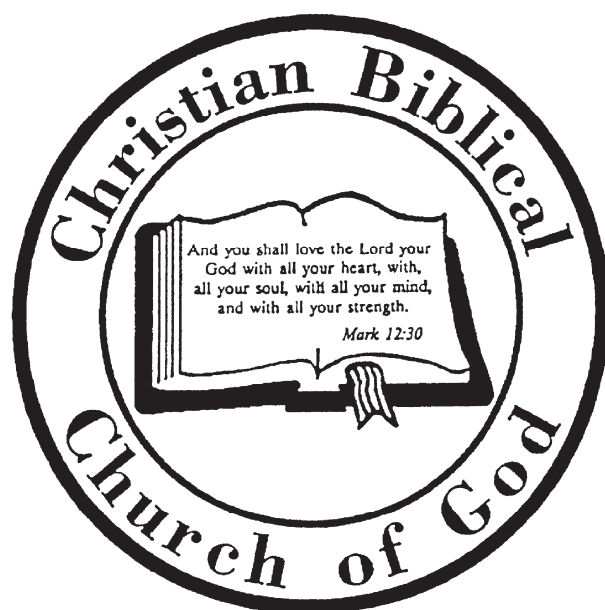


# **The Second Epistle to the Corinthians by the Apostle Paul**



**Transcript Book**

By Fred R. Coulter

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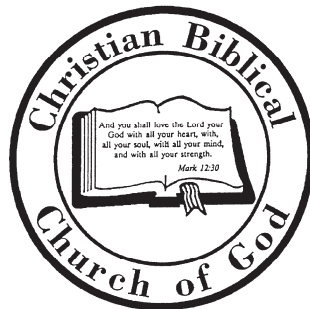
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## 2nd Corinthians

Series of 13 sermons by Fred R. Coulter



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## **Compact Discs**

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### **Disk One**

**Tracks 1 & 2 Second Corinthians I**

**Tracks 3 & 4 Second Corinthians II**

**Tracks 5 & 6 Second Corinthians III**

**Tracks 7 & 8 Second Corinthians IIIA**

**Tracks 9 & 10 Second Corinthians IV**

**Tracks 11 & 12 Second Corinthians V**

**Tracks 13 & 14 Second Corinthians VI**

### **Disk Two**

**Tracks 1 & 2 Second Corinthians VII**

**Track 3 Second Corinthians VIII**

**Tracks 4 & 5 Second Corinthians IX**

**Tracks 6 & 7 Second Corinthians X**

**Tracks 8 & 9 Second Corinthians XI**

**Tracks 10 & 11 Second Corinthians XII**

## **2nd Corinthians**

### ***Foreword***

This sermon transcript book, “The Second Epistle to the Corinthians by the Apostle Paul” is a series of 13 sermon transcripts that cover in detail what God’s servant, the Apostle Paul, said to those followers of Christ in the city of Corinth. These sermons were given by a minister in Jesus Christ for over fifty years, Mr. Fred R. Coulter. In reading these the reader will become familiar with the tactics of Satan and the fallibilities of human nature influenced by Satan along with being taught what the True Faith of the Saints of God is.

In the transcript “II Corinthians I – Background Review of I Corinthians 1-8” an in-depth review is conducted as to what the Apostle Paul said in these chapters. Some points made are:

- Billions of people have now had access to the complete Bible.
- the complete Bible was intended for those living in the end-time.
- The church in the Bible that is most like the Churches of God today is Corinth.
- The entire world worships Satan.
- Anyone who does not teach people to keep the Sabbath and to keep a Nisan 14<sup>th</sup> Passover is not of God.
- The two most important things in one’s life is love and grace.
- One needs to be renewed every day of their life.

In the transcript “II Corinthians II – Background / Review I Corinthians 8 – 15 – Comfort of God” the chapters eight through 15 of I Corinthians are examined as to what the Apostle Paul said and did. Prayer and sin are elaborated upon. Some points made are:

- People need to remember that God made everything.
- Paul had authority from God over the Corinthians—authority that he did not use such as in the area of tithing.
- The Word of God is layered, so it can have more than one fulfillment.
- There are three steps to salvation: (1) At repentance of sin and being baptized, (2) Being saved through the Gospel, which is an on-going process, and (3) Being saved at the resurrection by being resurrected as a spirit being.
- People need to know the promises of God and go to God and claim them.

In the transcript “Second Corinthians III – How God Comforts Us” the chapters one through three of II Corinthians are studied out and explained in detail. The reader of this transcript will find that they are to claim the comfort and encouragement and competency of God. The reader of this transcript will find that they are to claim the comfort and encouragement and competency of God. Some specific points mentioned are:

- As shown in chapters two and three of Revelation, Satan is there and comes back again and again.
- It may be that not much is said of Apollos by Paul because Apollos came out of Alexandria—the birthplace of a New Testament manuscript that is riddled with error—and perhaps Apollos fell into doctrinal error.
- One must prove the truth, understand the Truth, and always stick with the Truth.

- When one believes that they know the truth, and that belief is torn away with being told what you believe is wrong—one will experience torment.
- The Holy Spirit will give one comfort if one prays and does the things that God wants done.
- Sometimes it is God's Will that there is nothing to cling to except God, Who alone can give us the comfort we need!
- In the past there has been a lot of unconverted people within the Church, and when the opportunity arises for them to go back into the world, they go back into the world.
- Satan always comes along to give a benefit to those who follow him. The benefit is a reassuring lie.

The transcript "Second Corinthians III-A – The Great System of God for the New Covenant" is a study that shows laws of the Old Testament and of the New Testament that are still in force and not abolished. Important points made are:

- The ministry of death mentioned in II Corinthians 3:7 refers to those in the Old Covenant having the power of executing those guilty of capital crimes.
- God intended that every nation is sovereign and that nation to have one set of laws. It is not possible to have two sovereigns within one nation.
- Because God gave the execution of the death penalty to governments it is against the law for individuals to execute the death penalty.
- Even the Christianity of the world does some good by promoting a lower level of crime in civil society.
- When an evil thought comes into your mind you need to ask God to help you remove and control the thought.
- One is perfected by making right choices: One participates in the perfection of God's Spirit through them choosing to get rid of the evil that lies within.
- The law of sin and death within a person causes their mind to be deceitful and thoroughly wicked.
- One of the things that Satan wishes is for people to become so despondent that they kill themselves.
- It has been documented that beavers do not come out of their abode to do their daily routine of activity on the Sabbath.

The transcript "II Corinthians IV – How to Live for God in an Evil World" focuses on teaching what is found in II Corinthians Chapter four. This transcript will help those who follow Christ understand how to live in a world belonging to Satan. Other points covered are:

- In the acclaimed modern Bible translations, it has been noted that in them up to 2,900 words are missing in the New Testament.
- The Christianity of Satan's world promotes a reassuring lie, namely "God's love is unconditional, and it doesn't matter what you do as long as you're God's." And it teaches that people become part of God by standing up and making a public profession of Christ.
- Learn the truth and embrace the truth. Reject false doctrine, and in so doing you are trusting God. This is faith—and because you believe you act upon that faith—trusting God for whatever you do!



- The more of God's Word that is in one's mind, with God's Spirit, the more you will make your decisions based upon the Commandments of God.
- Religions are designed to take people away from God by improperly using the Word of God deceitfully.
- The Church of God became, a little bit at a time, so filled with carnal-ism, that it just flew apart.
- The world rejects the commands of God—the world is lawless. Those who follow Christ, who belong to Christ, they cannot change the world. The only thing that they can do is take care of their own lives.

The transcript "Second Corinthians V — Being Clothed with Christ!" is a study of things done by God for those called along with a study of God's entire plan. Other important items are:

- For people proclaiming that God the Father was the God of the Old Testament and not Jesus Christ, for this there is an answer. If God the Father was the God of the Old Testament, then the Father would have had to come and die, and not Jesus Christ for the Covenant with Old Testament Israel to be terminated.
- If one is yielded to God, then one can receive correction through study of the Bible.
- It is a perversion of the Gospel of Christ if they dishonestly preach the Word of God and preach themselves.
- When Corinthians speaks of treasure being in earthen vessels it is referring to the Spirit of God, the Knowledge of God, and the Truth of God being in a human being.
- Satan wishes to bring Saints to the condition of being weary and faint in their minds. In this way they are unable to handle things.
- Saints renew themselves, through prayer and Bible study, day by day.
- Critics, who say the Apostle John could not have authored the book of Revelation because the writing is so very different than the writing in John's other books, willingly overlook the fact that the Apostle John was the stenographer of the book of Revelation. John wrote what he was told to write by Christ.

The transcript "Second Corinthians VI – How Are You Building Your Spiritual Life?" is focused on how to grow spiritually and not taking the grace of God in vain. Important points are:

- The whole purpose of grace is being able to come to God the Father in prayer, study God's Word, and through obedience to the Word come to having a cleansed mind that can, through Jesus Christ, come to the Father with a pure heart.
- Righteousness cannot have any companionship whatsoever with lawlessness.
- In the Bible the word "perish" means to have no existence at all and no hope of resurrection.
- God does not compromise with evil—He does not let evil become joined with what He is doing.
- Those called, baptized, and having received the Holy Spirit need to know that through God's Spirit the Father and Christ both dwell in them. They are now a Temple of God—a living temple.
- The Father and Christ are there to help those of theirs internally and emotionally and mentally and spiritually and physically.

The transcript “Second Corinthians VII — Perfecting Holiness” is an in-depth study of chapter seven of II Corinthians. Attention is given unto sorrow leading to repentance with God working out salvation. Other items to be noted are:

- God the Father had to take Himself from Christ, right at the end of Christ’s ordeal, just before Christ died.
- God knows the thoughts of men and only God knows the hearts of men.
- When the Bible speaks of idols in the heart it is speaking of the deep-down secret things in the mind that are contrary to God.
- Ceremonies, such as those at the Vatican, with people waving, incense burning, and ritualistic movements, are the result of demonism.
- A lot of priests involved in ceremonial religious rituals are demon possessed, not with demons that are viciously evil, but those who think that they’re doing ‘good’ and maybe God will recognize how good they are and let them into His Kingdom.
- The Word of God, being alive, can revise your mind. A two-edged sword cannot.
- It was possible, through God’s inspiration, for 40 different writers, could write different parts of the Bible and they all agree.

The transcript “Second Corinthians VIII — Spiritual Warfare” speaks of what the whole armor of God is and how it is needed to be used if a Christian wants to survive spiritually in Satan’s world. Important things that are noted are:

- If you do not provide for the poor, God will hold it against you, and blessings will be withheld from you. The Apostle Paul saw to it that the deficiencies of the Saints were addressed.
- People that say they worshiped God, when they are prostrate upon their back, are not dealing with God but with Satan.
- The Saints will be exalted in the greatest exaltation of all—the resurrection.
- All things, for one in Christ, come back to study and prayer and then living what you pray.

The transcript “Second Corinthians IX — Bring Every Thought into Captivity #1” teaches more about dealing with evil using the Word of God and the Spirit of God. Important points noted are:

- The sin in the mind is a stronghold. Addiction is a stronghold that needs to be controlled.
- If in a nation there is not on an individual level resistance against sin throughout the populace, then sin grows. Satan move in and multiplies it and he can also project sin.
- A carnal mind is a mind that does not have the Spirit of God, and it lacks the understanding to know how to live.
- People are made dependent on something by that entity providing everything that they need. But because of sin one day it is all going to be gone.
- Half the truth will never fulfill all the truth.
- The story of Job has a moral: You better be careful what you wish for because you may get it.
- Job did not recognize that he lived and breathed and moved within God. Everything that he used and everything that he did was made by or made possible to do by God.

- The whole care of what God wants His begotten to do is to bring every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ. The mind is made to learn and re-learn, be renewed and renewed, added to, and to develop character.
- The door to the mind should be guarded so that evil thoughts are kept out of residing in the mind.

The transcript “Second Corinthians X – Bring Every Thought into Captivity #2” is a concentrated study of what and how followers of Christ are to do in their battle against Satan. Some important items covered are:

- The Protestant lie is that if you believe in Jesus that you have eternal life secure—it no longer matters what you do since God’s love is unconditional.
- The Will of God is not all found in one place in the Bible—there are many teachings and parts of teachings scattered throughout the Bible that show God’s Will. The parts must be searched out and put together.
- God wants His people to know what they are doing.
- Those called of God, the Saints, are to be of the same mind, having the same love, being jointed together in soul—all seeking the Kingdom of God.
- Not all thoughts that come into a mind are a result of past sins that have been committed—it may be the thought was thrust into the mind by Satan.
- Everything that comes along is a choice—free moral agency must be exercised to choose what is right, to do what is right, and this purifies the mind of evil.

The transcript “Second Corinthians XI — Survey of False Prophets” is an in-depth study of II Corinthians chapter 11. False prophets and a false gospel are studied as to what the Bible reveals. Some important points in this transcript are:

- The true Jesus was the One Who was the Lord God of the Old Testament, Who became Jesus Christ manifested in the flesh.
- Satan already has the world deceived—Satan is trying to deceive the elect of God.
- False apostles, deceitful workers, who represent themselves as apostles of Christ bring false doctrine. Satan’s servants transform themselves to portray themselves as ministers of righteousness.
- All spirits that confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh are from God. False prophets deny the divinity of Christ as being God in the flesh.
- The time of the end will have an end-time religion that amalgamize the faiths of the world into one universal religion.
- What it takes for a people to apostatize is probably four or five generations. The result is a generation that is of the mindset “I will not. I’m going to do what I want to do.”
- None of the teachers or prophets of God ever spoke anything that was not what God said to speak.
- Paul stated that those who preach a false gospel are accursed.

The transcript “Second Corinthians XII — The Trials and Difficulties of the Apostle Paul” is a study of what happened to the Apostle Paul and what he did in his life. Some major points made in this study are:

- The Roman Catholic hospitals and their charities are money-making organizations that get a good percentage of money from taking care of the immigrants that they want to be their church members in their cathedrals. They get that money from the government.
- Lawlessness has two forms: (1) breaking of God's Commandments, and (2) changing the commandments and adding traditions.
- When a person reads something in the Bible and they know it's something that should be done, they need to obey it. If they obey it, they will continue to understand other parts of the Bible.
- If people worship Satan the devil, they can receive a blessing from Satan.
- Satan can make people feel good and Satan can be funny.
- When people think that they are so profoundly good, and their mental abilities are above anyone else they are subject to false prophets.

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

## Second Corinthians I

### Background—Review of 1-Corinthians 1-8

*Corinth shows the state of the churches today,  
and 1-Corinthians shows why 2-Corinthians is written the way that it is*  
Fred R. Coulter

Greetings, brethren! Welcome to Sabbath services!

