and us we can discount the man and do’ what we want to do, which they subsequently did. So, you can always blame someone else: ‘He made me do it. He said...’

Here God is going to perform a miracle on the Day of Pentecost and in giving the Law, He gave the Law. On the Pentecost in Acts 2 He sent the Holy Spirit, which is the power of God:

- not only to understand the Word of God
- not only to hear the Word of God
- but also the power to keep the Word of God; keep His laws

Also, in a way, if you go back to the Tower of Babel He is undoing the confusing of the languages to a certain degree. In addition to this, God is proclaiming that the Word of God goes to *all nations, all kindreds, all tongues*, whereas, before it was *only for Israel* under the letter of the Law through the covenant that God established with Israel through Moses.

Verse 2: “And suddenly *there* came from heaven a sound like *the* rushing of a powerful wind, and filled the whole house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them divided tongues as of fire, and sat upon each one of them. And they were all filled with *the* Holy Spirit; and they began to speak with other languages... [known tongues] ...as the Spirit gave them *the words* to proclaim” (vs 2-4).

We're going to see that God is not the author of confusion. This was not confusing.

Verse 5: “Now, *there* were *many* Jews who were sojourning in Jerusalem, devout men from every nation under heaven.”

I imagine there were a lot of them there, because they had heard about the miracles of Jesus. Remember, this is after the three and a half-year ministry of Christ. Those who would come to the pilgrimage feast, to Jerusalem, every year would hear about Christ. Some of them may have even traveled over to Galilee and followed Him around when He spoke in some of the synagogues. We don't know, but you know that He was the topic of conversation.

Remember what Paul told Festus: *You know that this was not done in a corner!* So, the whole ministry and the beginning of the New Testament Church was a mammoth and fantastic thing! Especially when you understand that the

geographical area is really very small. You're dealing in no more than a hundred miles north and south and no more than 50 or 60 miles east and west. So, 100 by 50-60 miles maximum.

All that Jesus did:

- all those that **He healed**, and they went around and proclaimed that they were healed.
- the **feeding of the 4,000 and the 5,000**
- all **the teachings** that He taught
- all **the confrontations** that He had with the scribes and Pharisees and priests

When you come to the Feast of Tabernacles there in John 7-9, they were wondering:

- Is He here?
- Is He going to come?
- Why do they continue to let Him speak?
- Are the authorities going to arrest Him?

They were divided. Some of the people said, 'Yes, He's the Christ.' Some people said, 'No, He's not the Christ.' Others said, 'He has a demon.' Other's said, 'He's the Son of God.'

You know that when the pilgrims went back to whatever country they came from they told these stories. You know they did! All of the communities of the Diasporate Jews knew about Christ, whether for good or for bad. I just imagine that there were more that came to this Pentecost because of those who were there for the Passover. Remember, there are 50 days—in the case of the Passover being in the middle of the week, it's 54 days—and they went back to their different countries they had their synagogues and they told everyone what was going on and that this man Jesus was crucified but He rose from the dead!

The priests say that the disciples stole away the body, and the disciples say that He was risen from the dead, 'we saw Him.' If you are a devout Jew, what are you going to do? *You're going to saddle up your ass and you're going to go to Jerusalem as quickly as you can get there!* Or if you live in Asia Minor you're going to get on a boat and come on down to what is now Tel Aviv and you're going to go on to Jerusalem.

This is the scene: Picture the temple area jammed packed with thousands of people there on this Day of Pentecost:

1. because God brought them
2. because they wanted to come

What about devout Jews? Do we mean the equivalent of Orthodox Jesus today? *No! Orthodox*

Judaism did not come until way, way later! Orthodox Judaism actually came out of Eastern European Jewry.

What we are talking about is those who would attend synagogue, those who would read Scripture, and though they had certain of the laws of Judaism, it's not like it is in its full-fledged development today. We have all kinds of Jews here that we're talking about.

Verse 6: "And when word of this went out, the multitude came together and were confounded... [not confused; they were seeing something that had never occurred in the history of the world] ...because each one heard them... [the apostles] ...speaking in his own language." Here are 'tongues' that are understood.

Verse 7: "And they were all amazed, and marveled, saying to one another, 'Behold, are not all these who are speaking Galileans?'" Like saying you're from Idaho or Texas.

Verse 8: "Then how is it *that* we hear each one in our own language in which we were born?... [notice vast area that they come from]: ...Parthians and Medes... [all of the area that is Iran to Pakistan today, all the area between the Black and Caspian Sea] ...and Elamites... [that area of Elam was little further west] ...and those who inhabit Mesopotamia... [Iraq today] ...and Judea and Cappadocia... [on of the major provinces there in Asia Minor] ...Pontus... [northern Asia Minor] ...and Asia... [all the rest of Asia Minor] ...both Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya which *are* near Cyrene, and the Romans... [Gentile proselytes] ...who are sojourning *here*, both Jews and proselytes, Cretes and Arabians..." (vs 8-11). That's a wide geographical area.

"...we hear them speaking in our own languages the great things of God" (v 11). All of these were non-believers. *Tongues* is a sign to the non-believers.

Verse 12: "And they were all amazed and greatly perplexed, saying to one another, 'What does this mean?'" Just mentally picture yourself there and you're seeing these 12 men speak, and you know they're fishermen from Galilee, and you know they've never been to your country or educated in the language of the country you come from. Yet, everyone from every country understands what they are saying because they are two things in this miracle:

1. the speaking in tongues

They had to understand in their own mind what they were saying, but out of their mouths would come the

different languages.

2. the hearing—that they would be able to understand

Verse 13: “But others were mocking *and* saying, ‘They are full of new wine.’” Then Peter stands up and gives this profound sermon. He preaches Christ and he tells them to repent and be baptized. On that Pentecost day there were 3,000 that were baptized that very same day. Then we go through the rest of the story in the book of Acts.

Some of them had traveled and this was so great and exciting that they didn’t want to go home. Everybody shared everything together. That was for the need. That’s why *tongues* are a sign to them that believe not!

1-Corinthians 14:22: Consequently, **gifts of languages are a sign—not for those who believe, but for those who do not believe.** But prophesy...”

There are two kinds of prophesying that it’s talking about:

1. to be telling forth of God’s Word—inspired speaking
2. to foretell the future

Most of the time it means to be giving *inspired speaking*. Example: How would it be when you came to church all you heard were sermons on prophecy? Nothing on doctrine, nothing on Christian living, nothing of going through the Bible word-by-word, but it was always prophecy!

This gives you a good example as to why this word does not mean to be prophesying future events. We have also learned to be cautious in prophesying future events, because if you put your own ideas into it, and you want to speed up the return of Christ according to your timetable, you’re going to fail!

Concerning prophesying future events, ***it is the event that you look for.*** Don’t set a date for the even to happen because that may not be the date that God has in mind. Look for the event!

Remember all the peace things we had during the Clinton era? We were so close to getting peace in the Middle East? It looked so good! Remember when Clinton had Rabin and Arafat to the White House and they shook hands and embraced each other? Everyone thought that it was just around the corner! However, that’s not according to God’s timetable, so now, at the least, we are *many* years from peace in the Middle East. You have to see ***the completed event***, then you know that’s ***God’s timetable***.

Prophesying or preaching from the Word of God “...**is not for the unbelievers...**” (v 22). When we get into detailed studies like this and we have some who just walks in off the street who knows nothing about the Word of God or a Bible—maybe they have one at home but they may have never opened it—and they sit down here in the congregation, and we start going through a detailed study, they’re going to be lost! That kind of teaching is not for the non-believer.

“...but for those who believe” (v 22).

- we grow in grace and knowledge
- we grow deeper in our understanding of the Word of God
- we get into the Scriptures
- we know what it means

Verse 23: “Therefore, if the whole church is assembled together in one place... [apparently there were several congregations in Corinth] ...and all are speaking in *unknown* languages... [Paul is saying that this is the scenario] ...and unlearned persons or unbelievers come in, will they not say that you have lost your minds?” In this case he’s certainly talking about the unintelligible gibberish.

If you see Benny Henn or those who speak in tongues, he puts his hand on them and they fall over backward. That’s a sure sign of satanism, because when you worship God you fall on your face. They speak in ‘tongues.’ What happens when you see that? *You say they’re crazy!* That’s what Paul is saying here.

Verse 24: “But if all prophesy... [inspired speaking] ...and an un-believer or unlearned person comes in, he is convicted by all, *and* he is discerned by all. And in this way the secrets of his heart are exposed... [obviously bringing a sermon on repentance] ...and so, bowing down on *his* face, he will worship God, declaring that God is indeed among you” (vs 24-25). That’s what has to be the most important thing.

Now, get this view of the Church: Suppose you walk into the Church for the first time. Some of us have attended large congregations. What happens when you have large congregation? *They tend to break down themselves into little groups within the large congregation!* This is what happened when all the churches came together.

Verse 26: “What is it then, brethren? When you assemble together, each of you has a psalm...” You have a group over here in the corner singing a psalm. Maybe different ones have psalms to sing.

“...has a doctrine...” Someone over here is teaching

a doctrine.

“...has a language...” You have your tongues group over here in this corner.

“...has a revelation...” Someone says, ‘God revealed to me...’ When anyone says that to me, I’m gone!

“...or has an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification” (v 26). This is the whole purpose of coming together in the Church; **to edify the brethren, to up-build in Christ!** When we come together on the Sabbath Day, Christ is here:

- to fellowship with us
- to encourage us
- to uplift us
- to instruct us
- to edify us
- to build or construct

What is the greatest thing to happen through teaching that is to be built in you through the Spirit of God?

- the character of God
- Christ in you, the hope of glory.
- let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus

That’s what we should say church is all about. If it is not, then it is political church. What do I mean by political church? Can people learn things in a political church? *Yes, they can learn certain things!* But what are they really doing? *They are playing Church and they have a social club.* Then, especially when the income is the top measurement of spirituality, they are merchandized to keep the income coming. *You have lost the whole purpose of why God has called you in those cases!*

It’s gone! Christ is gone! He’s not going to stay there very long and fellowship with that kind of teaching and with those kinds of congregations.

- one has a song
- one has a doctrine
- one has a tongue (language)
- one has a revelation
- one has an interpretation

“...Let all things be done for edification. If anyone speaks in a *foreign* language, *let it be* by two, or three at the most, and *let that be* in succession... [one by one; not all at the same time] ...and let one interpret” (vs 26-27).

If we had someone come here from Germany and wanted to tell us about their church in

Germany, if he couldn’t speak English we would have to have someone interpret. If he spoke in German you might be able to pick up a word or two. I studied German years ago, so I could pick up on some of it. Or whatever the language may be.

Verse 28: “But if there is no interpreter, let him be silent in *the Church*, and let him speak within himself and to God.” That is if he wants to.

Verse 29: “And let the prophets speak... [those who do the inspired teaching] ...two or three *in succession*...” It’s all right to two speakers, three at the most. Notice that in both cases it is two or three, no more.

Here is the responsibility of the congregation, “...and let the others discern” (v 29). Does it square with the Word of God? This ties in with:

1-Thessalonians 5:21: “Prove all things. Hold fast *to that which* is good.” That’s what’s to happen on the Sabbath Day when we get together.

1 Corinthians 14:30: “But if anything be revealed to another *who is* sitting by, let the first one be silent.” We had a perfect example of that right here. We had some questions. We wait for an opportune moment and raise the hand.

Verse 31: “For your *prophets* can all prophesy one by one, so that everyone may learn and may be encouraged.” It’s talking about a situation much like a Bible study, where we’re talking together. Different ones have input, we put it all together and search out the Scriptures.

Women’s Role within the Church

Verse 32: And *the* spirits of *the* prophets are subject to *the* prophets.... [in other words, control your mind] ...For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints. **Let your women be silent in the churches...**” (vs 32-34).

That is when they’re all gathered together and you have a large group. It’s not wrong for them to ask a question in a Bible study. But to get up and speak out, such as giving sermonettes, etc. Let’s see why that is so. This is not male chauvinist pigism. This is the Word of God.

1-Timothy 2:9: “In like manner also, *let the women* adorn themselves with clothing that shows modesty and discretion...”—being able to blush. I tell you, we have a generation that cannot blush anymore: the younger generation coming up; hard, crass and almost freakish monsters, some of them. It’s amazing!

“...not with *elaborate* braidings of the hair... [stacked way up] ...or with gold, or pearls, or expensive apparel... [to weave it all in some classic design, etc.] ...but with *that* which is fitting for women who profess to have reverence for God—with good works” (vs 9-10). That has to be with all men, too.

Verse 11: “Let a woman learn in quietness and be submissive in every respect.” We’re all to do that, not just women. That’s not to say that the men can stand up and say and do things anymore than the woman. But here’s the key:

Verse 12: “For **I [Paul] do not permit a woman to teach, nor to exercise authority over man, but to be in quietness.**” It would not be wrong for all women to get together in a group so that they can discuss things pertaining to women only. Nothing wrong with that; that would be fine:

- how to be a better wife
- how to take care of children

What do you do when this new bambino comes, especially when it’s your first one? The first one is always an experiment. You never had one before. Those things and that knowledge needs to be passed on. That’s perfectly all right; absolutely nothing wrong with that.

But God does not want women to be teaching and preaching. One of the main reasons is because the way that God has made, emotionally, men and women. Men are more geared to *facts*. Women are geared to *feelings*. They have to be! God wants us to have our conversion based upon the facts and the Scriptures, because of the very fact of His creation. This is not to put women down at all. Please understand that! We are talking about how much time out of a week? Two hours? Three hours?

Verse 13: “For Adam was formed first, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived; but the woman came to be in transgression by being deceived” (vs 13-14). That doesn’t mean that she alone sinned. It talks about sin entering into the world through one man: Adam.

Verse 15: “But she shall be saved through the childbearing, if they continue in faith and love and sanctification with self-control.”

That’s why Paul said that women are to keep silent in the Church. That is, they are not to teach or usurp authority over men. If we have a Bible study, like we’re having today, it’s perfectly all right if ask a question of you, or you ask a question of me, that’s fine.

Why does it say that they shall be saved in

childbearing? Was it because there were so many infant deaths? Much less than we have now? *Probably! That’s a good point! I’ve never heard it quite expressed that way, but that’s true!* It’s not that it’s obligatory to have children, and you must have children in order to be saved. But they shall be saved in childbearing. In other words, their lives will be spared and that of their children. That’s the promise that is given there.

(go to the next track)

Women being silent in the Church is not necessarily saying that they do not have the capacity to speak. Some of them can speak better than some men. I know for a fact that women can probably speak longer than most men. I also know for a fact that women just like to sit down and talk, talk about many things. And if a man happens to be sitting there, in a little while he gets bored; at least I do. So, I have to be careful how I exit lest I offend. We all still have our human nature involved.

One of the things that happens with human beings is that the way that most human beings make themselves feel better is to tear down someone else by talking against them, or comparing themselves among themselves that Paul says that you’re not wise in doing so. That’s different than comparing doctrine.

If you compare a teaching or doctrine you’re comparing something that is written. Never compare yourself with anyone else, because you’re not that other person. God never made you to be the other person. Love and appreciate everyone for what he or she is, for the talents and abilities that God has given to each one of them, which may be entirely different than yours. That’s why it is completely wrong in a church to try and make everyone conform to the thinking of certain people.

The only conformity in thinking that we need is conformity to the thinking of Christ in carrying out our lives and how we live. Everyone has talents. God made us all different. There’s no such thing as equality.

We have equal opportunity for salvation. But we’re not all equal in the sense that men try and equate equality. Therefore, they don’t appreciate the differences that all people have, and the special talents and things that different ones have in different areas and different abilities. Always remember that.