I want us to truly appreciate what God has made possible for us today, having the instant communication that we do and like in the sermon: *News, Flesh & Bone and N.T. Fraud* that showed there is someone who says they have the most accurate Greek N.T. ever. We proved, by having Greek ourselves, that's incorrect. Do you suppose they could have done that 200 years ago? *No way!* You go down through history:

- How many people have had the whole Bible? *Billions!*
- How many people *use part* of the Bible? *Probably hundreds of millions!*
- How many people believe and know that the whole Bible was made for the end-time and for us?
- What does that do for us in our responsibility with God and toward God since all of this has been provided?
- Remember the prophecy that says *knowledge shall be increased?*
- Would you not say that we have much more knowledge today than 200 years ago? *Absolutely!*

Let's start out in Luke 12; this tells us what we must be doing, and really, when you understand it, more than at any other time in the history of the Church and our lives. I'll show you why.

Luke 12:31: "But seek the Kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added to you.... [think about being in the Kingdom of God] ...Do not be afraid, little flock..." (vs 31-32).

Think about that. How many people are afraid because of the things going on around them? Like we covered in the sermon *News, Flesh & Bone and N.T. Fraud*, Psalms 91: *If ten thousand fall at your right hand, and a thousand at your left, either way that's pretty close?*

"...for your Father delights ... [that's why we don't need to be fighting God] ...in giving you the kingdom" (v 32).

- we have the greatest calling of all
- we have the greatest preparation of all
- we have the greatest amount of knowledge

at any time for the Churches of God

*And we need to be about doing God's business!*

Down through the history of the Church—and we find an outline of that in Rev. 2&3, and there is a series called: *Assaults Against the Church* (Dan/Rev. series #12-15).

Verse 35: "Let your loins be girded about and *your* lamps burning." Always be prepared, like men waiting for the Bridegroom to return:

Verse 38: "And if he comes in the second watch, or comes in the third watch, and finds *them* watching, blessed are those servants."

What are we to watch? *A lot of people say that we are to watch world news first! NO!* That's second, maybe third. First of all, we are to watch out for ourselves. What's one of the very first things Jesus said we need to beware of? *False prophets!*

Verse 42: "And the Lord said, 'Who then is the wise and faithful steward, whom the lord shall put in charge of his household, to give *to each one* the portion of food in season? Blessed *is* that servant whom the lord, when he comes, shall find so doing'" (vs 42-43). {Note Matt. 25 about the steward who went and hid the talent instead of working.}

What does it mean to be given the kingdom? Verse 44: **"Of a truth, I tell you, he will set him over all his possessions."**

That's something! I don't think, even with all the knowledge that we have, and having the Spirit of God and the Word of God combined together, that we can really have a clear deep visual glimpse of what it's going to be like.

Remember what Jesus said concerning His words: ***Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall never pass away!*** Think about that!

This is why we have assaults against the Church; think about the state of the Church today, because ***we are going to cover and see that Corinth is the state of the Church today***, and we'll see why.

Verse 45<sup>[transcriber's correction]</sup>: "But if that servant shall say in his heart, 'My lord delays *his* coming,' and shall begin to beat the menservants and maidservants, and to be gluttonous and become drunk."

Who has the golden cup of *spiritual wine* to make them drunk? *Babylon the Great; the woman sitting on the beast!* All nations have drunk of it.

Verse 46: “The lord of that servant will come in a day that he does not expect, and in an hour that he does not know...” This does not necessarily mean Christ’s return. This could mean God coming upon anyone at any time, who is in this condition, *for correction!*

“...and will cut him asunder... [the end result] ...and will appoint his portion with the unbelievers. And that servant who knew the will of his lord, but did not prepare, nor did according to his will, shall be beaten with many *stripes*; but the one who did not know...” (vs 46-48).

Understand that if years ago they only had part of the Bible, they fall into this category concerning the Word of God. They didn’t know a lot of it.

“...and did *things* worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few. For **to whomever much has been given...**” (v 48). What is the attitude that we find with the Laodiceans? *I’ve grown rich and increased with goods and have need of nothing!*

Now, they may not express it in words directly that way, but that’s what they’re doing when they don’t pray, don’t study, don’t think that studying the Bible is that important; or they put it off and have so many other activities.

“...**from him shall much be required**; and to whom much has been committed, from him they will demand the more” (v 48). God demands more of us than at any other time in the history of the Church. That’s why He said with the Laodiceans—He didn’t put it exactly this way—‘I stand at the door and knock. If you will open, the door I will come in and sup with you and you with Me.’

What does that tell you? *There are a lot of people semi-converted!* As we go through these things, we’ll look at that.

We have to start out with the Apostle Paul, Saul who became Paul. He had orders from the high priest and was going to Damascus to arrest men and women and even have some of them killed.

Acts 9:3: “But it came to pass while he was journeying, as he drew near to Damascus, that suddenly a light from heaven shined round about him. And after falling to the ground...” (vs 3-4). It doesn’t tell us if he was walking, on a donkey, or whatever, but he fell to the ground.

“...he heard a voice say to him, ‘Saul, Saul, why do you persecute Me?’” (v 4). What does this tell us? *All of those who have the Spirit of Christ in*

*them and the Spirit of the Father, if we are persecuted, or if things are done to us, **that’s doing it to Christ!***

Notice how quickly Paul’s mind was changed. I wonder, when he fell to the ground, if there was some powerful wind that just knocked him flat on the ground?

Verse 5: “And he said, ‘Who are You, Lord?’ And the Lord said, ‘I am Jesus, Whom you are persecuting. *It is hard for you to kick against the pricks*’”—or the goads.

You’ve seen the ground thorns where they have the long thorns about six inches long, this is what it’s talking about. Think about being barefooted and kicking against that. Are you going to win the battle? *No, you’re not!*

Verse 6: “Then, trembling and astonished, he said, ‘Lord, what will You have me to do?’.... [you talk about instant conversion] ...And the Lord *said* to him, ‘Get up and go into the city, and you shall be told what you must do.’ Now, **the men who were traveling with him stood speechless**; for they indeed heard the voice, but they saw no one. Then **Saul arose from the ground**; but when he opened his eyes, he saw no one. And they led him by the hand and brought *him* to Damascus. But **for three days he was not able to see**, and he did not eat or drink” (vs 6-9).

Verse 12: “And he has seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming and putting *his* hands on him, so that he may receive sight.”

Ananias couldn’t believe it when he was told that ‘I have Saul was over here and I want you to go down and lay hands on him so he can regain his sight, and baptize him and wash his sins away.’

Verse 13: “Then Ananias answered, ‘Lord, **I have heard from many people about this man, how many evil things he has done to Your saints**... [to the Church] ...in Jerusalem.’”

Verse 15<sup>[transcriber’s correction]</sup>: “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 15-16).

We find in 2-Cor. a good listing of all the things that Paul suffered.

Verse 17: “Then Ananias went away and came into the house... [baptized him] ...and after laying *his* hands on him, he said, ‘Brother Saul, the Lord has sent me, *even* Jesus, Who appeared to you on the road in which you came, so that you might receive sight and be filled with *the* Holy Spirit.’”

Let's see another summation of the whole sequence of these events. Paul is before two kings and a governor and some from the Sanhedrin and other Jews down in Caesarea and he's recounting this story:

Acts 26:15: "And I [Paul] said, 'Who are You, Lord?' And He said, 'I am Jesus, Whom you are persecuting. Now arise, and stand on your feet; for **I have appeared to you for this purpose: to appoint you as a minister and a witness both of what you have seen and what I shall reveal to you.** I am personally selecting you from among the people and the Gentiles, to whom I now send you to open their eyes... [through the Word of God and the Spirit of God] ...**that they may turn from darkness to light, and from the authority of Satan to God,** so that they may receive remission of sins and an inheritance... [into the Kingdom of God] ...among those who have been sanctified through faith in Me'" (vs 15-18).

Look up the places in the Bible where it talks about darkness, spiritual darkness. There are quite a few places.

- What does it tell us in Rev. 12, what Satan is doing to the world? *Deceiving the whole world!*
- What does it tell us in Rev. 13? *The whole world worships Satan!*

You see how much more it's intensified at the end-time and why Christ has to return the way that He is going to.

Isaiah 60:1: "Arise, shine; for your Light has come, and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you." When God called Saul that's what happened to him.

Sidebar on Saul: He was right up there with Gamaliel. He was right up there with the high priest and he says in Galatians that he was 'advancing more than his contemporaries to become a great potentate in Judaism.' God called him so that the Church would not be engulfed in Judaism. That's what Gal. 2 is about.

Today there are a lot of Messianic Jews. Just because they're Jews and they claim to believe in the Messiah does not mean that they have the correct doctrine. Every one that I have checked on, including Jonathan Cahn and Joseph Farrar with WND—we're told to prove all things, so I check up them—and Jonathan Cahn is not a prophet; he is an analyst. I've read all three of his books, so I know. When he looks at something in the Old Testament and sees how that was done, then analyzes something in current events today that has a parallel fulfillment., that is not prophesying; that is

*analyzing.* I saw Cahn on TBN and he's very happy to be on TBN. *The Messianic Jews are not converted,* except maybe a very, very few!

- What did Jesus say about the Passover?
- What did Jesus tell Peter when Peter said that He was not going to wash his feet? *If I don't, you don't have any part with Me!*

If you don't keep the proper Passover on the 14<sup>th</sup> day of the 1<sup>st</sup> month by the Calculated Hebrew Calendar, *you have no true part with Christ!* You may be near, you may be close, but every Messianic Jew keeps a **15<sup>th</sup>** Passover.

I know that this is a little sidebar, but it's important to understand. Jonathan Cahn has temple for the Jews on Friday night. He teaches the Sunday 'Christians' on Sunday. He is a descendant of the priesthood, being called Cahn. He doesn't know the Old Testament Scripture—Isaiah 56 and 58—that tells the Gentiles to keep the Sabbath. He does not tell them to keep the Sabbath **and does not keep a 14<sup>th</sup> Passover, so he is not of God!** He may be close; he may be near; he may know a lot of things, but **he is not sent from God,** because whom God sends **speaks the words of God!**

Verse 2: "For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth... [*spiritual* darkness] ...and gross darkness *the* people..."—describing the *complete deception* that Satan is bringing on this world.

One more little thing for those who are new: During Christmas season is not the time to tell your relatives that Christmas is not of God. Wait until afterward and tell them with questions:

- If this is the Lord's birthday, how much money did you give?
- How much were you thinking of yourself and your children and your wife/husband?
- How much were you thinking of all of your friends?
- What's one of the worst sins that we find listed by the Apostle Paul concerning the end-time?

2-Timothy<sup>[transcriber's correction]</sup>3:1: "Know this also, that in *the* last days perilous times shall come; for men will be lovers of self..." (vs 1-2). You just take that and watch the news.

Isaiah 60:2: "...but the LORD shall arise upon you, and His glory shall be seen upon you. And the Gentiles shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising" (vs 2-3).

That's what it's going to be like when Christ returns. It's going to be an astonishing event. A lot of these things happen in cycles. Then you have one

key event in those cycles, which then becomes a key prophecy. Think about today beginning in:

Jeremiah 13:12: “Therefore, you will speak unto them this word, ‘Thus says the LORD, God of Israel, ‘Every wineskin shall be filled with wine.’...” That means we have good times. You may have it for a while.

“...And they shall say to you, ‘Do we not surely know that every wineskin is filled with wine?’ Then you shall say to them, ‘Thus says the LORD, ‘Behold, I will fill all the people of this land, even the kings that sit on David’s throne, and the priests, and the prophets, and all the people of Jerusalem, with drunkenness’” (vs 12-13)—***spiritual drunkenness!***

Does this sound like today? Verse 14: “And I will smash them one against another, even the fathers and the sons together,” says the LORD....” Everybody is fighting, no peace anywhere. ***It’s also true in the Churches of God in too many cases!***

There comes a point—we haven’t quite reached it, yet—but where will we be in watching and doing when this point comes?

“...‘I will not pity, nor spare, nor have mercy, to keep them from their destruction.’ Hear and give ear; do not be proud; for the LORD has spoken. Give glory to the LORD your God, before He causes darkness, and before your feet stumble on the dark mountains, and, while you look for light, He turns it into the shadow of death, making it gross darkness” (vs 15-16).

Paul is finally made an apostle (Acts 13) and he and Barnabas go out and do great healings and signs and wonders and many different things take place. Now, here’s where Paul comes to Corinth, and we’re going to learn a lot right here, and remember he just left Athens with all the idols and tells them about the ‘unknown God’ (Acts 17).

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. and because he was of the same trade, he dwelt with them and worked; for they were tent makers by trade. And he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and persuaded both Jews and Greeks” (vs 1-4).

He always went to the Jews first, into the synagogues, and proselytes were also there; believers, those who fear God. Were they Sabbath-keepers? *Yes!* Did they hear the Scriptures? *Yes!*

Now, this is one of the riots that Paul started in the synagogue, v 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. 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’**” (vs 5-6).

How bad of a statement would that be to the Jews? I’ll bet there were some Jews who said, ‘How can he be of God, look at how nasty that he spoke to us. I am offended.’ Well, you can read a lot of things that Jesus said that offended a lot of people!

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.” Right next to it!

Can you imagine what happened every Sabbath? Remember, Paul had a long ministry spanning pretty close to 30 years. I know that in reading through the Gospels you will see that there were times when he spent three years here, two years there, etc.

To make matters even worse, v 8: “But Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed in the Lord with his whole house; and many of the Corinthians... [those who attended synagogue] ...who heard, believed and were baptized. And the Lord said to Paul in a vision in the night, ‘Do not be afraid; but speak, and do not be silent, for I am with you; and no one shall set upon you to mistreat you because I have many people in this city’” (vs 8-10).

Stop and think about that! How did that occur? Were they all attending synagogue? *I doubt it!* How does God work? *Remember Acts 16 when Paul went over to Macedonia and the city of Philippi!* He didn’t know anyone was there, but the Spirit of God made it work out.

{Note sermons: *Spirit of God/Spirit of Man—7 Spirits of God #s1-2*} Revelation shows that the eyes of the Lord are called *the seven spirits of God*. That answers: How does God look down upon every man? *That’s the business of the seven spirits!*

Paul was to stay there because God had been preparing new people without his knowledge.

Verse 11: “And he remained there for a year and six months, teaching the Word of God among them.” After that Paul went to Ephesus and he stayed there three years. You know what happened there?

In this background we’re going through



leading up to 2-Corinthians, let's come to 1-Cor. and we'll do a short review. We will have a little understanding of the background.