1-Corinthians 14:34: “Let your women be silent in the churches, for they are not allowed to speak... [to teach] ...but they are to be in subjection, exactly as the law says. And if they wish to learn anything, let them ask their own husbands at

home....” (vs 34-35). Some say that’s because they had the women’s section over here and the men’s section over there, and the women would ask the men, ‘What did he say, I didn’t hear it?’ That may be a possibility.

What happens if your husband doesn’t come to church? *Now you’re confronted with a different proposition!* What if you have a question in a Bible study? *That is a different proposition!*

The Purpose of Our Calling

Verse 36: “WHAT? Did the Word of God originate with you? Or did it come only to you *and no one else?*” Now that you’ve got all these new and different and strange doctrines.

Verse 37: “If anyone thinks that he is a prophet or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things I write to you are commandments of the Lord.” The writings of the apostles that are canonized in the New Testament are in an entirely different category than the writings that we do now, such as letters or articles or books. Those are not the Word of God, or the commandment of God. We can copy it and put it in a book and say that this is what God’s says and give the Scripture quote.

Verse 38: “But if anyone *chooses* to be ignorant, let him be ignorant.” That is willfully, which is obviously implied here.

Verse 39: “So then, brethren, desire to prophesy, and do not forbid speaking in *foreign* languages. Let all things be done decently and in order” (vs 39-40). So that we don’t have a bunch of strange doctrines coming around. That’s why we have heresies; that’s why we have different things that come along.

In this age we have oh so many! It’s really hard sometimes for people to hold onto the Truth.

- Which Bible should I read? *There’s a whole array of Bibles out there!*
- Which church should I go to? *Hundreds of denominations!*
- Where is God?
 - ✓ The scientists tell us that we don’t know, and probably doesn’t exist!
 - ✓ Theologians and ministers say the same thing!

Now we are in a situation at the end of the age that if we draw close to God and ask Him to give us understanding, which He will—God won’t withhold understanding—and if we truly seek it with all our heart while we’re seeking the Lord, we have to seek Him first, then God will give us great

understanding of His Word.

This is what Paul was trying to talk about here in the first part of 1-Cor. This is what Paul was trying to teach them, because he knew that he was going to get into this a little later on concerning all these teachings.

1-Corinthians 1:18: “For to those who are perishing... [those in the world] ...the preaching of the cross is foolishness... [it surely is today] ...but to us who are being saved... [salvation is a process] ...it is the power of God.” That’s what we want it to be; to grow in that.

Verse 19: “For it is written, **‘I will destroy the wisdom of the wise...’**” Remember that! How many things were you told years ago that you ought to do this or that or the other thing, and then they find out, no, that’s the opposite?

“...and I will nullify the understanding of those who understand” (v 19). They’ve even found now that Einstein was wrong. In some things he was right, but some of his other conclusions they now understand were wrong. Here was the greatest mathematician in the history of the world in our time, and it’s fulfilled right here. “...to bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.”

Verse 20: “Where *is the wise?* Where *is the* scribe? Where *is the* disputer of this age? Did not God make foolish the wisdom of this world? For since in the wisdom of God the world through *its own* wisdom did not know God, it pleased God to save those who believe through the foolishness of preaching.”

That sure is true today! All their great pronouncements! What you need to do is take God’s perspective. When you see some great thing pronounced on television or some great teacher pronounces something with great aplomb, just listen and wait and see. Be patient, it may take some time. It may take years. But sooner or later you’re going to find out that this Scripture is true. That’s why God has done what He has done.

That’s why the world is not filled with Churches of God today. In the wisdom of men they want to go one better than God. It all began with Cain.

Verse 21: “For since in the wisdom of God the world through *its own* wisdom did not know God...” See Rom. 1. They knew God but they exchanged the Truth of God for a lie. Look what happened; we see it happening in the world today. ‘We don’t need God; we’ll take care of ourselves. Everything will be just fine.’ Not only their wisdom, but also their behavior. God has a very special way

of doing it; a small, little virus.

I have two books that are good for teenagers, both by Rick Jones:

1. *Stairway to Hell*
2. *How to be a Successful Teenager*

In *Stairway to Hell* the author says that the only way to have safe-sex is sex in marriage, which is true. The blessing of God for sex in marriage is what God created.

- no venereal disease, of which in the world there are over 60
- no mental illness because of the fear and perversion
- no corruption of the mind because of live pornography

God's way is right. But the world says that's foolishness. The world says, 'Our wisdom is that we'll have the medicine; we'll figure it out; we'll get a cure for AIDS.' Never happen! They may be able to prolong the life, but guess what's going to happen? *It's going to mutate into a stronger strain.* He's done that with everything; those who reject God!

"...it pleased God to save those who believe through the foolishness of preaching.... [who really believe in Christ; to the world that's foolishness] ...For *the Jews* require a sign... [didn't do any good] ...and *the Greeks* seek after wisdom... [but they know nothing] ...**but we proclaim Christ crucified. To the Jews it is a cause of offense, and to the Greeks it is foolishness**" (vs 21-23). 'Our gods are better.'

What did they do with the false Christianity? *They took all the ancient philosophies and superimposed it upon Christianity and now they have the big Babylon the Great out there!*

Verse 24: "But to those who are called—both Jews and Greeks—Christ *is* God's power and God's wisdom." You need to understand that in your life; it's through Christ that you have the power of God:

- the power to overcome
 - the power to change
 - the power that God gives through His Holy Spirit that you are converted
- and the wisdom of God:*
- that you know how to live your life
 - that you understand the right and proper things in life

Verse 25: "Because the foolishness of

God is wiser than men... [if there be any foolishness with God] ...and the weakness of God is stronger than men.... [that is if there be any weakness of God] ...For you see your calling, brethren..." (vs 25-26).

Here's how Paul started out. This is the foundation and framework that he wanted them to understand so that when he got to 1-Cor. 14 then they would be willing to understand and the important thing is your relationship with God and understanding the Word of God.

"...that *there are* not many who are wise according to the flesh..." We're all really, when you come down to it. I remember just driving down the road after all the trials and everything that I'd gone through, I just prayed and said, 'God, teach me how to think; I don't know how to think. I'm making so many stupid and dumb mistakes, I don't know where to begin.' God has to give it to us.

"...not many who are powerful..." *No!* A lot of us have afflictions.

"...not many who are highborn *among you*" (v 26). Are there any princes or princesses among us, any relation to the throne of England? *No!*

Verse 27: "Rather, God has chosen the foolish things of the world..." Sometimes we have a hard time getting along. That's why we need to be converted, so we can get along.

"...so that He might put to shame those who are wise..." They're not going to be confounded until the resurrection, then it's going to blow them away!

"...and God has chosen the weak things of the world..." They would look at someone like a 91-year-old who is weak and frail and just discount them entirely.

"...so that He might put to shame the strong things" (v 27). How many great basketball or football players do we have? *None!*

Verse 28: "And the lowborn of the world... [those that are rejected] ...and the despised has God chosen—even the things that are counted as nothing—..."

- Who are these people?
- Who is this little church, wherever it may be?

The Catholics and the Jesuits survey their conquest of the world.

- Who are these little people, just little flies to annoy us?

- ✓ We'll get them one day!
- ✓ They're nothing!

But God has called us who are nothing, "...in order that He might bring to nothing the things that are" (v 28).

Remember Rev. 3, God is going to cause those of the synagogue of Satan to come and worship before our feet. Just think of it this way: One day, everyone who is in the U.N. today is going to come and worship before the feet of the saints of God, to acknowledge that they are of God and that they are wrong!

- today, they're the mighty
- today, they're the powerful

That's why it's imperative that Christ be *in us* and we be *converted*! God has given us a great and fantastic calling. Here's the reason:

Verse 29: "So that no flesh might glory in His presence." That's the lesson that Job had to learn. Job couldn't understand why God would do to him the things that He did, because, after all, he [Job] was so great. *No flesh is going to glory!*

No one is going to say, 'God, I knew You had to call me because I was this and that or the other thing.' Be guaranteed, God isn't going to call that person! That's what repentance is all about, that you come to repent, and you understand your calling.

Verse 30: "But you are of Him in Christ Jesus, Who was made to us wisdom from God, even righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption; so that, as it is written, 'The one who glories, let him glory in *the Lord*'" (vs 30-31). *Everything that we do comes to be for the glory of God!*

Not that we set out to: 'Oh, God I'm going to glorify You.' No, but you love God, you serve Him and you love the brethren and do the things that are right. You ask God for His help, His blessing, Spirit and understanding. We glorify in God!

1-Corinthians 2:9: "But according as it is written... [this is what God wants to do for all of those whom He's called]: ...*The eye has not seen... [not going to come through human perception] ...nor the ear heard... [it's not going to come from hearing the philosophies of men] ...neither have entered into the heart of man... [that's because he's not capable of thinking the thoughts of God on his own] ...the things which God has prepared for those who love Him.*"

That's why Paul started out this way: for them to really focus on Christ. This is a great, great key in understanding. Whenever you have problem

you need to overcome, first come to Christ, then go to the prophet.

Verse 10: "But God has revealed *them* to us by His Spirit..." The things that he gives to us and we understand that the knowledge and the Truth comes from God.

"...for the Spirit searches all things—even the deep things of God" (v 10). Here we are at the end-time right now. Just exactly how it's all going to play out we'll have to wait and see.

So, we have on the one hand a world that is headlong leaving God. And we have those whom God has called that He wants to give them the deep understanding of His Word. *What a contrast!* That is an amazing thing to contemplate.

That's what God is doing, and that's the whole purpose of the book of 1-Corinthians.

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

Scriptural References:

- 1) 1-Corinthians 11:17-19
- 2) 1 Corinthians 14:17-22
- 3) Acts 2:1-13
- 4) 1 Corinthians 14:22-29
- 5) 1 Thessalonians 5:21
- 6) 1 Corinthians 14:30-33
- 7) 1 Timothy 2:9-15
- 8) 1 Corinthians 14:34-40
- 9) 1 Corinthians 1:18-31
- 10) 1 Corinthians 2:9-12

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Genesis 9
- John 7-9
- Romans 1
- Revelation 3

Also referenced:

- Sermon Series: *Refuting Sunday-Keeping*
- Sermon: *The Administration of Death*
- Books:
 - ✓ *Sunday Facts and Sabbath Fiction* by Russell Tardo
 - ✓ *The Stairway to Hell* by Rick Jones
 - ✓ *How to be a Successful Teenager* by Rick Jones

FRC:bo
Transcribed: 4-26-15

First Corinthians 15 & 16

Fred R. Coulter

Greetings, everyone! Welcome to Sabbath services! This Sabbath we're going to do a verse-by-verse study of 1-Cor. 15. The reason that I'm doing it so we can finish the series that we have, going through 1-Cor.

I actually went through the first six chapters in the Corinthians series long time ago. Then Jim, in compiling everything, was able to get 7-14, but we're missing chapters 15 and 16. Sixteen does not have very much in the way of things that you need to know.

But fifteen is very important. What you will do, if you look at the *Fourteen Rules of Bible Study*, we will go through it just exactly according to the rules of Bible study. That should apply every time you want to do an in-depth study. There may be some things you want to know, that you've had questions about, but you don't know how to answer them.

1-Corinthians 15:1: "Now, I am declaring to you, brethren, the *same* Gospel that I proclaimed to you, which you also received, *and* in which you are now standing." That's very interesting! There are two things you stand in which also means under, because they come from God:

1. the Gospel
2. the grace of God

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 **in which we stand...**"

That's very important, because the Gospel brings us the grace of God and we stand in grace. When you go through the series, *Grace Upon Grace*, you will see that God has put us in a special category that no one else in the world has any entitlement to. That is to have the Holy Spirit of God and direct connection with God the Father in heaven above.

We just saw what the likeness of the Holy of Holies is going to be in the coming temple in Jerusalem. On the Day of Atonement we learn that the high priest only went into the Holy of Holies *one day a year*.

However, with *grace upon grace*—standing in the grace, standing in the Gospel—we have access to God the Father and Jesus Christ 24/7 through prayer. That's something to really contemplate and think about, and how much hope this is to give us when we look out and see how things are going in the world.

1-Corinthians 15:2: "By which you are also being saved... [by the Gospel; that's the way it is in the Greek] ...if you are holding fast *the* words that I proclaimed to you; otherwise you have believed in vain."

Sidebar: 1st & 2nd-Cor. are filled with so many problems and difficulties, I just imagine that the Apostle Paul from time-to-time when he was praying to God, said, 'God, why did you give me all these problems in this Church?' The answer is that covers every single problem—plus other Epistles of Paul covering other problems—that we will have in our Christian lives at any time in the history of true Christianity. We have the answers for it right here:

Verse 2: "By which you are also being saved... [this is present-tense passive; it is being accomplished] ...**if** you are holding fast *the* words that I proclaimed to you..." This also tells us why:

- Bible study is so important
- knowing and understanding the Word of God is important
- living in the grace of God and by the words and commandments of God are very important

1-Corinthians 1:18: "For to those who are perishing..."—the people in the world, the Greeks especially. You talk about intellectual vanity, the Greeks had the highest scale of that with their philosophers and everything that they had intellectually. They had some very complicated things that they invented.

They have found a very precision machine that is calculating time, that has many gears. It was found at the bottom of the Aegean Sea near Greece. And was also used for navigation. So, this whole thing that the people back in Jesus' time were a bunch of ignorant fools running around with used burlap bags for clothes and had long hair, because they didn't know how to cut it, etc. *is foolishness*.

"...the preaching of the cross is foolishness..." (v 18). 'You believe in Someone Who gave His life so that you can have your sins forgiven? Compared to our great philosophies?' *Nonsense!*

"...but to us who are being saved..." (v 18). This tells us *salvation is a process!* Protestantism falls absolutely flat on their nose, because they think, 'once saved-always saved, and all you have to do is say I believe in Jesus. Jesus forgives my sins and it's done.' *Not so!*

Let's see why it is a process. Consider this, Peter tells us we are to 'grow in grace and knowledge.' If we're to grow in grace and knowledge, how is it that salvation is so simple and instantaneous? *It's not! It's a process! You are being saved!*

Ephesians 2:8: "For by grace... [because God has reached down here to call you with His Spirit] ...you have been saved..." That is past-tense right there. *You have been saved!* But the question is: From what?

Verse 1: "Now you were dead in trespasses and sins." When the man said, 'I'll follow you, Lord, but let me bury my father,' Jesus said, 'Let the dead bury their dead.' Everyone that does not have the Spirit of God is as good as dead, just a matter of time.

Verse 2: "In which you walked in times past... [walking in your sins, living in them] ...according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now working within the children of disobedience." We have been saved from Satan the devil *and* from our past sins. ***But we have to grow in grace and knowledge and develop the character of God!*** That's the whole purpose of grace in the New Testament.

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, and were by nature *the* children of wrath, even as the rest of *the* world." *This is what we have been saved from!* We have not received the completion of salvation, and that does not come until the first resurrection.

Verse 8: "...and this *especially* is not of your own selves; *it is* the gift of God, not of works..." (vs 8-9)—***your*** works. 'Oh, Lord, look what I did for You; isn't that wonderful? Nobody ever did this.'

"...so that no one may boast" (v 9). Just think if Job would have made it on his own!

Verse 10: "For we are **His workmanship, being created** ..." A ***process*** of creation! Why is it process? ***Because it is in our mind and heart with God's Spirit!*** That takes:

- time
- living
- faith
- study
- prayer
- understanding

"...in Christ Jesus unto *the* good works..." (v 10). ***If*** you do your own works, that's not going to do

anything toward salvation. But ***if*** you keep the commandments of God, whose work is it? *The good works from God!* That's why when you read Rev. 2 & 3, Jesus says, '*I know your works and I judge you by your works.*'

If our works are our own, carnally speaking, we haven't built any spiritual character. So we ***are being created*** with God's Spirit to develop the character of God so that when the resurrection takes place we will be ready for a spirit-mind and body.