### **Review of 1-Corinthians:**

Remember, Paul starts out every epistle nearly the same way. We need to understand why he does that. He does that from the point of view that he wants everyone to know that what he's writing and saying and preaching comes from God the Father and Jesus Christ, and it is the Word of God.

1-Corinthians 1:1: "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, called by *the* will of God, and Sosthenes *our* brother, to the Church of God that is in Corinth..." (vs 1-2). He wrote this in 57 A.D.

If you want to, go to the Chronologies #5 & 6 of the New Testament in the back of *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*. In 57 A.D. Paul was in Ephesus and wrote to Corinth.

Verse 2: "To the Church of God that is in Corinth, *the* called saints who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, together with all those in every place..." This is a prophecy for us. Isn't that something?

All those in every place who are calling on the name of Jesus Christ, both theirs and ours" (v 2). That's a prophecy coming down to our day.

Verse 3: "Grace and peace *be* to you from God our Father and *the* Lord Jesus Christ." That's is quite an opening. To show you the consistency, let's see how we have exactly the same thing in:

Ephesians 1:1: "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by *the* will of God, to the saints who are in Ephesus and **to the faithful in Christ Jesus**: Grace and peace *be* to you from God our Father and *the* Lord Jesus Christ. Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly *things* with Christ" (vs 1-3). What heavenly things do we have?

- the Word of God
- the Spirit of God
- the understanding of these things

Then when we're resurrected, we're going to have the fullness of all the blessings as spirit beings. Notice how these reach out in prophecy, as well. This is quite something. This helps us understand more how God looks at things than we do.

Verse 1: "...*the* faithful in Christ Jesus." That reaches out where? *Wherever there are those who are faithful!* All of the books we have in the Bible we need for today; they are essential for us!

These are the words of God. Can there be anything more important than this?

The way that Paul is writing in 1-Cor. is that he is leading up to some things, because we're going to see that Corinth is just like today, overtaken with a lot of problems, sex sins, religious sins, false doctrines and false preachers.

1-Corinthians 1:4: "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, in all discourse and knowledge" (vs 4-5). Take these two verses and think about how that applies to us today.

- Do we not have much more than they have?
- How was he preaching the Gospel back then? *Out of the Old Testament!*

Think about how much more we have.

Verse 6: "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..." (vs 6-8).

Think about that. All of these words we can apply to ourselves today. Do we not need to be strengthened to the end?

Sidebar: We're going to have a lot of people dying in the Church of God in the next few years. Why? *It's not that the Church is dying out*—which some people will say—it *is that they have endured to the end and now they will await the resurrection!* If they die, which they will, ***it is a harvest!*** So, don't get discouraged at anything. If God can have people that Paul never knew of, that He was personally working with in Corinth, rank pagans. It makes you wonder what God is doing if we, as Churches of God, really start doing what we need to do.

We reach a lot of people through our websites. We're going to be close to, or more than, four million distinct visitors to our websites. We don't count lookie-loos. They come and look and go. The average time for every visitor is between eight and nine minutes consistently. Jonathan can tell you that is a long time for websites.

Sooner or later God is going to work with those people. But we also know that just like the Church began in houses, Church at Home is going to become the thing that will be the most important down the road. So, we're very thankful that we're able to do that; very thankful for everything that we have on the website and so forth. Plus, as I've mentioned, we have the Dan./Rev. series—no cost—all the transcripts of every sermon that I gave

connected with Daniel and Revelation, and the CDs with the messages. That will help you a great deal.

But the two most important are love and grace. Those are the two most important, especially living in the evil time that we are. We have things come along to where everything about our character is tested! That's why we have to repent everyday, because we don't win every battle.

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).

Think about that! A lot of people put a lot of stress on: 'I have to stay in this Church of God even though I know they're not preaching the Truth, because of the fellowship with the brethren. It say not to fail to assemble.' Well, you'd better re-read the message to the Church at Laodicea.

Then Paul enters unto the beginning of the problems. We will find that this was a very argumentative church.

Verse 10: "Now I exhort you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing..." They were speaking all kinds of different things. We will see in 1-Cor. 15 that Paul said, 'How is it that there are some among you that say there is no resurrection?' That's something!

(go to the next track)

We know that parts of the book of Matthew were written early, however, when Paul went into the synagogues he didn't say he had a new book written by Matthew.

When Paul went into Berea to the synagogue; Acts 17:11: "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." They were looking at the scrolls in the synagogue.

How much of the book of Matthew did they have? *They had enough at least for the Jews. They had them for the group in Antioch!* Paul beginning in the synagogue did not bring these things out if he had them until later.

Let's look at the problem there in Corinth, which is very simple and almost identical to what we have today.

1-Corinthians 1:11: "For my brethren, it has been declared to me concerning you, by those of the house of Chloe, that there are contentions among you. 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.'" (vs 11-12). They were

following a man.

Verse 13: "Has Christ been divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized into the name of Paul?"

What were they doing? *They were comparing things*—the way the Greeks always do—with their *philosophies*! Philosophy was a great problem here.

Verse 17: "For Christ did not send me to baptize... [he did baptize when there was no one else around] ...but to preach the Gospel—not with the wisdom of words..." Greek is 'sophia'—philosophy; this is what the Greeks were always looking at:

- What were the words?
- How did he say it?
- What was the parsing of it?

"...lest the cross of Christ be made void. For to those who are perishing, the preaching of the cross is foolishness..." (vs 17-18)—to the ones in the world and don't believe. It's written in such a way that I covered in the sermon *News, Flesh & Bone and N.T. Fraud*, the seven points needed to understand. To many people it is foolishness.

I got a book that has the names and basic philosophy on one page of the great men of the world, and they all hate Christ. They all are atheists.

"...but to us who are being saved, it is the power of God" (v 18). That's very interesting because it's in the Greek exactly as it's translated. Salvation is a process and you are being saved.

- you ***have been saved*** from your past sins, through repentance and baptism
- you are currently ***being saved*** from your sins as you grow, overcome and repent
- you ***shall be saved***, the complete product at the resurrection

What I just read about the differences is the same thing today being of this man or the other man. There are those who followed just one man alone, who is long dead, and they think he had the whole Truth. ***Nonsense! God has the whole Truth!***

Unless we're continuing to grow in grace and knowledge all the time, who do we think we are? Can we ever get to the time when we say, 'I know everything.' ***God is the only One Who knows everything!***

Verse 19: "For it is written, 'I will destroy the wisdom of the wise...' Look at what is happening today. Let's just take one thing alone here in America:

The sins of the Democrat Party is causing it to be destroyed in front of our very eyes! Same way with the churches. What they have is being destroyed, they're even allowing in Sunday-keeping churches to have the Koran read. They think that would be a nice wise thing to do. 'Just think they would not be offended with us if we let them come into our church and read from the Koran, and wouldn't we be fine buddies?' *Until they take control!* Because, behind the scenes, the leading Muslims say that 'those in the west are going to have to be forced to embrace the Muslim religion.'

All of these women running around tempting men are going to be in burqas, just like they are in Sweden. All of the men running around lusting after women are going to be put to petty little jobs that the oppressor will put them in. ***No one is going to mock God! No one! Doesn't matter! Will never happen!***

"...and I will nullify the understanding of those who understand" (v 19). You must constantly renew spiritually, every day!

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?" Try any movement and see the stupidity of it!

Sidebar: How about the movement in San Francisco to do away with Hetch Hetchy Dam up there in the mountains. 'We must restore it to its natural way.' Water for San Francisco comes in through a giant huge pipe all the way under the bay to San Francisco. There are those 'greenie-weenies' who want to get rid of the dam up in the mountains and restore it to its natural beauty. Okay, all of you women go to the creek and wash your clothes on a rock. How do you like that?

Verse 21: "For since in the wisdom of God the world through its own wisdom did not know God..."

- they think they are rational
- they think they are philosophical
- they think they are right
- ***but they're blinded***

"...it pleased God to save those who believe through the foolishness of preaching" (v 21). 'You actually believe the Bible!' *Yes, I do!* 'You're a nut!'

Verse 22: "For *the* Jews require a sign, and *the* Greeks seek after wisdom..." That's the problem! ***Carnal wisdom does not bring you the spiritual understanding of the Word of God!***

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..." (vs 25-27).

So, if you want to pull yourself up 'by your bootstraps' and tell yourself how great you are, just remember that God says *we're all foolish*. Even the wise, because they think they know and they don't know.

"...so that He might put to shame those who are wise; and God has chosen the weak things of the world..." (v 17). That's why we have problems; we're weak. You have things to overcome. You have things to work on. You have the flesh that you give into to often. That's why there's repentance and forgiveness.

"...so that He might put to shame the strong things" (v 27). Think about what it's going to be like when those in this world—whichever resurrection they are in—understand what God has done. I imagine that there are some who will say, 'Yeah, cast me in the Lake of Fire if you want to run things with these foolish people.' *It's amazing how some people think!*

Verse 28: "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" (vs 28-29).

Note the book of Job. That's why Job went through what he went through. He was bragging that he was more righteous than God. 'Why don't we have a judge; I want to take God to court so I can have a judge's opinion who is right, God or me.'

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).

That first chapter of Corinthians sets the whole tone for the whole book and every single chapter deals with problems.

1-Cor. 2—When you have that, Paul says that you're carnal and you can't receive the spiritual things. Then he says that there's no way any eye, ear or mind can find the way of God *without God*. It has to be revealed. You need the Spirit of God; you can't do it because you're intelligent. You can't do it, because you're stupid; you need the Spirit of God. And to understand the things of God you need the Spirit of God.

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.”

What happens with little children like that? They may be enthusiastic at times, but they make a lot of silly statements and think a lot of silly things.

Verse 2: “I gave you milk to drink, and not meat...” Look at some of the things we handle here today. Look at all things that God has given us to understand. I hope we can have a ‘filet mignon’ every Sabbath. But that’s not necessarily so.

“...for you were not yet able *to receive spiritual meat*; and neither are you able now, for you are still carnal...” (vs 2-3). How many people in the Churches of God 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?....” (vs 3-5).

Paul is saying, ‘You’ve got to grow up!’ Christ is the Stone, the Foundational Stone upon which you’re going to build.’

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” (vs 11-12).

So, we have those three categories of spiritual things, and the three categories of semi-spiritual things, or carnal things. Then Paul says that you need to be careful how you’re building; likewise with us. If you build with wood, hay or stubble, it’s going to be burned up by fire, and fire is trials. That’s what happens when people get trials and they are built on a carnal base of wood, hay and stubble. They go puff! *Gone!*

Then Paul gives them a little bit of meat, v 16: “Don’t you understand that **you are God’s temple**, and **that the Spirit of God is dwelling in you?**” There are two words for *dwelling*: one that means to abide, and the other is a derivative that comes from *house*—‘oikos.’ This *dwelling* comes from ‘oikos.’

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).

Isn’t that the biggest difficulty of all. Stop and analyze what happens when people get themselves in trouble. The first thing they do is lie to themselves and deceive, and think that they can get

away with it. That’s why I like to watch this program every once in a while: *I Almost Got Away with It*. Know this: ***God is greater than the authorities in the world! God knows!***

“...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). In other words, how do you do that? If you have a good mind, that’s what is the matter with the Brits. They have a high level of intelligence, and with it they have rejected God.

Notice that a lot of these programs are very good in analytics and putting things together, and figuring out how things work, especially when they’re uncovering an archeological project or something like that. But tell them to believe in God; the churches are emptying in the UK, as well as the U.S. Same way with the Greeks.

How do you become a fool if you have a good intelligence? *I’ll show you!* This is something we need to understand every day! All those atheists who shake their fist at God and hate the Word of God and hate those who believe in God, they need to really learn this:

Acts 17:23—Paul says: “...’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...**” (vs 23-24). Everything you think you’re so smart about, that you know and understand, ***God made!***

“...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... [every human being, each and every one of them] ...life and breath and all things” (vs 24-25). Stop and think about that! You can ask the smart people:

- How smart are you?
- What can you do? *Oh, we can make robots!*
- Can they reproduce one another? *Well, we’re about ready to make a machine to do that!*

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.” (vs 26-27).

Now, this is how a wise person makes himself a fool before God; in other words, he does

like Job did. Job had to understand that God made all of these things. And every single thing that Job did was according to the commandments of God. So, how could his righteousness be more than God's, Who lived forever? Here it is right here:

Verse 28: **"For in Him we... [every human being] ...live and move and have our being..."**

- every thought
- every heartbeat
- every breath
- every drop of water
- every morsel of food
- every emotion
- everything that we are

***God has made!*** And you give up the wisdom of your stupidity of evolution and learn the wisdom of God; it's right here in the Bible! **"For in Him we live and move and have our being..."**

That's how you become a fool in God if you think you're so intelligent. How do you think that would go over talking to all of the great minds of this world? Start with Schmidt of Google! Start with all of them. All you rich people, what's going to happen in the day that all of your money goes POOF!

1-Corinthians 3:19: "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.' 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 19-23).

Based upon that, why should we get all exalted. They were saying like one evangelist who used to go around to the Churches—Gerald Waterhouse—and he used to 'water the house' with his messages. He had the whole Kingdom of God portioned out to everyone possible. That was nothing but vanity and stupidity.

God is going to put whom ***He's*** going to put, wherever ***He's*** going to put them, according to ***His*** judgment and according to ***how we yield to Him!*** That's how God is going to do it.

1-Corinthians 4:7: "For what makes you superior *to others*? And **what do you have that you did not receive?**

Verse 18: "Now, some of you are puffed up, as though I were not coming to you; 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 18-21).

Not like it is today. It's almost like this: How can you get the attention of some of these Sunday-keepers to understand about the Word of God? *It's amazing!*

I saw Adrian Rogers who has a program on TBN; I'm finding out what they preach. It's called *Love Worth Finding*<sup>[transcriber's correction]</sup>. I came in on a program he did the ninth commandment: you shall not bear false witness. Good speaker, excellent presentation, spoke the truth, very convincing. You have false witness, good witness and explained what that meant. Then he explained how he explained it to his children. Then he asked his children were there some things that they thought that were not true that he said to them. They all raised their hand and said, 'Yeah, Dad, you said this, that and the other thing.' He said, 'As I told you, you have to repent if you say something that isn't right. So, I repented to my children.' What's he going to say to God when God says:

- Did you not give this sermon on false witnessing?
- Did you not do this on Sunday?
- Did you not say that it's okay not to keep the Sabbath?
- Is that a false witness against Me Who created it?
- You kept Christmas, Easter, New Years and all of this, and all of those are Satan's days!