Verse 10: "For we are His workmanship, being created in Christ Jesus unto *the* good works that God ordained beforehand in order that we might walk in them."

1-Corinthians 15:2: "By which you are also being saved, if you are holding fast *the* words that I proclaimed to you; otherwise you have believed in vain. For in the first place, I delivered to you what I also had received: that Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures" (vs 2-3).

This has to be New Testament Scriptures. No place in the Old Testament does it say, 'The Messiah will be in heart of the earth three days and three nights.' The only one that said that was Jesus Himself. How do we know that's not Old Testament Scripture? Remember what I brought out about the ministers of the Word were writing it down, as Jesus was teaching, and the events were occurring.

I hope to get that book real soon *Jesus' Stenographers* by B.J.E. Van Noort (a Dutchman) [transcriber's correction of title] He has a chapter on how they took shorthand. Again, everything about the time of Christ is cast into the 'just evolved out of the caveman era.' ***Not true!***

1-Timothy 6:3: "If anyone teaches any different doctrine, and does not adhere to sound words, *even those* of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the doctrine *that is* according to Godliness."

He's talking to people in Ephesus who never heard Jesus. This tells us they had the Gospels written by the time he wrote this, which was in about 62_{A.D.} Very important to understand.

1-Corinthians 15:3: "...Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures." If they were ministers of the Word, what they were writing became Scriptures.

We have other prophecies in the Old Testament about the resurrection: 'I will rejoice when I awake in your likeness' (Psa. 17). But that doesn't tell how many days, how many nights in the grave.

Verse 4: "And that He was buried; and that He was raised the third day... [which is all about the

Gospels] ...according to the Scriptures; and that He appeared to Cephas, *and* then to the twelve. Then He appeared to over five hundred brethren at one time..." (vs 4-6). That's when He was on the mount in Galilee. Imagine what that would have been like? Imagine what those 500 thought?

"...of whom the greater part are alive until now, but some have fallen sleep. Next He appeared to James; then to all the apostles; and last of all He appeared to me also, as one who was born of a miscarriage. 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. 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" (vs 6-10).

Let's see what else Paul says. It makes you wonder why those who say that 'the Gospels were only orally transmitted for over 300 years.' Sometimes if you have people sitting in a circle, and you whisper something in the ear of one, and he whispers it to the ear of the other around the circle, it gets mixed up. How long would that take? Five minutes? What about 300 years? *It was written down!*

Think of this: ***The coming of Jesus Christ, His first coming, was a most important event in the history of the world up until that time!*** You think God would leave it to people in their imaginations? *No!* Likewise with Paul; he was called out of sequence with the other apostles.

Galatians 1:6: "I am astonished that you are so quickly being turned away from Him Who called you into *the* grace of Christ, to a different gospel, which *in reality* is not another *Gospel*... [there is only one and that began with Christ] ...but there are some who are troubling you and are desiring to pervert the Gospel of Christ" (vs 6-7).

- Have we experienced that?
- Have we lived through that? *Yes, indeed!*

But notice what he says. How important is the Word of God? I can tell you this, this was one of the guiding things that I was following when I was translating the New Testament, and then later as much I could, the Old Testament with the help of Michael Heiss.

Verse 8: "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!" That's very emphatic in the Greek: ***Accursed!*** That means *let him be thrown in the Lake of Fire!*

How important is it to stay true to the Word of God? ***Absolutely important!***

Verse 9: "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! Now then, am I striving to please men, or God?... [you can't do both] ...Or am I motivated to please men? For if I am yet pleasing men, I would not be a servant of Christ" (vs 9-10).

What happened to so many of the ministers who were trying to please men? I remember one time I was sitting in the auditorium in Pasadena and all they did was praise the founder of it. Every other sentence had his name in it. So, one Sabbath I decided to do a little score keeping. I put the name of the founder of that church and the so-called apostle, abbreviation H.W.A. The next column I put Jesus Christ. I did tick marks. How many for the founder? *111 in an hour and a half sermon!* Was that seeking to please men? *Yes, indeed! Less than 25 for Jesus Christ!* I think that is illustrative. Where is that man now? He is not a servant of Christ; he is gone!

Verse 11: "But I certify to you, brethren, that the Gospel that was preached by me is not according to man; because neither did I receive it from man, nor was I taught *it by man*; rather, *it was* by *the* revelation of Jesus Christ" (vs 11-12). Paul says in another place that he was down in Arabia and he was there for three and a half years.

Verse 13: "For you heard of my former conduct when I was in Judaism, how I was excessively persecuting the Church of God and was destroying it; 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" (vs 13-14). Trying to please men to get number one!

Verse 15: "But when it pleased God, Who selected me from my mother's womb, and called *me* by His grace." Paul's calling was very ungracious. He was knocked flat to the ground, made blind for three days.

Verse 16: "To reveal His own Son in me, in order that I might preach Him as the Gospel among the Gentiles..."

Also, Paul was from the tribe of Benjamin, the smallest tribe and the last son of Jacob. God, many times, takes small things, that which is least. Paul was like that.

"...I did not immediately confer with flesh and blood, nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those *who were* apostles before me; but I went away into Arabia, and returned again to Damascus. Then, after three years, I went up to Jerusalem to become

acquainted with Peter... [imagine what a shock that was] ...and I remained with him fifteen days” (vs 17-18). So, the Gospel that Christ gave to Paul was exactly the same one He taught the twelve apostles.

Sidebar: Someone wrote me a note and said, ‘When I read about New Jerusalem, all twelve of the apostles are listed as part of the foundation. I didn’t see the name of that man who proclaimed himself to be an apostle. What do you think?’ I answered back and said, ‘We better stick with the Word of God, but I can tell you one thing, any self-appointed apostle is in deep trouble.’

1-Corinthians 15:11: “Now then, whether I or they, so we preach, and so you have believed. But if Christ is being preached, that He rose from *the* dead...” Notice that in the Church Paul had a hard time convincing them of the resurrection. If you read some of the Greek philosophies you’ll understand. This is the very problem in Christianity today. They believe in going to heaven, no resurrection.

In the book, *My Catholic Faith*, it’s ridiculous to read how the souls in heaven come back into the bodies that have long disintegrated in the earth for the resurrection. An impossibility! No resurrection of the dead.

Then he makes it absolutely clear, v 13: “For if there is no resurrection from *the* dead, neither has Christ been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching *is* in vain, and your faith *is* also in vain” (vs 13-14). {2-Cor. 11 about everything he went through as an apostle.}

Do you think that if the resurrection were not true, that if he didn’t see Jesus Christ and got the Gospel from Him, that he would have endured any of those things listed in 2-Cor. 11? *I say no!*

Verse 15: “And we are also found *to be* false witnesses of God... [and God cannot lie] ...because we have testified of God that He raised Christ, Whom He did not raise, if indeed *the* dead are not raised. For if the dead are not raised, neither has Christ been raised. 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.... [gone forever] ...If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all people most miserable” (vs 15-19).

God wants the Gospel preached, He wants the Word to go out. Paul *did not know* it’s going to be nearly 2,000 years.

Verse 20: “But now Christ has been raised from *the* dead; He has become the Firstfruit of those who have fallen asleep.”

What do we have in Lev. 23? We have the Wave-Sheaf Offering, the first of the firstfruits. That’s symbolic of Christ’s resurrection. We have a continuous count beginning with that day up to day-50, and that’s the finality of the harvest, which is the harvest of the rest of the firstfruits. So, if you want to stop here and go get one of the sermons on Pentecost, that will fill in the blanks.

Verse 21: “For since by man *came* death, by Man also *came the* resurrection of *the* dead. For as in Adam all die...” (vs 21-22).