That's going to be a Matthew 7:23<sup>[transcriber's correction]</sup>: "And then I will confess to them, 'I never knew you. **Depart from Me, you who work lawlessness.**'" Even though you say, 'Lord, Lord, we did this, that and the other thing.'

This guy was a really good preacher, very convincing. But I wonder how he would handle that?

1-Cor. 5—sexual immorality, incest in the Church! What brought down the largest Church of God in modern history? *Sexual immorality!* Do we have that today? *Yes!*

Then Paul shows that we are going to be judges of the world, and even of angels; 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... [the man playing the role of a woman: transgenderism today] ...nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit *the* Kingdom of God"

(vs 9-10).

Here's a homosexual Bible called *The Queen James Version!* Verse 9: "Know you not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdom of God? Do not be deceived, neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, **nor morally weak, nor promiscuous,** nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the Kingdom of God." *The wisdom of the wise! Look what they have done!*

Isn't this for 2-Corinthians? *Yes, but I want you to understand why 2-Cor. is written the way that it is, and it's predicated on 1-Cor.!*

They recognized fornication and adultery in this homosexual Bible. You've heard of same-sex marriage; you've got to be loyal. So, they allowed that. Amazing!

How do you solve all of these things? Again, Paul says, 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 in relationship to false religion. Think of that in relationship to Rev. 17.

"...MAY IT NEVER BE! WHAT! Don't you know that he who is joined to a harlot is one body? For He says, 'The two shall be one flesh.' But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit. Flee sexual immorality..." (vs 15-18). That's what they ought to post in the halls of congress!

"...Every sin that a man may commit is outside the body, but the one who commits sexual immorality is sinning against his own body" (v 18)—because of everything that comes along with it:

- it affects your emotions
- it affects your mind
- it affects your thinking
- it affects your health
- it affects your children
- it affects everything that there is

The Proverb says that 'a foolish man that commits adultery is like bringing hot coals to his chest.'

Verse 19: "WHAT!.... [very corrective, but they didn't get the point] ...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). In other words:

- ***Live God's way!***
- ***Think with the words of God!***
- ***Conduct your life according to the commandments of God!***

When we have done of all of that, what did Jesus say we are to conclude? *We're unprofitable servants because we've only done what has been commanded!*

How do you go above that? *By loving God with all your heart, mind, soul and being!* That's how you go above and beyond. We're living in a wicked world! They ought to post this, and this ought to be sent as a telegram to everyone in congress, every politician in the United States, whether on a city council or in a state capital.

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'..." That's true! That's been the problem! Also, there are a lot of women out there who want to be touched. *It takes two tango!*

"...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's the solution to the problem.

Remember all of those LIBs who said, 'Hooty-snooty Vice President Pence, he won't be alone with a woman in a room. He always has his wife with him.' Who is now wise? *Pence! That's smart! He knows what has happened!*

1-Cor. 8—eating things to idols.

We'll pick it up in 1-Cor. 9 in part two because we have to answer the question, which always comes up: Why do you ask for tithes and offerings? Especially when we were in the other churches, that's all they do.

- When Paul didn't get a thing from the Corinthians, why didn't he do it?
- What was his reason?

I even had one person write me and say, 'What you ought to do is take your Bible and go with nothing like the apostles did when Jesus sent them on a mission. Is that what God wants us to do? Well, we'll answer those questions in part two: Why did not Paul instruct them to give tithes and offerings? We will see that he had the authority to do it, but why didn't he?

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

Scriptural References:

- 1) Luke 12:31-32, 35, 38,42-48
- 2) Acts 9:3-9, 12-13, 15-17
- 3) Acts 26:15-18
- 4) Isaiah 60:1-2
- 5) 2 Timothy 3:1-2
- 6) Isaiah 60:2-3
- 7) Jeremiah 13:12-16
- 8) Acts 18:1-11
- 9) 1 Corinthians 1:1-3
- 10) Ephesians 1:1-3, 1
- 11) 1 Corinthians 1:4-10
- 12) Acts 17:11
- 13) 1 Corinthians 1:11-13, 17-22, 25-31
- 14) 1 Corinthians 3:1-5, 11-12, 16-18
- 15) Acts 17:23-28
- 16) 1 Corinthians 3:19-23
- 17) 1 Corinthians 4:7, 18-21
- 18) Matthew 7:23
- 19) 1 Corinthians 6:9-10, 9, 15-20
- 20) 1 Corinthians 7:1-2

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Psalm 91
- Revelation 2; 3
- Matthew 25
- Revelation 12; 13
- Galatians 2
- Isaiah 56; 58
- Acts 13; 16
- 1 Corinthians 15; 2; 5
- Revelation 17
- 1 Corinthians 8; 9

Also referenced:

Chronologies 5 & 6 (*The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*)

Sermons:

- *News, Flesh & Bone and N.T. Fraud*
- *Spirit of God/Spirit of Man—7 Spirits of God #s1-2*

Sermon Series: *Assaults Against the Church* (Dan/Rev. series #12-15)

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## Second Corinthians II

### Background/Review 1-Corinthians 8-15

### Comfort of God

(Chapter 1:1-11)

*In times of trouble and despair, go to the Psalm and learn to trust God*

Fred R. Coulter

Greetings, everyone! Welcome to Sabbath services!

Someone asked me what the pope said about the 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm. When I first read it, I had some problems with it, too; but the not the same one.

Psalm 23:1: "The LORD is my Shepherd; I shall not want." When I first read that I must have been about 15-16 and I thought: Why wouldn't you want the Lord? It actually means, *I will not be in want!*

Verse 2: "He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters. He restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death..." (vs 2-4).

What you need to do is think of this as Christ's prayer; "...I will fear no evil, for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table for me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup runs over" (vs 2-5). Remember, He was anointed with oil twice: once on His head, once on His feet.

Verse 6: "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD forever." This is interesting, because in 2-Cor. we're going to be talking a lot about it.

Matthew 6:6: "But you, when you pray, enter into a private room; and after shutting the door, pray to your Father Who *is* in secret; and your Father Who sees in secret shall reward you openly." In other words, this is how we know that God will answer our prayers.

Verse 7: "And when you pray, do not use vain repetitions as the heathen *do*..." there are repetitions that are necessary:

- you need help every day
- you need food every day
- you need God intervention and protection every day
- you pray for people every day

Do they need your prayers every day? *Of course!*

Vain repetitions are like 'hail Mary, mother of God' blah, *blah*, **blah** 200 times. Or you can go back to the days of Elijah (1-Kings 18) where the prophets of Baal were calling out all day long, cut themselves in the afternoon. Elijah came up and in an 18-second prayer got answered and God burned it all up.

"...for they think that by multiplying their words they shall be heard. Now then, do not be like them; for your Father knows what things you have need of before you ask Him" (vs 7-8).

Not everything *that you think you need* do you really need. It's what you actually need. Maybe some of the things that you actually need are different that what *you think* you need.

Verse 9: "Therefore, you are to pray after this manner... [this outline] ...'Our Father, Who is in heaven, hallowed be Your name; Your kingdom come...'" (vs 9-10).

Notice how he gives it at the end, v 33: "But *as for* you, seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you."

What does this prayer do? *The same thing!* The first thing is that you acknowledge God in heaven, Who has created everything that there is, and that's something when you stop and think about it. God's faithfulness to everyone is known in the things that He's created for us to have to eat for all human beings.

Every once in a while I get up at night and I have an apple, and I generally get Fuji apples. I sit there in the dark and I eat this apple and think about that little stem that was there, everything came down and made this apple. How did it do that? Then you take a bite of the apple and it has all the juice, taste and everything in it. You think: **God made every apple that way!** He's got sweet apples, sour apples, red apples, green apples, striped apples, yellow apples, whatever; **God made them all!**

I think about that and think: Look at way God has done for all the people in the world. Look at all the food that is necessary to feed them every day.

"...Your will be done on earth, as *it is* in heaven" (v 10). Where is the will of God on earth to



start in your prayer? *With you!* What is the will of God? *That you love Him and keep His commandments!*

Verse 11: “Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts... [your indebtedness because of sin; not money you owe on your credit card] ...as we also forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation...” (vs 11-13).

Now, the pope wants to change this to *don't let us fall into temptation*. That may be a secondary rendering; it's not necessarily wrong. But the question is: Does God lead us into temptation? Meaning a trial? *Yes, He does!*

Matthew 4:1: “Then Jesus was led up into the wilderness by the Spirit in order to be tempted by the devil.”

Temptations do come, but God doesn't lead us into all of them. Some temptations come because of:

- our ignorance
- our lust
- who we're with
- what we're watching

It's not necessarily totally wrong for the pope to say, 'do not let us fall into temptation.'

Now let's continue on with the background to 2-Corinthians. It's amazing that many people don't understand this. So, we're just summarizing on the background, and what we're looking at is a church full of problems: arguing, bickering, who to follow, carnal interpretations, self-vaulting, exaltation, gross sex sins, and so forth.

The solution for the world today is the same that Paul wrote to avoid sexual immorality: *let every man have his own wife, and every wife her own husband*. That ought to be written out and mailed to everyone in Congress.

1-Corinthians 8:1: “Now concerning things sacrificed to idols, we know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffs up, but love edifies.”

I've heard this misquoted so many times! 'We don't need to have knowledge, we need to have love.' That's not what it says. Knowledge by itself puffs up; with love it edifies. Everything we do needs to be based on the love of God.

Verse 2—this is absolutely true of everything that there is in the world, and everything in the Bible. Stop and think about the Bible: We have the book that tells us:

- who God is

- why He created us
- where we're going
- the past history of the people that He has worked with

We see that it is written in such a way that those whom God has chosen, when they sin He punished them. It's not like a biography written by men about other great men. 'Oh, this person is perfect.' *NO!* the Bible also tells us about:

- who God is
- who Christ is
- what salvation is
- what we need to do to receive eternal life

This is the greatest book in the world!

Verse 2: “But if anyone thinks that he knows anything, he knows nothing yet to the degree that he ought to know. But if anyone loves God, he is known by Him” (vs 2-3).

So, if you love God, *God knows you!* He knows everything about you, because in Him you *live, move and have your being!* Think about all the genetics and God put that there. He knows exactly who you are, what you are greater than you have ever supposed.

1-Cor. 9 becomes a problem because people don't like to pay tithes and offerings, so they say that Paul didn't take tithes and offerings. That's not the statement you need to look at. If he didn't ask for them, the question is: Did Paul have the authority to receive them? *He answers that!*

1-Corinthians 9:6: “Or I only and Barnabas, do we not have a right to refrain from working?” He says later in 2-Cor. that he took wages from other churches. Why did he not take it from those in Corinth? *Because they were carnal and had so many problems and bickering.*

We'll find out in 2-Cor. they were probably giving to these false prophets whom they thought were better speakers than Paul. He said, 'All right, I'm not going to take anything from you because I want to see whether you will love God, love Jesus Christ and keep His commandments. They had a lot of problems.'

Verse 7: “Does anyone at any time serve as a soldier at his own expense? Does anyone plant a vineyard and not eat the fruit of it? Or does anyone shepherd a flock and not eat *the meat* and milk from the flock? Am I saying these things *merely* from a human point of view? Or does not the law say the same things? For it is written in the Law of Moses, 'You shall not muzzle the ox that is treading out corn.' Is it because God is concerned for oxen? Or

does He not certainly say *this for our sakes?*.... [that is the apostles, because Paul mentions Barnabas, Peter and the other apostles] ...For our sakes it was written... [How is that for an interpretation of Scriptures, which is true?] ...so that the one who plows might plow in hope, and the one who threshes the corn in hope might be partaker of his hope. If we have sown to you spiritual things, **is it a great thing if we shall reap your physical things?**” (vs 7-11) **NO!**

Verse 12: “If **others** participate in this authority over you...” That shows that he had the authority, but he didn’t use it. Why? *Because we find in Luke 11 that Jesus excoriated the scribes and Pharisees and doctors of the law for tithing every little tiny thing, but overlooking the weightier matters of judgment, love and faith!* Jesus said, “Those things you should have done, **but not to leave the other undone.**”

So, in no way did Paul do away with tithing. He just wanted to prove whether they would really serve God, love God and be the people that he should serve, rather than the false apostles. Obviously, they did things a little differently then. So, you take the principle.

Since they were to give to those who were preaching the Gospel, and Paul said that he ‘took wages,’ that meant that he didn’t take all the tithes of Corinth, getting them all for himself. What did they use it for? *For the others who were serving, the things for taking care of the widows, and for whatever was necessary for sending those out to preach the Gospel!* If you give them money to go preach the Gospel, that’s not much different than giving money so that it can be recorded and sent out by the various means to do it. It’s just how it’s done, that’s all. So, the authority is the thing that is there, **which God gave!**

“...much more surely *should* not we? Nevertheless, we have not used this authority; but we have endured all things, so that we might not hinder the Gospel of Christ. Don’t you know that those who are laboring *in* the sacred things of the temple live *of the things* of the temple...” (vs 12-13). Was the temple not up and operating then when this was written in 52<sub>A.D.</sub>? **Yes!**

“...and those who are ministering at the altar are partakers with the altar?.... [Yes!] ...In the same way also, the Lord did command that those who preach the Gospel are to live of the Gospel” (vs 13-14).

Remember what they did in Acts 2-5; some even sold all that they had and brought it all. That’s a little more than a tithe, wouldn’t you think? So,

there are different things that apply at different times. Yet, there is one who tells brethren, ‘If you want to join this church, sell all that you have and give it to me.’ Well, we don’t need that today.

Verse 15: “But I have not used any of these things. And I have not written these things in order that this might *now* be done to me. For *it would be* better for me to die rather than to have anyone make my boasting void. For though I preach the Gospel, there is no *reason* for me to boast because an obligation has been laid upon me. And woe to me, if I do not preach the Gospel!” (vs 15-16). If he’s willing he has a reward, if not, he’s a steward.

1-Cor. 10:7-8—Paul warned them again about sexual immorality.

1-Corinthians 10:9: “Neither should we tempt Christ...” Here’s the principle: Don’t do the carnal things, you’re tempting 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). That’s everyone from that time to this. How are we to be admonished?

- we’re to be taught and learn the lesson of the commands
- what happened to them when they sinned
- what happened to them when they went against God

Verse 14: “Therefore, my beloved, flee from idolatry.” So, they had idolatry there! Amazing!

We’ll take a few more verses to show that you can’t mesh together paganism and true Christianity! That’s what this is talking about.

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 of the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not *the* fellowship of the Body of Christ? For we, being many, are one body *and* one bread, because we are all partakers of the bread. Consider Israel according to *the* flesh. Are not those who eat the sacrifices partakers of the altar? What then am I saying? That an idol is anything, or that which is sacrificed to an idol is anything?” (vs 15-19). **NO! It’s nothing!** But behind it there are evil things!