When you go through the genealogy of Jesus Christ, that is beginning through *Mary’s father*. Joseph was the son-in-law of Mary’s father, and that is properly translated Joseph the son-in-law of Eli^[transcriber’s correction; Luke 3:23]. Then it goes to Eli’s father, and all the way down to Adam, the son of God. That’s why it’s important that it go back there. That shows that Christ fulfilled the prophecy of the Messiah, to Adam and to Eve.

Once you get into the Bible and put all of these things together, it becomes absolutely a fantastic, wonderful thing to understand.

Romans 5:12: “Therefore, as by one man sin entered into the world...” I don’t know how it would have worked out, but what if when Eve picked the fruit, and Adam would have said, rather than watching what she was doing to see if anything would happen to her, if he would have said, ‘Eve, leave that alone.’ I wonder how the human race would have turned out. Maybe a great deal differently.

We’ve got a sermon also online, *What Would the World have been Like **IF** Adam and Eve had not Sinned?* I suppose it would be very much like it’s going to be in the Millennium. By one man, through him and Eve we have—all of us—‘the law of sin and death.’

“...and by means of sin *came* death; and in this way death passed into... [Greek—‘eis’] ...all mankind; *and it is* for this reason that all have sinned” (v 12). That’s why it has to come through Christ.

1-Corinthians 15:22: “For as in Adam all die...” Then we also have where Paul wrote, ‘It’s given to men once to die and after that the judgment.’ All die, every human being!

“...so also in Christ shall all be made alive” (v 22). That means everyone. When you understand the second resurrection and you understand that part of the second resurrection for the resurrection of the wicked, *they are all made alive*. Those in the second resurrection to receive salvation, they’ll have an opportunity. The wicked who are resurrected are all brought back to life so that they are all judged at

once and thrown into the Lake of Fire altogether—all!

Verse 23: “But each in his own order: Christ *the* Firstfruit; then, those who are Christ’s at His coming.” Nothing in between! Those who are Christ’s at His coming are called the firstfruits and they are in the first resurrection.

Verse 24: “Afterwards the end *comes*...” John fills us in with more information, because Paul did not understand the second resurrection. The only thing he wrote about was ‘all Israel shall be saved’ (Rom. 11).

Then he says the greatness of God, the mercy, the compassion, and everything. But no one knew until John was given the revelation of what we have (Rev. 20). The first resurrection, those are Christ’s. Then we have the statement, ‘but the rest of the dead lived not again till the thousand years have been finished.’

Verse 24: “Afterwards the end *comes*, when He shall have delivered up the kingdom to Him Who is God and Father, when He shall have put an end to all rule... [the rule of man, the rule of Satan] ...and all authority and power. For it is ordained that He reign until He has put all enemies under His feet. *The last enemy to be destroyed is death*” (vs 24-26).

I want to show you something in Rev. 20. Keep this mind for any of your Baptist friends who believe in an ever-burning hell. Last enemy: *death*!

Revelation 20:14: “And death and *the* grave were cast into the Lake of Fire. This is the second death.” In the *King James* it reads, “And death and hell...” What is hell to the Protestants and Catholics? That’s a place of ever-burning fire. But the Greek word ‘hades’ means *grave*, not hell.

Question for them: Why would God cast ever-burning fire into ever-burning fire? How can you cast hell into ever-burning fire? The Lake of Fire is eventually going to burn out. This is the second death! If there is a second death that means that those who suffer the second death they had to live twice. So, they are included in the phrase ‘*all shall be made alive*.’

That’s why it’s important for all of to really learn the Bible, so we will not be intimidated with smart questions by people who don’t know the Bible. If we know it, what are they going to say?

1-Corinthians 15:26: “*The last enemy to be destroyed is death*. For He has put all things in subjection under His feet. But when it is said that all things have been put in subjection, *it is* clearly evident that *it does* not include Him [God the Father]

Who put all things in subjection under Him” (vs 26-27).

(go to the next track)

Now we’re going to cover something that is very important. One of the central doctrines of the Mormon Church is ‘baptisms for the dead.’ That’s why they are such ardent genealogists. They have the greatest genealogy capacity of anybody in the world.

They claim that people can be baptized for their relatives, or other people, so that they will receive salvation—they baptize for George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, etc. I wonder if anybody was for Judas?—because of the way it’s translated in the *King James Version*.

The whole topic in 1-Cor. 15 is the resurrection. Why can you not be baptized for other people so that they can be saved? *Because it has to be you!* Baptism alone is not enough. So, for them to take it and say, ‘This is a doctrine. We now baptize for people who have been dead’...

I remember one woman, when we were in Salt Lake, she asked to be visited by a minister and I was the minister, so we came in and we started talking. She told me why she had left the Mormon Church, because she was going over to the local church, which was not too far away, but it was a snowy day. They were going to have a baptism for different people there to baptize 200 people that day. To be baptized *for* 200 other people, long dead.

She was the only one there and she went through 200 baptisms. She said, ‘I felt like I was drowning going through that.’ That’s as bad as water-boarding. The only thing you have to do is provide the word, like in 1-Cor. 15:29 *resurrection* in italics. That’s what it is referring to all the way through. So, when you do that, that eliminates that false interpretation.

1-Corinthians 15:29: “Otherwise, what shall they do who have been baptized for the *resurrection of the dead*... [that’s what you’re baptized for, *the resurrection*] ...if *the* dead are not raised at all? Why then are they baptized for the *resurrection of the dead*?” Let’s see that it’s necessary to be baptized so you can be saved.

Mark 16:15: “And He [Jesus] said to them, ‘Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to the whole creation. The one who believes...’” (vs 15-16). You have to be alive so you can believe. A dead person can’t believe anything. If you believe in the immortality of the soul, if they’re already in heaven, why do you have to be baptized for them?

Verse 16: “The one who believes and is baptized shall be saved...” *Baptism is necessary for*

salvation, but also standing in the Gospel and living by the Gospel is all necessary.

“...shall be saved, but the one who does not believe shall be condemned” (v 16).

1-Corinthians 15:30 is sort of an encapsulation or summary of everything: “Why are we also in danger every hour? I die daily by our boasting, which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord” (vs 30-31).

What does he mean “...die daily...”? Jesus said, ‘*No one can come to Me unless he hates his father, mother, brother, sister, children, lands, and also his own life, and does not carry his cross, cannot follow Me!*’ How do you die every day? *The truth is physically you are dying every day!* Of the trillions of cells that you have, every seven years they’re completely replaced. That’s why seven years later you look a little older than you were the seven years before.

Remember, all of what we are and every process that’s going on in the body came from a speck of dust. Paul says, “...I die daily...” I tell you, Paul really had a difficult life. He had to be exceedingly strong in order to go through this:

2-Corinthians 4:8: “On every *side we are* hard pressed, but not crushed; perplexed, but not despairing; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed” (vs 8-9)—which shows that God is going to see you through every difficulty, regardless of how hard it is.

Verse 10: “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. 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; but if our outward man is being brought to decay, yet, the inward *man* is being renewed day-by-day” (vs 10-16).

In Galatians he says that he *dies daily*. How is that accomplished? *By repentance, overcoming and always moving ahead every day!*

There’s one thing the athletes have correct: Don’t let the poor game of yesterday tarnish the

game today. Take everything day-by-day; likewise with us. What we did yesterday is already over and done, it’s gone. There isn’t anything you can do. Now, if it was not a good day, you can repent of it today. But if you *die daily* that means that ***you’re putting to death the works of the flesh within your mind!*** That’s what it means.