Verse 20: “But that which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons, and not to God... [ultimately that’s to Satan] ...and I do not wish you to have fellowship with demons. **You cannot...**” (vs

20—21). Strong in the Greek: ‘ook’—*the impossibility!* Take this one verse and think about it.

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.** Now do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? Are we stronger than He?” (vs 21-22). He’s saying, ‘*Look, you’re tempting God!*’.

1-Cor. 11 has to do with hair length for men and women; that God created man, and woman was created from man, etc.

1-Cor. 12—concerning spiritual gifts; not everyone has the same spiritual gifts; 1-Corinthians 12:2: You know that you were Gentiles, *and* were carried away with dumb idols, as you yourselves were led away again and again.... [that’s pretty strong] ...Therefore, I am letting you know that no one speaking by *the* Spirit of God calls Jesus accursed; and no one can say *that* Jesus *is* Lord, except by *the* Holy Spirit” (vs 2-3). That means to *truly mean it!*

Verse 4: “Now there are differences of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord.... [Rev. 2 & 3, the seven churches] ...And 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*. For to one, a word of wisdom is given by the Spirit; and to another, a word of knowledge according to the same Spirit; and to a different one, faith by the same Spirit; and to another, gifts of healing by the same Spirit; and to another, *the* working of miracles; and to another, prophecy... [foretelling the Truth, more than prophesying events] ...and to another, discerning of spirits; and to a different one, various languages; and to another, *the* interpretation of languages” (vs 4-10).

Everyone wanted to have a gift. There are those who wanted to:

- have healing
- speak in tongues
- be important
- have more knowledge than others

That’s why Paul said, ‘You don’t know what you need to know, the way you need to know it. Even if you have it and you *think* you know it.’ Especially with the Bible, because the Word of God is layered and layered. It has so many fulfillments it’s incredible.

1-Cor. 13—love chapter

1-Corinthians 14:1: “Pursue love, and earnestly desire the spiritual *gifts*, but especially that

you may **prophecy**”—foretell the Scriptures in truth!

Then we have all about speaking in tongues. Today, that problem is mostly solved. We don’t need it.

1-Cor. 15—a great dissertation of the resurrection of the dead. Just to show you how bad things were in Corinth... If you’ve been in a church that has gone through the throws of doctrinal problems and people leaving and false preachers, think of this:

1-Corinthians 15:12: “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?” Add all of these problems together. Can you imagine what it was like coming together on the Sabbath? You had:

- the resurrection group over here
- the no resurrection group over there
- tongue speaking over here
- no tongue speaking over there
- ones who had knowledge and great interpretation over here
- ones who had healing over there
- ones who had knowledge over here

Paul gets up and they say, ‘Look at how ugly he is with his countenance, and that he is not a good speaker at all. Think about all the false prophets that come in. Why, they’re wonderful.’ What a congregation!

1-Cor. 16—closing comments.

Now, with that background you can see, as we get into 2-Cor. there are a lot of difficulties involved.

## **2-CORINTHIANS:**

We’ll start out by reading 2-Cor. 1:1-11<sup>[transcriber’s correction]</sup>, and then go back and look at the verses and other Scriptures that apply to them.

2-Corinthians 1:1: “Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by *the* will of God...” Remember, that’s how he opens nearly every epistle. So, these constitute the greatest authority of these writings:

- that they came from God
- it’s the will of God
- all Scripture is God-breathed
- Holy men of old were moved by the Holy Spirit
- the Holy apostles were moved by the Holy Spirit

“...and Timothy *our* brother, to the Church of God

that is in Corinth, with all the saints who are in the entire region of Achaia: Grace and peace *be* to you from God our Father and *the* Lord Jesus Christ. Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and *the* **God of all comfort**” (vs 1-3)—this becomes important. We’re going to have to think about the days that we’re living in.

Verse 4: “Who comforts us in all our tribulation... [we’re going to see that we had a lot of that] ...in order that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trial...” As we read these things and you go through your difficulties, always remember:

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.” *All things!*

*Even all the disasters! Why? Because you cry out to God! You ask God for help!* What happens when you’ve had troubles and difficulties and you pray in your earnest? Does God comfort your mind and you have peace of mind? You may need peace of mind by the next day, because of what happens later on today. So, “...**the God of all comfort...**”; *He continuously gives it!*

1-Corinthians 1:4: “...in order that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trial...” You can say to someone who’s going through a trial, ‘You know, I had a problem like that hand here’s what happened...’ Don’t worry.

“...through the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God. For to the degree that **the sufferings of Christ abound in us**... [that’s quite a thing] ...so also our comfort abounds through Christ. And if we are in distress...” (vs 4-6). How many of you have not had any oppression or distress this week?

“...*it is* for your comfort and salvation, which is being worked out by *your* enduring the same sufferings that we also suffer; *and* if we are comforted, *it is* for your comfort and salvation (and our hope *is* steadfast for you); knowing that **as you are partners in the sufferings, you are also partners in the comfort**. For we do not want you to be ignorant of our tribulations, brethren, *even the trials* that befell us...” (vs 6-8). Maybe you have experienced v 8 yourself.

“...in Asia; **we were exceedingly burdened beyond our own strength**, so much so that we even despaired of living” (v 8). The Apostle Paul!

That’s something! Remember what we covered in part one of this series, of the things that he was going to suffer for Christ.

Verse 9: “For we had the sentence of death within ourselves... [look at all that he went through] ...so that we would not trust in ourselves but in God, Who raises the dead.”

This tells us that it doesn’t matter what happens, as long as you are faithful you’re going to be in the resurrection and be a spirit being, a son/daughter of God. It’s going to be the most fantastic, awesome thing that has ever, *ever, ever* been!

Verse 10: “Who delivered us from so great a death, and continues to deliver; in Whom we have hope that He will even yet deliver”—showing that these things, trials and difficulties, come like waves of the sea. Little ones you can handle, bigger ones get more difficult. Every once in a while here comes a 200-foot wave! ***God will help us in every one!***

Verse 11: “While you also are laboring together for us by supplication *to God*, that the gift to us from many persons might be *the* cause of thanksgiving by many for us.” There were some who sent some money, and goods, to Paul.

He couches this in 2-Cor. very carefully. When we get to 2-Cor. 13, Paul says, ‘I was wrong! Forgive me, but I’m still not going to do it because I said I’m not.’

Now let’s look at a lot of Scriptures concerning difficulties and problems. After the disciples understood little bit about that Christ was going to die and be raised from the dead:

John 16:31: “Jesus answered them, ‘Do you now believe? Listen, the time is coming, and has already come... [it was going to be in a couple of hours] ...that you shall be scattered each to his own, and you shall leave Me alone; and *yet*, I am not alone because the Father is with Me. These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have **peace**... [which comes with comfort] ...**In the world you shall have tribulation. But be courageous! I have overcome the world**’” (vs 31-33).

I think of the movie with Mel Gibson—Passion of the Christ—it was very enlightening the way that he showed the scourging. That’s how it happened! That’s why Steve Green<sup>[transcriber’s correction]</sup>—his family owns of Hobby Lobby—was the one who dedicated tens of millions of dollars for the Bible Museum in Washington, D.C. Of course, here comes a good Catholic who says, ‘Why don’t you have a picture of Jesus?’ This was on Fox News, and he gave a very good answer: *Because there are so many different pictures of Jesus, we really don’t know what He looks like.*’ This was a nice way of

saying, 'I'm keeping the second commandment and not making any images.'

(go to the next track)

Comfort in times of trouble, even when you come to the point of despair! Why would God want us to come to that? *So that we learn to trust in Him!*

We need to take a little different view of problems and distress and things like that than maybe we have in the past. Never, at any time, is it pleasant going through a difficulty; that's understood. But *what is the spiritual value* is the most important. If it were not of spiritual value, God would not have you go through it! So, we need to look at it from God's point of view, and not necessarily from our point of view and have a big pity-party over it, and becomes so desperate that we get mad at God.

1-Peter 1:1: "Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the **elect** strangers..."—*selected by God!* Think about that in relationship to your life.

- Why are you here?
- Why are you with God?
- Because you were so great and found out about it? *No!*
- ***It's because God selected you!***
- How did He select you? *With His Spirit:*
  - ✓ to draw you
  - ✓ to give you strength
  - ✓ to give you understanding

"...scattered in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia; *who have been chosen according to the predetermined knowledge of God the Father...*" (vs 1-2).

Now, think about that! God's plan was already set before He ever created Adam. He had predetermined, knowing what would happen. He knew that Adam would sin; it wasn't any surprise. He didn't make Adam sin; He gave him free choice. Adam didn't have to sin. It could have been that he could have chosen to go God's way. But he didn't!

Sidebar: Last night when I was eating my apple, I took a bite of it and thought: I wonder how the 'forbidden fruit' tasted? It always pictures an apple. I just happened to think of it at that point. It didn't say that Eve took a bite; it says that she *ate!* So, I'm sitting there eating the apple and thinking: I wonder how that was? And she gave it—she must have had more than one; it doesn't say she just took one—and gave it to Adam. I imagine that when she was eating that Adam was sitting there, 'What's going to happen to her? God said that we shouldn't eat of this.'

He was a fault because he knew better. So, she came over and said, 'Look, this is really good! Try it; you'll like it!' So, what did he do? *He ate! Not a bite! He ate!*

"...by sanctification through *the Spirit, unto obedience...*" (v 2)—***obey My voice***; found in the Bible, written. You don't have to wonder what God said, or someone transmitting it to you verbally that here's a message from God, and you miss a word.

"...and sprinkling of *the blood of Jesus Christ...* [because you're here through His sacrifice] ...Grace and peace be multiplied to you. 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..." (vs 2-3).

{Note book: *From a Speck of Dust to a Son of God*; with audio and video}

"...unto a living hope through *the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead*" (v 3). All the officials, all the soldiers, every one of the Jewish authorities were looking everywhere, all over the landscape: Where did they bury the body of Christ? *They couldn't find it!*

Notice what is ahead, v 4: "Unto an inheritance incorruptible..." You can read about how New Jerusalem looks, and that's kind of just like a little speck of dust of what it's going to be like.

"...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*" (vs 4-5). That salvation is the resurrection. There are three steps to salvation:

1. you ***are saved*** from your sins when you repent and are baptized
2. you ***are being saved*** through the Gospel; a process
3. you ***shall be saved*** at the resurrection when you are a spirit being

That's salvation!

Verse 6: "In this you yourselves greatly rejoice; though for the present, if it is necessary..." How about living in this age. You can just go to the grocery store and you can end up in distress.

Sidebar: I went to Knob Hill the other night, and I had to get in and out of there real quick. Guess what happened? *Everyone*—all the clerks, all the customers—*was in distress and frustrated* because the computer went down and none of the cash registers were working. They all had their cards.

There was one open if you had cash and knew the price; she could ring it up. So, I got through that because I knew the price and I had cash! Everyone with their cards was in flat out distress and it took two hours to get it resolved. You just come to the grocery store for five minutes to get something. That's nothing spiritual. Think about all the problems of life that come along.

"...you are in distress for a little while by various trials; in order that the proving of your faith..." (vs 6-7). That's what it's for: In all those circumstances: Are you going to trust God?

"...which is much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is being tested by fire..." (v 7)—*fiery trial!*

Let's see what Christ says about that. This is for the Church of Laodicea at the end-time. We do have a lot of difficulties, don't we? *Yes!* All the problems that we saw in 1-Cor. we've all experienced with the Church, plus all the problems we will see in 2-Cor.

Revelation 3:15: "I know your works that you are neither cold nor hot; I would *that* you be *either* cold or hot."

Verse 17: "For you say, 'I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing'..."—that's why God took it all away.

Did you see that Terrace Villa—Delores stayed there for two or three years—sold for \$4.5-million. It's in escrow. All the buildings, all the grounds, everything are all gone! {in reference to the former Ambassador College and headquarters of the former WCG}

Why? *Because people trusted in the physical things!* 'Look, God's blessing is here; it's nice and wonderful and beautiful, like a little part of the Millennium.' Didn't we hear those things? *Yes, indeed!* What happened? *Instead of thanking God and giving Him glory and credit for everything and being humble, everybody got:*

- lifted up in pride
- lifted up in wealth
- lifted up in importance

*Know for sure: God's judgment is going to come!* Living in a Laodicean era, you're going to have troubles almost everywhere. Driving home you may have some troubles. These freeways are designed so that all the cars can go at 65mph, well they go at 5mph because of all the cars; there are too many cars.

"...and you do not understand that you are

wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked. I counsel you to buy from Me gold purified by fire..." (vs 17-18). What did we read in the highest standard of building on the foundation of Christ (1-Cor. 3)? *Gold!*

"...so that you may be rich; and white garments so that you may be clothed, and the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and to anoint your eyes with eye salve, so that you may see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore, be zealous and repent" (vs 18-19).

So, a lot of the things that we go through are because of this. God wants us to overcome. God wants us to grow. He wants us to trust in Him in every way.

Verse 20: "Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door..." This tells us there are a good number of people in the Church at the end-time who are marginally, if any, converted. If Christ is in you, you don't have open the door and let Him in; He's already there!

"...I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me. To the one who overcomes will I give *authority* to sit with Me in My throne..." (vs 20-21)—*and judge!*

1-Peter 1:7: "In order that the proving of your faith, 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." That is when He returns.

That's going to be an event! You hear all about the aliens from outer space; it's going to be that, but it's not going to be like the Protestants think, not going to be like the Catholics think; it's going to be a fantastic event!

Verse 8: "Whom, not having seen, you love; in Whom, *though* at the present time you do not see Him, you believe, *and* rejoice with unspeakable joy, and filled with glory."

This is how we need to handle all of the situations that we need to go through. Now let's see some of the things that we go through are corrections from God because He loves us. Either way, He still loves us because of everything.

Heb. 11, last part, goes through a lot of things that everyone listed there went through. Some of them very difficult problems. Look at it this way: Perhaps the more difficult the problem that you have or are going through, if you were successful in it, the greater your reward. Who knows what that will be?

Here's part of the mindset that we need to

have with the trials and difficulties so that we receive the comfort of God.

Hebrews 12:1: “Therefore... [considering all the witnesses in Heb. 11] ...*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 it does!

Have you seen this special shrimp that’s on the bottom of the ocean that has a real powerful knockout punch? He goes along and BOOM! cracks the shell of a crab and eats it up. It’s very small and it’s the strangest funniest thing. It has eyes on pedestals and look around back and forth. God made it! What a fantastic creation God has made! Here’s this little thing and it has more punch than a jackhammer. That’s how sin traps us! It comes along and you did it. You didn’t mean to do it, but you did it! *I’m sorry, and go repent!*

“...and let us run the race set before us with endurance” (v 1). We will see that trials and tribulations bring endurance. Here’s how you endure:

Verse 2: “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.” *Look what Christ went through for the salvation of all mankind!*

Verse 3: “Now meditate deeply on Him Who endured such great hostility of sinners against Himself so that you do not become weary and faint in your minds.” That’s why we go through these things, to have strength of mind spiritually.

You need to have your mind strengthened like iron pillars and a brazen wall, like Jeremiah. Yet, let your heart be tender within. And as Jesus Who said that He set His mind like flint. Have to, to endure all the things that He went through by the very people who should have known. Isn’t that amazing?

Verse 4: “You have not yet resisted to the point of *losing* blood in your struggle against sin.” I’ve never had an anointing for a wound because someone was resisting against sin.

Now then, here’s part of why we go through what we go through: *It’s for correction to help us!*

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; **for whom the Lord loves He chastens...**’” (vs 5-6).

Keep that in mind. If you’re going through

something real deeply, get on your knees and know that God loves you, **He loves you!** Get the strength that comes from Christ to help you through what you’re going through.

“...and He severely disciplines every son whom He receives.’ 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 6-8). That’s a pretty strong statement!

The ultimate peace and the ultimate glory for us is coming at the resurrection. That’s why Paul says to keep your eyes ‘fixed on Christ.’ Yes, the problem is there. How do you handle it? *Do the best you can! Pray about it!* You can even pray, ‘O God, help me right here.’

Verse 11: “Now truly, no chastisement for the present seems to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless, afterwards it yields *the* peaceable fruits of righteousness to those who have been exercised by it. Therefore, lift up the hands that are hanging down, and *revive* the weakened knees; and make straight paths for your feet, lest that which *is* lame be turned aside; but let it rather be healed. Pursue peace with everyone...” (vs 11-14).

Those are the words we need to strengthen us, especially when we look at things. Stop and think about all the difficult things that are happening just in California: seven major fires! Think of the trauma those are going to go through when they come back to their home and it’s a pile of ashes, and the chimney standing where the house used to be! Everything is gone! That’s very difficult.

This is why at baptism we count the cost, that we are not going to let anything come between us and God, regardless of what the trial may be.

Let’s see how this works. The Apostle Paul wrote all of these things, and he was the one who suffered more than any other apostle did, because of what he did to the Church. Remember what we read in part one of this series about God calling him, because he persecuted the Church? *God said that he was to the Gentiles and ‘you are going to suffer things for Me.’* So, Paul knows. If there is anything about troubles and tribulations, *Paul knows!*

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).

Never forget that you have direct access to God the Father and Jesus Christ. How close is God to you? *As close as your knees are to the floor!*

“...in which we stand, and we ourselves boast in *the* hope of the glory of God” (v 2). God is going to do it!

What’s it going to be like for all of us standing on the Sea of Glass and here’s the big ceremony going on. God says to all of those who are standing there, ***‘Well done faithful servants!’*** Here’s your new name, your new clothes, your assignment, your white horse, and an angel will instruct you on how to ride it.

Verse 3: “And not only *this*, but we also boast in tribulations...” I haven’t yet quite come to that; count it all joy when you fall into tribulation. I haven’t quite done that, yet. Not once! I’m not going to say that I’ll ‘work toward it’ and then I get a lot more.

“...realizing that tribulation brings forth endurance... [and resolve] ...and endurance *brings forth* character...” (vs 3-4). How does all of that bring forth character. Because you see that you need to have God. You understand that you need the:

- Spirit of God
- words of God
- forgiveness of God
- strength of God
- power of God

All of those things draw you closer to God. What if you have long-standing difficulties? *Ask God to give you greater strength!* All of us have some sort of long-standing difficulty.

“...and character *brings forth* hope. 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).

That’s the whole operation of what it is when we have a trial and difficult come upon us. Here’s what you do. Don’t get in a corner and have a pity-party with yourself and sit and cry and feel sorry for yourself, and how bad it is for you, and you can’t handle it any longer.

Psalms 11:1: “In the LORD I have taken refuge; how *then* can you say to me, ‘Flee like a bird to your mountain’? For lo, the wicked bend their bow; they make ready their arrow on the string, so that they may secretly shoot at the upright in heart” (vs 1-2)—*planned evil!* Some people experience that against them, deliberate!

Verse 3: “If the foundations are destroyed, what can the righteous do?... [here’s the consolation; what to know]: ...The LORD is in His Holy temple; the LORD’S throne is in heaven....

[you have direct access to it; that is *grace upon grace*] ...His eyes behold; His searching gaze tests the children of men. ***The LORD tries the righteous...*** [so, you have to leave that in there about temptation] ...but His soul hates the wicked...” (vs 3-5).

- Why do they prosper?
- Who is ‘the god of this world’?
- Does he control everything?
- Who are the rich people in the world?
- *Satan the devil!*
- Didn’t he promise to give that to Christ?

“...and the one who loves violence. Upon the wicked He shall rain snares, fire and brimstone...” (vs 5-6). Isn’t that going to happen at Christ’s return? *Yes, indeed!*

“...and a scorching wind shall be the portion of their cup... [sounds like the Lake of Fire] ...for the LORD is righteous, He loves righteousness; the upright will behold His face” (vs 6-7).

Think about that! Here in this one Psalm is a summary and capsulation of growing and overcoming, and receiving eternal life and entering the Kingdom of God. Where did we start? *Your Kingdom come! Your will be done!* Unity of the Scriptures.

This is a wonderful Psalm; here’s how to pray; Psalm 86:1: “Bow down Your ear, O LORD, answer me, for I am poor and needy.” When you’re troubled and distressed, aren’t you “...poor and needy...”? *Yes, indeed!*

Verse 2: “Preserve my soul, for I am Holy...” You can say:

- God, You have called me
- God, You have blessed me
- God, You have given me of your Holy Spirit
- hear my prayer
- help me
- these circumstances I don’t understand
- I don’t know what to do
- I don’t know how to handle it
- please help me
- I need Your guidance
- I need Your wisdom
- I need Your Spirit

***God will give it!*** Not all at once, but maybe you’ll be walking along and BING! God gives you the answer, like a light going on in your brain: *Yes, that’s what to do!*

“...O You my God, save Your servant who



trusts in You. Be merciful to me, O LORD, for I cry unto You all day long. Rejoice the soul of Your servant... [that is comfort] ...for to You, O LORD, do I lift up my soul, for You, LORD, are good and ready to forgive, and rich in mercy to all those who call upon You” (vs 2-5). A promise!

- Will there come a time when you may kind of doubt that promise?
- What do you do?
- *You claim the promise, because God is behind that promise! He will help you!*

Verse 6: “Give ear, O LORD, to my prayer, and attend to the voice of my supplications. **In the day of my trouble I will call upon You, for You will answer me**” (vs 6-7). That’s quite a thing!

Verse 10: “For You are great and do wonderful things; You alone are God. **Teach me Your way, O LORD...**” (vs 10-11). That’s the whole purpose of what all of it is; this is for eternal life and there’s so much to it that it is incredible.

You go along and after years of study and all the things—I’ve been a minister for how long, and I’ve done whatever I’ve done—I think: *I’m just beginning to learn!* There’s so much to learn!

“...I will walk in Your Truth; unite my heart to fear Your name. I will praise You, O LORD my God, with all my heart, and I will glorify Your name forevermore, for great is Your mercy toward me and You have delivered my soul from the depths of the grave” (vs 11-13). *That’s something!*

Verse 15: “But You, O LORD, are a God full of compassion...”—remind God of that:

- God, You’re a God of love
- You love me
- You’re a God of compassion
- You have mercy
- You have understanding
- all hope and faith comes from You

“...and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and Truth. Oh, turn to me, and have mercy upon me; give Your strength to Your servant and save the son of Your handmaid. Show me a token for good, so that they who hate me may see and be ashamed because You, LORD, **have helped me and comforted me**” (vs 15-17). There it is, right there!

I remember a young man who because he kept the Sabbath lost his job. He ended up with a better job. He was all depressed when he lost his job: ‘What am I going to do?’ I said, ‘Look to God! Remember that God is there! He’ll help you; ask

Him and He’ll provide for you. But if you just sit around and do nothing... Yes, it’s a disaster that you lost your job, but if you turn to God, something good will happen.’ What happened? *He got a better job!*

Psalms 31:9: “Be gracious unto me, O LORD, for I am in distress; my eye is consumed with grief, yea, *even* my soul and my body; for my life is spent with grief and my years with sighing; my strength fails because of my iniquity, and my bones have wasted away. Because of all my adversaries I have become a reproach, but especially among my neighbors, and a dread to my friends; those from outside who saw me fled from me” (vs 9-11). I wonder how sick David was at that time.

Psalms 30:10: “Hear, O LORD, and be gracious unto me; LORD, be my helper.” That’s what Christ has promised (Heb. 13).

Verse 11: “You have turned my mourning into dancing; You have torn off my sackcloth and have clothed me with gladness, to the end that my glory may sing praise to You and not be silent. **O LORD my God, I will give thanks to You forever**” (vs 11-12).

When you have troubles and difficulties, get out the Psalms! Go through them; start your prayers with reading some Psalms, and then let your own words come from that. Here’s what we do:

Psalms 54:1: “Save me, O God, by Your name, and vindicate me by Your might. Hear my prayer, O God; give ear to the words of my mouth” (vs 1-2). Yes, God loves you. His Spirit is in you and He wants you. He wants you to overcome.

Verse 3: “For strangers have risen up against me, and violent men seek after my soul; they have not set God before them. Selah.” This could be a prayer of Christ just before He was arrested.

Verse 4: “Behold, God is my helper... [claim that promise] ...the LORD is with those who uphold my soul. He shall reward evil to my enemies. Destroy them in Your faithfulness” (vs 4-5).

It looks like a lot of people have been praying about that for the Democrat Party. We’ll have to see what happens. Who would have ever guessed that all of this corruption would have come out? There has to be something that God is doing to expose it and give a little peace and prosperity for a while. There is more that has to be done to preach the Gospel.

You’ve heard the things that I’ve said about those who are sending out the Bible translated verbally for those who do not have a written language. They’re sending it to them with a player

and a little solar panel so they can charge the battery. They can have it anywhere. They don't need a plug, electricity, phone, etc. It's right there. They don't know how to read, it can be there: repent and be baptized.

Think about what it says about 'to the ends of the earth.' Remember, the apostles never got there. But is it going to get there today? *Yes, indeed!* And those of you have your digital phones, you've got it in your hand; what a cheap way to get the Bible to everyone? How much does it cost you to download the Bible? *Zero!* Preaching the Gospel everywhere! Where is the Gospel? *In the Bible!* If you've got the Bible, and it you have it and it has reached you, it has been preached and written, and you live at the end of the earth, *you have the Truth of God as a witness!*

Whether they read it, or listen, that's their choice, but God has done it so that no one can ever say, 'God, You never let me know.'

There's this company that's paying to have all the satellites to have Wi-Fi free around the world. That's not so that they can play games. *That's so that the Gospel can be preached and given around the world to every single human being!*

So, preaching the Gospel to the whole world as a witness is a fantastic job, and God is the One Who is making all of that possible. No church can say that they're preaching the Gospel to the world. We need to change that. We will preach to the world as much as we can with what You give us to do with it in the way that You want, and may the Churches of God do it.

Then just suppose what's going to happen when the two witnesses get here. So, there are a lot of things that are going to take place.

Psalm 20:1: "**May the LORD answer you in the day of trouble**, the name of the God of Jacob set you on high, **may He send you help from the sanctuary...**" (vs 1-2)—directly from God. If He sends an angel, that is directly from God.

Verse 3: **May He remember all your offerings** and accept your burnt sacrifice. Selah." All of the good things that you have done. Remember, He says that He will forget all your sins.

Verse 4: "**May He grant you according to your own heart and fulfill all your plans**. We will shout for joy in your victory, and in the name of our God we will set up banners. **May the LORD fulfill all your prayers**" (vs 4-5).

*That is the comfort that we get from God in our tribulations!*

#### Scriptural References:

- 1) Psalm 23:1-6
- 2) Matthew 6:6-10, 33, 10-13
- 3) Matthew 4:1
- 4) 1 Corinthians 8:1-3
- 5) 1 Corinthians 9:6:16
- 6) 1 Corinthians 10:9-11, 14-22
- 7) 1 Corinthians 12:2-10
- 8) 1 Corinthians 14:1
- 9) 1 Corinthians 15:12
- 10) 2 Corinthians 1:1-4
- 11) Romans 8:28
- 12) 2 Corinthians 1:4-11
- 13) John 16:31-33
- 14) 1 Peter 1:1-7
- 15) Revelation 3:15, 18-21
- 16) 1 Peter 1:7-8
- 17) Hebrews 12:1-8, 11-14
- 18) Romans 5:1-5
- 19) Psalm 11:1-7
- 20) Psalm 86:1-7, 10-13, 15-17
- 21) Psalm 31:9-11
- 22) Psalm 30:10-12
- 23) Psalm 54:1-5
- 24) Psalm 20:1-5

#### Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- 1 Kings 18
- Luke 11
- Acts 2-5
- 1 Corinthians 10:7-8; 11
- Revelation 2; 3
- 1 Corinthians 13; 16; 13; 3
- Hebrews 11; 13

Also referenced: Book: *From a Speck of Dust to a Son of God* by Fred R. Coulter

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## Second Corinthians III How God Comforts Us

(Chapters 1-3)

*Claim the promises of comfort, encouragement and competency of God*

Fred R. Coulter

Greetings, everyone! Welcome to Sabbath services. This is # [transcriber's correction] in the series in 2-Corinthians, and I think this is important with the things that we're going through today.

We covered about half of 2-Cor. 1, so we'll finish the other half of it, and we'll get in to chapter two. 2-Cor. is very important from the point of view that it records all the sufferings and difficulties that Paul went through.

Remember that when he was called he was told that 'you're going to have to suffer for Me.' He found that his comfort was with God.

### 2-CORINTHIANS 1:

2-Corinthians 1:3: "Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and ***the God of all comfort***... [which can also mean *encouragement*] ...Who comforts us in ***all*** our tribulation..." (vs 3-4)—not some, not part, *but all!* The thing that's also important is much of the comfort comes after we have gone through whatever trial there is.

I've told you quite a few times about this series: *Assaults Against the Church #s1-4*. I've been reading through it since I asked you to get it and go through it. I wondered what did I preach? because some of these were done a long time ago.