1-Corinthians 15:31: “I die daily by our boasting, which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord. If I fought as a man with beasts in Ephesus, what *did it* profit me, if *the* dead are not raised? Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die. Do not be deceived; evil companionship corrupts good behavior. Awake to righteousness, and do not sin, for some *of you* do not have the knowledge of God. I say *this* to your shame” (vs 31-34). Isn’t that true with some people in the Church? *Yes, indeed!*

Verse 35: “Nevertheless, someone will say, ‘How are the dead raised?... [a mystery of God] ...And with what body do they come?’” If you’re lost at sea and the sharks ate you up, how are you going to be resurrected? ***or*** If you died and everything is gone to dust, how are you going to be resurrected? ***The spirit of man!***

What did Jesus say just before He died? ‘*Father, into Your hands I commit My spirit!*’ That substantiates Ecc. 12 where it says when we die the spirit goes back to God Who gave it. It’s not resurrected in the same body or the same flesh. Where does that spirit go? Just like I explained before, in these envelopes I have these little chips. I can record the sermon on it. Everything is recorded on this chip. But if I don’t have a player, it’s worthless.

Likewise with the *spirit of man*, which I’m writing about for the letter in August, quite considerably, to show that *life begins at the instant of conception!* That’s it! Heb. 12 gives us an indication. The spirit goes back to God and when you stop and think about it, aren’t there a lot of things taking place through the power of God, that the power is so slight, you don’t even notice it?

Like right here, right in this room, what do we have? *Radio waves, television waves, light waves coming down upon us!* There’s the machine going, we can hear that, for air conditioning. If we had the right tuner, we could tune into every one of those things. But you have to have the right tuner.

When you die, *the spirit goes back to God!* The spirit has no consciousness, because it’s just the spirit of man. The spirit of man cannot function without a brain anymore than you can listen to this chip without a player. What does God do?

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; and to *the* spirits of the just who have been perfected” (vs 22-23).

When we die, and the spirit goes back to God, it has been perfected. It’s waiting for the resurrection. God has to put it into a spirit body and spirit mind. Exactly how He’s going to do that I do not know. I don’t know how He’s going to do it in relationship to the grave, in relationship to where you died or any of those things. He doesn’t tell us.

We know the activity of giving us spirit life is going to take place on the earth, because we’re going to be carried up into where the Sea of Glass is. I can’t answer all those questions, because God has all that already worked out. The only ones that we can talk about, that we know, are those who are still alive and they are changed after everybody else has been resurrected.

1-Corinthians 15:35: “...And with what body do they come?” *A new body!* Isn’t that going to be great? Here we are, we’ve got a lot of people in the Church now that are reaching the finish line. Same way with the veterans of WWII, they’re reaching the finish line. God intends we reach the finish line and we die and our spirit goes back to God. We’re not coming back in the same body, couldn’t be, because that one’s already gone and disintegrated, whether buried, burned, or eaten by sharks.

Can you imagine the intellectual arguments they were having about, ‘How is the resurrection going to occur?’ So, Paul says:

Verse 36: “Fool! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies.” That’s an amazing thing! Take any seed, you can keep that as long as you like. It has everything in it that it will be, but cannot become that until it’s put in the ground and given water. What is in the ground and what is in the water that says to the seed *grow* I don’t know. But that’s an every-day occurrence. Every seed!

You look at some seeds, like I did with the ones from the sequoia tree, it’s no bigger than a grain of wheat, but that can grow to be over hundreds and hundreds of feet tall and live to be thousands of years old. But it’s in a very small seed. What does God need to give us eternal life? *A new body and a new mind*, the perfected spirit that He’s got stored there probably right close to His altar. Who knows, I don’t know!

Verse 37: “And what you sow *is* not the body that shall be; rather, *it is* bare grain—it may be of wheat, or one of the other *grains*.” So you put it in the ground, it is all consumed in the process of sprouting and growing. Then the head has between 30-100 kernels in it.

Verse 38: “And God gives it a body according to His will... [what He put into it] ...and to each of the seeds its own body. *Likewise*, not all flesh *is* the same flesh. Rather, *there is* one flesh of men, and another flesh of beasts, and another of fish, and another of birds” (vs 38-39). All different kinds!

Verse 40: “And *there are* heavenly bodies, and earthly bodies...” Now we can see more of the heavenly bodies with all the technology we have today. Sometimes when you see that you think, ‘I wonder what it’s going to be like traveling in the universe.’ We’re going to live forever, so it doesn’t matter how far away it is. How fast does a spirit being travel? Faster than the speed of light? *Don’t know!* But we’ll find out at the resurrection.

“...but the glory of the heavenly *is* different, and the *glory* of the earthly *is* different. *There is* one glory of *the* sun, and another glory of *the* moon, and another glory of *the* stars; for *one* star differs from *another* star in glory” (vs 40-41). They had a lot of understanding, didn’t they? *Yes, indeed!*

Verse 42: “So also *is* the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption... [you’re weak, you die, you’re gone] ...it is raised in incorruption... [that’s going to be a spectacular operation] ...It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power” (vs 42-43).

Every time I perform a funeral ceremony I think about that. Here’s this person, whether I knew him or not, they were alive once, now they are gone. They’re just a body. It’s going to completely disintegrate. So what’s it going to be at the resurrection? *Quite a fantastic thing!* Think of the calling and the hope that God has given us. It’s just mind-blowing!

Verse 44: “It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body....” Think about that! When there is conception, everything that that person is going to be is right there, *likewise spiritually!* When we develop the character that God wants, there’s everything that He has done with us through our physical lives. All of this is recorded on *the spirit of man*.

We are not going to be born again into the Kingdom of God at the resurrection as infants, *but as full spirit beings*. How God is going to do that, that has to be connected to our original genes and chromosomes, and conversion with God’s Spirit. Has to be!

Verse 45: “Accordingly, it is written, ‘The first man, Adam, became a living soul; the last Adam *became* an ever-living Spirit.’ However, the spiritual *was* not first, but the natural—then the spiritual” (vs 45-46).

The ancient philosophers say, ‘We came from star dust up in heaven.’ The Mormons say that human bodies are ‘possessed by a spirit that was in heaven with God and possesses a human body.’ So, they are saying the spiritual is first, contrary to the Word of God. *The physical is first—the natural—then the spiritual!*

Verse 48: “As *is* the one made of dust, so also *are all* those who are made of dust; and as *is* the heavenly *One* [Christ] so also *are all* those who are heavenly.” Hasn’t happened yet, but it’s going to.

Verse 49: “And as we have borne the image of the *one* made of dust [Adam] we shall also bear the image of the heavenly *One* [Christ]. Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit *the* Kingdom of God... [not possible because it is a *spiritual* kingdom, not a *physical* kingdom] ... nor does corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I show you a mystery... [it is a mystery, a secret of God] ... we shall not all fall asleep, but we shall all be changed” (vs 49-51).

At this point Paul didn’t understand how far off it was until the return of Christ. He was thinking it was in his lifetime and that’s reflected in their writings. Then the last of their writings with Peter and with Paul, you get the understanding that they understood there was more time.

“...but we shall all be changed. in an instant, in *the* twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for *the* trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruptibility... [that has to come from God] ...and this mortal must put on immortality. Now, when this corruptible shall have put on incorruptibility, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: ‘Death is swallowed up in victory.’” (vs 51-54). So then, death is nothing!

Verse 55: “O death, where is your sting? O grave, where is your victory?” Now the sting of death *is* sin, and the power of sin *is* the Law. But thanks *be* to God, Who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ So then, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in *the* Lord” (vs 55-58).

So that’s quite a chapter, isn’t it? *Yes, indeed.* This tells us a lot of things.

In the first part of 1-Cor.16 is where the Protestants get going to church on Sunday and taking up a collection. Nothing could be further from the truth.

1-Corinthians 16:1: “Now, concerning the collection that *is being made* for the saints...” You have to read in 2-Cor. what it is all about. There was a famine down in the area of Jerusalem. They were growing food, getting it ready to send. They would send grain, raisins, probably other dried foods, figs, fruits, vegetables, maybe even dried meats. But a lot of them had to go out and plant the wheat, let it grow and then harvest the wheat and get it ready. It was a whole year-long project. So, they were doing many things.