I tell you what, #14 (Dan/Rev Series) entitled, *Hurricane Against God's People (#3 in Assaults Against the Church)*, that's what everything looked like it was just spiraling out of control. So. I'm going to say, get this and go through it. Why do I say it? ***Because it's going to happen again!*** Remember that Satan is never done. As we found with the seven churches in Rev. 2 & 3, *Satan is there and comes back again and again*. What was it said of the temptation of Jesus after He succeeded that initial temptation? *'And the devil left Him for a season.'* So, Satan came back!

Think of all the viciousness that came with the Passover Day. That was especially powerful because the One Who was the Lord God of Old Testament became Jesus Christ, and He gave all the prophecies concerning what He would suffer through, and *He knew it*. That's why He prayed so fervently there in the Garden of Gethsemane.

John 16:33[transcriber's correction]: "...In the world you shall have tribulation. But be courageous! I have overcome the world." That's very important for us to always remember.

2-Corinthians 1:4: "...in order that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trial, through the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.... [notice he's admitting all the suffering that he went through]: ... For to the degree *that* the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so also our comfort abounds through Christ" (vs 4-5).

Then he explains. They came to the point that they were distressed of even life. We'll see a little later how that came about.

Verse 13: "For we do not write *any* other things to you but what you have read and already acknowledge; and I hope that you will acknowledge *them* even to the end; according as you did also acknowledge us in part..." (vs 13-14).

What does he mean by that? *This is Paul's way of telling them that, yes, you did send me a little sustenance to help me along the way!* He said he had to 'take wages from other churches and rob them,' because he didn't collect any tithes or offerings from them.

Why? *Because there were so many false apostles coming in, and the people were welcoming them with open arms!* They were Israelites, Abrahamites, and they were probably the Jews coming out of Alexandria like Apollos. Whatever happened to Apollos, we don't know. He just drops out. We hope he was faithful.

Coming out of Alexandria, makes me raise a the question: What happened to him doctrinally later on? *We don't know!* But we do know that the New Testament out of Alexandria is filled with a lot of errors. So, if that's what he was using, that may be part of the reason why we know nothing about him.

"...that we are your boasting, even as you are also our *boasting* in the day of the Lord Jesus" (v 14).

Here's another thing to understand. The apostles were expecting Christ to return before they died. Then when you look at all of the events beginning in 62 A.D. beginning with the martyrdom of

James, the brother of Jesus. Everything started to unfold.

They saw everything out of Matt.24, Luke 21 and Mark 13: *many coming in the name of Christ, wars and rumors of war, race against race!* Here you were having the beginning of the rebellion of Jews against Rome.

They were saying, 'If we get enough—especially for the last Passover they had there before they destroyed Jerusalem—the way that God is going to save us if we get as many Jews here as we can for the Passover.' They had 2.5-million Jews there in the city, but that was their death warrant. They ran out of food from the time of Passover until the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> of Ab. They actually had enough food normally to run in Jerusalem for 3 or 4 years, but there were so many they ate it all up. If you can read the account of *Josephus* about the fall of Jerusalem, it was horrible, terrible, cannibalism! *Amazing stuff!*

Verse 15: "And with this confidence I had previously planned to come to you so that you might have a second benefit... [from my visit]...and *after coming* by you, *I intended* to travel through to Macedonia, and to come again from Macedonia to you, and *then* be accompanied by you to Judea" (vs 15-16)—to take all the food that they had grown that year for famine relief for those down in the area of Judea.

Verse 17: "Now then, in planning this *journey*, was I light-minded? Or *are* the things *that* I resolve to do motivated by *the* flesh, that there should be with me *wavering between* yes and no?"

He had to change his schedule. They were saying, 'Why don't you come?' So, he's explaining to them, 'I did intend...'

Verse 18: "But God *is* faithful, so that our word to you was not yes and no. For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, Who was preached by us among you (by me and Silvanus and Timothy), was not *first* yes and *then* no, but in Him has *always* been yes. For whatever promises of God *there are*, in Him *is* the yes, and in Him the Amen, with glory to God by us" (vs 18-20).

In other words, whatever the will of God is, as we're going along, that's what we are going to be sufficiently satisfied with.

Verse 21 "**But He Who establishes us with you in Christ, and Who has anointed us, is God**" (v 21).

We're going to talk about how God comforts us in just a bit. There's a lot of comfort that

He can give. We are going to need it in the days ahead. Think about all those people who went through the hurricanes, the cold, the winter blast back East. It was something!

Sidebar: Because of that, the homeless in the nation moved out to California, a good number of them. California has 25% of the homeless in the United States.

One other thing, next time you go to bed and go to sleep, you're in your comfortable house, you have your comfortable bed, you have your pillow just where you need it and you have your blankets just right. You have the thermostat just right. You prayed, you're ready for bed. You get in bed and it's nice and warm. You sleep really well. Just think about those who sleep on the street, who have very few things to go by.

Verse 22: "Who has also sealed us and has given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts." Let's look at how God does that, because this is very important. This has an awful lot to do with how we are comforted through Christ, even though there are difficulties we go through.

I can't believe in reading #10, *Hurricane Against the Church*, what we were going through then. Everything was upside down. The worse kind of torment you go through is if you believe you know the Truth, and then you have that ripped away from you and told that's wrong. That's why we have to:

- prove the Truth
- understand the Truth
- always stick with the Truth

We can claim the promises from God in John 14. Jesus was telling them that He was going away, but He would come again. He said He was going to the Father:

John 14:12: "...I am going to the Father. And whatever you shall ask in My name, this will I do that the Father may be glorified in the Son" (vs 12-13).

Sometimes you ask for things and it doesn't come right away. Why? *Because God's timing is different than ours!* Have you ever asked for something and you've been going along, and all of a sudden—I know this has happened to me in driving a car—DING! God answered that prayer, and I had prayed the prayer quite a long time before that.

Sometimes God doesn't answer right away. What is the qualifying factor from Matt. 6 on prayer? 'Oh, God, help me win the Lotto.' *No!* We

ask the first thing, *after we honor God*, ‘Your will be done **on earth** as it is in heaven’—referring to us, and then whatever else God is doing on the earth. *In our personal prayer that refers to us!* So, whatever we ask, according to the will of God, He will do it. That’s part of the comfort we are to have:

- faith
- knowledge
- hope
- comfort

*altogether with the love of God!* We will be comforted, even if there are things going around that are very difficult to handle outside of our own sphere.

Verse 14: “If you ask anything in My name, I will do it.”

Notice another qualifier for answered prayer and for comfort. We’ve covered this many, many times, haven’t we?

Verse 15: “If you love Me, keep the commandments—namely, My commandments. And I will ask the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter...” (vs 15-16). ***The Holy Spirit gives us the comfort in our mind***, provided that we pray and we do the things that God wants.

Let’s see what we need to hold on to as the foundation of this for the comfort that we need to have.

“...that it may be with you throughout the age: ***Even the Spirit of the Truth...***” (vs 16-17). That’s the most important thing! This helps us:

- overcome the deceitfulness of human nature
- to convict us in conscience
- to lead us in our thoughts

*So we don’t become totally bottomed-out and think there’s no hope for anything!*

Verse 17: “*Even the Spirit of the Truth*, which the world cannot receive because it perceives it not, nor knows it; but you know it because it dwells with you, and shall be within you.”

We read this every Passover and we cover it in sermons during the year. Why? *Because this is one of the most important, key foundational things that we have from God!* This is the earnest of the Spirit. The earnest is *the down payment for eternal life*.

Verse 18: “I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you. Yet, a little while and the world shall see Me no longer; but you shall see Me. Because I live, you shall live also” (vs 18-19).

Remember when He suddenly appeared in the room when they were all there for fear of the Jews? They couldn’t believe it. But can you imagine the joy. It was forty days and forty nights that Jesus was with them, teaching them many things concerning the Kingdom of God and the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms.

Verse 20: “In that day, you shall know that I am in My Father...”—because He came back from the dead.

Stop and think about what He endured with the scourging and everything, and how disfigured that He was when He died on that cross. Here He appears into the room. We covered that in the sermon, *News, **Flesh & Bone**, & New Testament Fraud*.

Verse 21: “The one who has My commandments and is keeping them, that is the one who loves Me...”

Let’s look at Protestantism again: If you build something on a lie, how much truth can you put on a lie? Let’s look at it in building on the sand.

In Sand City it’s easy to build, nothing but sand. All you do is water down the sand, level off the dirt, and then you can dig out the foundation real easy, easy to pour, no problem at all. Let’s say you build in Sand City a wonderful house, has everything in it, everything modern. You walk up to the door, and you just say, ‘Door open,’ and it opens up. You have the best thing in the kitchen, the best bed, the best view, the best ultra high definition television. You have whatever you want, whatever you need.

But a 200-foot wave from Monterey Bay hits your house. *It’s gone because there’s no foundation, there’s no rock!* That’s why we’re to build on ***the Rock!***

I’ve been watching on TBN and the different ministers. They have some lousy speakers. They have some very good speakers. Some of them give very great sermons *to a point*. ***But you can’t preach the Truth of God based on the lie of:***

- Sunday
- the immortality of the soul
- the holidays of this world

I do not care how much Scripture you read, you may understand it to a certain point, but you cannot have a lie and build an edifice that’s going to stand all the problems that come along.

Likewise financially: Our whole financial system is based upon a lie, which is debt. Debt is

only accepted when people have confidence that it has value. So, when it has no value, the whole thing's going to come tumbling down. What's everybody going to do?

- you have all this prosperity
- you have all these things that you have
- you have all the things that you buy
- you work
- you build

*The whole society is based upon it!*

Speculation: I suspect that somewhere down the road during the tenure of Donald Trump, they're going to have to re-evaluate the dollar downward, because of all the debt. There are going to be a lot of people go completely bottom-up, lose everything, *because it's built on a lie!* This is why we're given the Spirit of Truth.

Verse 21: "The one who has My commandments and is keeping them, that is the one who loves Me... [He said He was Lord of the Sabbath Day, so Sunday is of no account] ... and the one who loves Me shall be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will manifest Myself to him." ***That is a great promise!***

If you get really discouraged, really down, things are really kind of all upset and you're just completely frustrated, turn to this section of the Bible, *and claim the promises here. Ask for the comfort of God!* You need it first inwardly with His Spirit, not just the physical circumstances around 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?'" That came four days later.

Tie in v 21, 23, 24; *these are the most important verses in our personal relationship with Jesus Christ and God the Father!* Most important!

Verse 23: "Jesus answered and said to him, 'If anyone loves Me, he will keep My Word; and My Father will love him, and **We** will come to him and make **Our** abode with him.'"

Most important thing in our lives is—with the earnest of the Spirit—that *we have the Spirit of Christ to develop the mind of Christ!* We have the begettal from the Father to be His future sons and daughters as spirit beings as Christ is a spirit being. ***We will see Him as He is, because we will be like Him!*** Keep that in mind, in the forefront of your mind when you're going through a difficulty that is hard to handle. Sometimes there are things that are hard, difficult to handle. That's how you do that.

How precious is the Word of God? Remember, there are nearly 7-billion people on the earth.

Ephesians 1:9: "**Having made known to us the mystery...** [secret] **...of His own will...**" How important is the plan of God?

Protestants never get past forgiveness of sin. That is the ultimate because they have the false doctrine of when you die you go to heaven. If you say, 'Lord, I believe in You; forgive me for my sins,' you're set for eternity. ***That's as anti-Scriptural as can be!***

Verse 9: "Having made known to us the mystery of His own will, according to His good pleasure, which He purposed in Himself."

Think about how much that God has given us to know and understand. That's something! That should encourage everyone in any predicament.

Verse 10: "That in *the Divine* plan for the fulfilling of *the* times, He might bring all things together in Christ, both the things in the heavens and the things upon the earth; *yes*, in Him, in Whom we also have obtained an inheritance... [but you don't get it until you get there] ...having been predestinated according to His purpose..." (vs 10-11).

I've got another thing that I read, I might even put it on here. It talks about the human cell. If you think that's the smallest thing, and all the cells that compose our body, every one of those cells have structure, function and atoms. Did you know that our bodies have trillions of atoms? That's an amazing thing! When David writes, '*We are fearfully and awesomely made,*' that was quite a statement! Now we can understand it more than ever before. *Every cell is structured on the pattern of the universe!* Just like I read earlier, the more you get into the Word of God, the more profound it becomes.

"...Who is working out all things according to the counsel of His own will" (v 11).

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"—because sometimes it's God's will that we suffer. ***Sometimes it's God's will that there is nothing to cling to except God, Who alone can give us the comfort we need!*** That's an amazing thing!

Ephesians 1:12: "That we might be to *the* praise of His glory, who first trusted in the Christ."

How's that going to work? *When Christ returns and all the saints are resurrected, and we take over the government of the world!* That sure

needs to be done everywhere in the world. Even here in the flunk-out of the United States Senate. What a stupid rule that you have to have 60 votes before you can even consider voting on something's that necessary, like the budget.

So, as you can see with that, that's not the best government in the world. The best government in the world is coming with Christ, when He returns, and *we* are the ones who are going to run it. It's not going to be run on compromise, it's going to be run on Truth. There's going to be no problem with the budget. God is going to declare it. No excess taxes, *but you will tithe.*

- What's it going to be like, just in the human realm? *We don't know!*
- What is it going to be like in the spiritual realm?
- Did Christ have to suffer? *Yes, He did!*
- Was He comforted when He was resurrected? *Yes, He was!*

*Likewise with us!*

Verse 13: "In Whom you also trusted after hearing the Word of the Truth, the Gospel of your salvation; in Whom also, after believing, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, which is *the* earnest of our inheritance until *the* redemption of the purchased possession, to *the* praise of His glory" (vs 13-14).

If you get down and discouraged, don't sit there and have a pity-party just for yourself. Get out the Bible and go to some of the Psalms. There are a lot of good Psalms there.

- the *comfort* is going to come from God
- the *courage* is going to come from God

so that we come to the converted point of view that nothing in this world is going to take us from God the Father and Jesus Christ. Satan has other thoughts and schemes.

2-Corinthians 1:22: "Who has also sealed us and has given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts. But I call upon God to bear witness of my intentions, that in order to spare you I did not yet come to Corinth" (vs 22-23).

We'll see why when at the end. Sometimes it's good to look at the end. Sometimes when you get a book, you read the conclusion first.

2-Corinthians 13:1: "This *is the* third time *that* I am coming to you. In *the* mouth of two or three witnesses every matter shall be established." They were fighting and warring among each other: I said, you said, they said.