“...as I directed the churches in Galatia, so you also are to do. Every first *day* of the week... [weekly on the first day of the week] ... each one is to put aside *food* at home...” (vs 1-2)—because that’s what he’s talking about. He says so:

2-Corinthians 9:5: “Therefore, I thought *it* necessary to exhort the brethren to go ahead *of us* to you, and to complete the *preparations* of this your bounty beforehand... [to get it all ready to go when he came] ...since you had already proclaimed *a willingness*; so that it might be *received* as a blessing, and not as *it were of* covetousness. But this *I say*: the one who sows sparingly shall also reap sparingly...” (vs 5-6). If you want to send a big offering down to Jerusalem, you plant a lot of seed.

“...and the one who sows bountifully shall also reap bountifully. Each one as he purposes in his heart, *so let him give*, but not grudgingly or by compulsion; for God loves a cheerful giver. For God *is* able to make all grace abound toward you so that in every way you may always have sufficiency...” (vs 6-8).

Don’t worry about what you have after you give the offering, because God is going to provide you plenty. What example do we have? *The example of the manna!* Everybody had plenty.

Verse 9: “According as it is written: ‘He has scattered abroad, *and* he has given to the poor; his righteousness remains forever.’ Now, may He Who supplies seed to the sower, and bread to eat, supply *your seed* and multiply your sowing; and may He increase the fruits of your righteousness... [the gift that is going to Jerusalem] ...*so that you may* in every way be enriched unto all bountifulness, which causes thanksgiving to God through us” (vs 9-11).

So, this is what they were doing, preparing. This was the plan: every first day of the week, at home, you gather it. You get it ready, so that when

it's ready to ship 'we won't have to come up and do anything.'

1-Corinthians 16:3: "And when I come, whomever you approve in *your* letters, these are the ones I will send to carry your bounty to Jerusalem."

Think of this: If the Protestants want to take this literally, then every Sunday gather up your collection and send it to Jerusalem. The only church that wouldn't have to do that would be a church of New Jerusalem. There are such churches.

Verse 5: "But I will come to you after I pass through Macedonia, for I am going through Macedonia. It may be *that* I shall stay with you, or *that* I may even winter *there*, so that you may send me forth *on my journey* wherever I may go" (vs 5-6).

In other words, he's also telling them, 'Get ready to send some things with me when I go'; which would also include funds to pay for the trip on the ship. How do you think he would get around to different places? *Close by he would walk! To go from Asia Minor to Greece he would have to go on a ship!* Do you think they're going to let him come, 'Here's the Apostle Paul. Let's give him a free ride.' *No!*

Verse 7: "For *at this time* I will not *stop* to see you, but I hope at some *future* time to stay with you, if the Lord permits. But I will remain in Ephesus until Pentecost" (vs 7-8). That's where he was writing the letter from.

Verse 9: "For a great and effective door has been opened to me, and there *are* many adversaries." You read Acts 19. What a thing! There in Ephesus he set everything upside down! There were so many people converted, they were coming in and bringing their statues of Diana and all of their occult books and burning them. All of the idol-makers and silver-makers said, 'We can't have this.'

Ephesus was a big city, thousands of people. It was the center of the goddess worship in Asia Minor and a big statue of Diana. She was so fertile she had countless breasts. They actually had it so that the initiates and the devotees who would come in, they had it so that they could heat the milk and make it go up and then at the magic moment, all the milk pour out of the breasts of Diana. The people, 'Oh, what a wonderful thing that is.' What did God do to the temple? *He destroyed it!* Paul was there in Ephesus.

Verse 10: "Now, if Timothy comes, see to it that he may be with you without fear; for he labors in the work of *the* Lord, even as I *do*. Therefore, do not let anyone despise him; but send him forth *on his journey* in peace... [pay for his way to go] ...so that he may come to me; for I am waiting for him with

the brethren. Now concerning Apollos, *our* brother..." (vs 10-12).

I've often wondered about Apollos because he came from Alexandria (Acts 18). He was an eloquent man with the Scriptures. So, I've often wondered, because there's hardly anything mentioned of him later, was he one of those who became one of the false teachers? *I don't know*, but this is what he did here. This gives me cause to ask that question.

Verse 12: "Now, concerning Apollos, *our* brother, I strongly urged him to go to you with the brethren.... [to go visit them, to go with Timothy] ...However, it was not at all *his* desire to come *to you* at this time; but he will come when he has an opportunity."

That sounds like a politically correct excuse by Apollos not to do it, which makes me wonder, did he have something else in mind. *I don't know!*

Verse 13: "Be watchful; stand fast in the faith... [that's what we need to do today] ...conduct yourselves with courage. Be strong *in the Lord*." Regardless of what comes along! We don't know how things are going to go, but we can certainly look forward to some difficult times with the same-sex marriage advocates, because their goal is to destroy Christianity.

Verse 14: "Let everything you do be done in love. Now I exhort you, brethren, (You know the household of Stephanas, that it is the first fruit of Achaia, and *that* they have dedicated themselves to the service of the saints.) To submit yourselves to such *as these*, and to everyone who is working and laboring with *us*" (vs 14-16). So that everything that needs to be done can be done reasonably and decently.

Verse 17: "Now I rejoice at the coming of Stephanas and Fortunatus and Achaicus because they have made up for your deficiency." What does he mean here? Remember, he didn't take any tithes and offerings from them, because they were more willing to give them to the false ministers and apostles. So, Paul said, 'I'm not taking a dime.' Every once in a while he lets them know, 'You didn't do it.' He says, 'I wasn't burdensome to you' (2-Cor. 13), meaning, 'I didn't take from you,' with the implication, 'I should have, but didn't. Forgive me for this wrong.'

If you believe in God, and believe in the Truth, then you are going to give. You think there are going to be any freeloaders in the Kingdom of God? Look at the entitlement society we have today. Almost outnumbering the working class. *Yes, indeed!*

Verse 18: “For they refreshed my spirit and yours; therefore, recognize those *who are serving*. The churches in Asia salute you. Aquila and Priscilla salute you much in *the* Lord, together with the Church in their home.... [church at home] ...All the brethren salute you. Greet one another with a Holy kiss. The salutation of Paul by my *own* hand. If anyone does not love the Lord Jesus Christ let him be accursed. Our Lord shall come! The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you. My love *be* with you all in Christ Jesus. Amen” (vs 18-24).

That concludes the series in 1-Corinthians!

Scriptural References:

- 1) 1-Corinthians 15:1
- 2) Romans 5:1-2
- 3) 1-Corinthians 15:2
- 4) 1-Corinthians 1:18
- 5) Ephesians 2:8, 1-3, 8-10
- 6) 1-Corinthians 15:2-3
- 7) 1-Timothy 6:3
- 8) 1-Corinthians 15:3-10
- 9) Galatians 1:6-18
- 10) 1-Corinthians 15:11-22
- 11) Romans 5:12
- 12) 1-Corinthians 15:22-26
- 13) Revelation 20:14
- 14) 1-Corinthians 15:26-27, 29
- 15) Mark 16:15-16
- 16) 1-Corinthians 15:30-31
- 17) 2-Corinthians 4:8-16
- 18) 1-Corinthians 15:31-35
- 19) Hebrews 12:22-23
- 20) 1-Corinthians 15:35-58
- 21) 1-Corinthians 16:1-2
- 22) 2-Corinthians 9:5-11
- 23) 1-Corinthians 16:3, 5-24

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Revelation 2; 3
- Psalm 17
- 2-Corinthians 11
- Leviticus 23
- Romans 11
- Ecclesiastes 12
- Acts 19; 18
- 2-Corinthians 13

Also referenced:

- Sermon Series: *Grace Upon Grace*
- Sermon: *What Would the World have been Like **IF** Adam and Eve had not Sinned?*
- From *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order: Appendix A: Fourteen Rules of Bible Study*
- Books:
 - ✓ *Jesus' Stenographers* by B.J.E. Van Noort
 - ✓ *My Catholic Faith* by L. LaRavoire, S.T.D. Morrow, E. Andre

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