Verse 2: "I have previously told *you*, and I am telling you in advance the second time, as though I were present; but since I am absent now, I am writing to those who have continued to sin until now—and to all the rest—that if I come again, I will not spare."

He's telling them up front, 'Really I don't want to have to come and go through this with you guys.' When he gets to the end, he sees he's going to have to.

Verse 3: "Since you seek a proof of Christ speaking through me (Who is not weak toward you, but is powerful in you." Paul is weak, but we have the Spirit and it is powerful in you.

Verse 4: "For although He was crucified in weakness, yet, He lives by God's power; and we are indeed weak in Him, but we shall live with Him by God's power toward you), examine yourselves *to see* whether you are in the faith; prove your own selves...." (vs 4-5).

Paul was dealing with a lot of unconverted people. I think there are a lot of unconverted people within the Church. There were in the past, where did they go? As soon as the opportunity came for them to go back into the world, they went back into the world.

"...Don't you *of* your own selves know that Jesus Christ is in you? Otherwise, you are reprobates. But I hope that you will recognize that we are not reprobates" (vs 5-6).

2-Corinthians 1:23: "But I call upon God to bear witness of my intentions, that in order to spare you I did not yet come to Corinth; not that we exercise lordship over your faith, but because we are working with you *to increase* your joy. For you stand by faith" (vs 23-24).

That's the whole purpose of all the correction here that we get in 2-Cor. that

- they stand by faith, and not by sight
- that they exercise the things with spiritual knowledge, not with carnal fleshly knowledge

*Not arguing back and forth among each other!*

(go to the next track)

Before we get into chapter two, there are just a couple of things that we need to cover here to finish off *the joy, the overcoming, the comforting* and so forth.

If you want a really, really good study, take the time and study through the entire Psalm 119. When you're done with it, see if you think that:

1. These are the inspired ways that Christ looked at the laws and commandments of God.

*When you get done with it, ask:*

2. Why would anyone in his/her right mind want to abolish the laws, commandments, statutes, judgments, and precepts of God?

Each one of these sections is based upon one of the 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet. This was to be sung by memory by the Levite singers at the temple. Each section contains 8 verses.

Psalm 119:49: "Remember the Word to Your servant upon which **You have caused me to hope.**"

Joy and hope go together. When you're in trouble and difficulty and affliction, *you hope* for God to intervene. *You hope* that things will get better. *God will, and can!*

Verse 50: "This is my comfort in my affliction, that Your Word has given me life." Remember what Jesus said, *'The words that I speak to you, they are Spirit and they are Life!'*

There's something that happens with God's Spirit within us, when we study the Word of God, and we get the spiritual meaning out of it that can :

- give us comfort
- give us hope
- can help us come out of depression
- can help us come out of tailspin of despair

*That's why it is so great!*

Verse 51: "The proud have utterly scorned me, yet, I do not turn aside from Your Law. I remembered Your judgments of old, O LORD, and **have comforted myself**" (vs 51-52).

Think about that. With the Spirit of God, with the Word of God, you can come to have comfort through the Word of God and His Spirit, though there may be a lot of difficulties still going on out around you.

Verse 73: "**Your hands have made me and formed me...**" Back to conception! Conception is because of genes and chromosomes from father and mother, which come from their father and mother, all the way back to Adam and Eve.

Did He form them with His hands? *Yes, He did!* He put the genes and chromosomes in there, so it's the same way. God put it into the genes and

chromosomes to form us, the same way, beginning with conception, that He formed Adam and Eve. Only they were full grown adults with a working language and everything.

"...give me understanding so that I may learn Your commandments" (v 73).

Stop and think about this: the commandments of God, like everything else, are layered and layered with many different meanings. So, we learn as we study and restudy. I find that when I go back and study something and go over things that I haven't gone over in a long time, I learn a lot.

Just like going through this #10 in the *Assaults Against the Church*. I didn't remember that I preached all of that, because there was so much going on, it was like the tail end of a storm coming in and keeping it all upset and upside down.

Verse 74: "Those who fear You will be glad when they see me because I have hoped in Your Word.... [a prophecy of Christ] ...I know, O LORD, that Your judgments are right, and that You have afflicted me in faithfulness" (vs 74-75).

We do have troubles and afflictions that come for our good.

Verse 76: "I beseech You, let Your steadfast love comfort me... [tie that in with John 14 about the Comforter] ...according to Your promise to Your servant. Let Your tender mercies come to me so that I may live, for Your Law is my delight" (vs 76-77).

We're going to cover a couple of things where Paul said we want to be helpers of your joy. With that he is saying we do not rule you with an iron fist.

Matt. 20 is quite a chapter, because we have some very important things going on. This tells us not to get politics within the Church.

Matthew 20:18: "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of man shall be betrayed to the chief priests and scribes, and they shall condemn Him to death; and they shall deliver Him up to the Gentiles to mock *Him*, and to scourge *Him*, and to crucify *Him*; but He shall rise again the third day" (vs 18-19). That sailed over their head. They didn't understand it until it occurred.

Verse 20: "Then the mother of the sons of Zebedee..."—James and John. It's possible that she was the sister of Mary. A little political inside job here?



You know what they have in business? You need a pusher and a puller. The way you advance is you push important people up by flattering them and then they pull you up to their level, because they like you. This is what we have going on here. This is what happened in the Church of God that caused its downfall, because they went against exactly what Jesus taught.

Verse 20: “Then the mother of the sons of Zebedee came to Him with her sons, worshiping Him... [you can almost picture this] ...and asking a certain thing from Him. And He said to her, ‘What do you desire?’ She said to Him, ‘Grant that these my two sons may sit one at Your right hand and one at Your left hand in Your kingdom’” (vs 20-21).

They couldn’t go and ask Jesus for that themselves. We don’t know what on earth kind of conversation was between mother and James and John as they were discussing this. But here we have some vanity that ‘we’re important.’

It was true that James and John, along with Peter, were the ones to go see the vision of Transfiguration.

Verse 22: “But Jesus answered *and* said, ‘You do not know what you are asking...’” I don’t know if she had one son on one side and one on the other, but then Jesus talks to James and John.

“...Are you able to drink the cup that I am about to drink, and to be baptized *with* the baptism that I am baptized *with*?’.... [that’s His own blood] ...They said to Him, ‘We are able’” (v 22). They didn’t have a clue as what they were saying.

As it turned out, James was beheaded in about 44<sub>A.D.</sub> Also, they were of the high priest family as well. This is kind of—‘well, genetically, we’re important, Lord, just think what we can do for You, one at your right hand and one at your left hand.’

Verse 23: “And He said to them, ‘You shall indeed drink of My cup, and shall be baptized *with* the baptism that I am baptized *with*...’”

How was John martyred? It didn’t afflict him, but he was cast into boiling oil. How’s that for a baptism? Didn’t hurt him! He came out, then was given the book of Revelation.

“...but to sit at My right hand and at My left *hand* is not Mine to give, but *shall be given to those* for whom it has been prepared by My Father.’ And after hearing *this*, the ten were indignant against the two brothers” (v 24).

‘How dare they go in there and try politicking and try to get the best position, leaving

us all alone, hanging out here. We’re important too.’ Jesus had to settle the argument:

Verse 25: “But Jesus called them to *Him and* said...” Very important thing: ***Ministers do not rule over the faith of the brethren!*** We are to help them come to God all the time *with His Word and with His Truth!*

“...‘You know that the rulers of the nations exercise lordship... [‘katakuriuo,’ *downward authority from a hierarchy*; that’s the rulers of the nations] ...and the great ones exercise authority over them’” (v 25)—‘katexousiazō.’

- Who are the great ones?
- Is there someone in Acts 8 called a great one? *Simon Magus, the religious leader of Samaria!*
- Do we have his successor in Rome today, who is a great one? *Yes, indeed!*
- Does he sit at the top of a hierarchy? *Yes, indeed!*

Verse 26: “However, it shall not be this way among you; but whoever would become great among you, let him be your servant, and whoever would be first among you, let him be your slave; just as the Son of man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life *as* a ransom for many (vs 26-28).

Peter said the same thing; don’t treat the brethren as your personal possessions with lordship over them, but be examples, help them, teach them. (1-Peter 5).

We remember some of the stern correction we got down in Pasadena years ago. Yes, indeed! All of that stern correction was when trouble came and they didn’t want to admit the truth. They wanted to lie and say none of these things occurred. Instead of admitting and saying, ‘Yes, there are great problems here and, brethren, we need your help and prayers. We’ve got to solve these things. We can’t let these continue this way.’ If they would have done that, would have been a different story. Maybe the colleges would still be there. That would have been a great thing.

We’re going to learn another principle—the principle of forgiveness. That has to be upon sincere and deep repentance, because it involves the one who in 1-Cor. 5 was the one who was committing incest with his stepmother. That’s a pretty grievous sin. Apparently he really repented.

## **2-CORINTHIANS 2:**

2-Corinthians 2:1: “Now I am resolved within myself not to come to you again in sorrow. if I make you sorrowful, who is it that makes me glad ... [What do you do? *You point out the hope!*] ...if it is not the one who has been made sorrowful by me? And I wrote this same *thing* to you, lest when I come, I might have sorrow from *those* in whom I ought to rejoice; *for* I have confidence in all of you, that my joy is *the joy* of you all. For out of much distress and anguish of heart I wrote to you with many tears—not that you might be sorrowful, but that you might know the overflowing love, which I have for you” (vs 1-4).

Any correction that he wrote and said, ‘Remove this one, and you do it.’ When it involves people in the congregation or the people in the congregation to participate in what is necessary for the correction and removal.

How many times had it happened in the Church? Someone the hierarchy didn’t like, disfellowshipped, labeled and discredited? *Many times!* That’s not the way it’s to be done. Is there any question then why God had to do what He did with the Church? Had to happen!

Verse 5: “But if anyone has caused sorrow, he has not grieved me, but you all, *at least* in part (in order that I may not overcharge *him*). To such a one this punishment, which *was inflicted* by the majority *of you*, is sufficient; so that on the contrary, you should rather forgive and encourage *him*... [comfort] ...lest such a one be swallowed up with overwhelming sorrow” (vs 5-7).

There have been things so bad with hierarchies, I know of at least three suicides. The correction wasn’t given to encourage them to overcome a sin, it was given to destroy the person. *God doesn’t want that!* If there’s something that needs to be corrected, *help with the encouragement* when you can.

Verse 8: “For this reason, I exhort you to confirm *your* love toward him. Now, for this *cause* I wrote *to you*, that I might know by testing you whether you are obedient in everything. But to whom you forgive anything, I also *forgive*; and if I also have forgiven anything, to whomever I have forgiven *it*, for your sakes *I forgave it* in the person of Christ... [Why?] ...**so that we may not be outwitted by Satan**, for we are not ignorant of his schemes” (vs 8-11).

Very interesting in the Greek; it means his thoughts. So that’s why we need to know the enemy. We’ll cover that a little more when we get to 2-Cor. 4. *Satan always comes along to give a benefit!* That

benefit is a reassuring lie, rather than a inconvenient truth.

Verse 12: “Now when I came to Troas *to preach* the Gospel of Christ, and a door was opened to me by *the* Lord, I had no rest in my spirit because I *was not able* to find Titus, my brother; then I left them *and* went into Macedonia” (vs 12-13).

Think about this: No phones, slow mail, no communication back and forth. So, he leaves from over there in Troas, which is on the northern part of what is Turkey today, the northern western part. And you go to Macedonia, going to look for Titus. He had to have God’s help to do it.

Verse 14: “But thanks *be* to God, Who always leads us triumphant in Christ, and manifests the fragrance of His knowledge through us in every place.... [he found him] ...For we are Christ’s sweet perfume to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing... [those who don’t like us, those who are not in the Church] ...to those *who are perishing*, *we are* a stench of death unto death...” (vs 14-16).

A little example happened to me. I hadn’t had my teeth cleaned in a long time, so I called the dentist, and I said, ‘If you have a cancellation, I’ll come in.’ She said, ‘We have one tomorrow at 11:30.’ Here’s this nice gal and she does a real good job in cleaning teeth. Here you are, leaning back, and now they have you put on sunglasses so you don’t get any water or broken teeth in your eyeballs and stuff like that.

She’s saying, ‘How did your Christmas go?’ I said, ‘As well as could be expected.’ I could have said, ‘You rotten pagan. You’re misled in your belief.’ Here this sweet little gal. She says, ‘Easter’s coming up. What are you going to do?’ I said, ‘I don’t know, yet.’

Then I had another one: the doorbell rings and so I go down there and here are two men standing there. ‘We’re following up on your request.’ I said, ‘Oh, really, what was that?’ One said, ‘We’re from the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints, and we have come to explain about Mormonism.’

So I reached back and got my blowtorch and burned them up. *No!* I said, ‘I don’t know anything about it, but I’m a minister myself, and I used to pastor in Salt Lake City, and I know all about Mormonism. I’m sure that you can help someone else. Thank you for stopping by.’ Dolores would be proud that I said that.

Remember years ago, little kids would come up to the house with the parents on Halloween. I would say, 'Don't you know this is pagan?' So, I guess I learn a little.

"...but to those *who are being saved, we are* a fragrance of life unto life. And *who is* qualified for such things?" (v 16).

In other words, the only one who qualifies us for anything is Christ. It's not by who you are, who your parents were, who your aunt and uncle were, who your friends are, it's what Christ makes us qualified.

Verse 17: "For we are not like the many, who for *their own* profit are corrupting the Word of God... [we'll tie that in with the schemes of Satan in 2-Cor. 4] ...but we speak with sincerity, as from God, *and* before God, *and* in Christ."

This tells us why, like we just had, we had covered, *God the Father Was Not the God of the Old Testament*. Was it the Father? Or was it the one Who became Jesus Christ? *Wasn't the Father*. As we saw, the Father is referred to, but not revealed. The Most High. But it doesn't tell us anything except there is one above the Lord God of the Old Testament—the Most High.

## 2-CORINTHIANS 3:

Luke 16 is very instructive. Jesus said, 'The Law and the Prophets were till John, and from John the Kingdom of God is preached.' The Protestants go there and say, 'See, when John came, the Law and the Prophets were done away.' **No!** because a little later Jesus said, 'Not one jot or tittle shall depart from the law until everything is fulfilled.' That includes the prophets.

So when you read all of Luke 16 you get the correct understanding. That's why you come in and pick a verse out and you clip the top off and you clip the bottom off and take the verse, you're going to come up with something that's not actually true. Is the qualification for the Kingdom of God greater than the things of the Old Testament? *Yes, indeed, because they're in the Spirit!* We will see there are two kinds of blindness.

1. 2-Cor. 4 talks about *the blindness by Satan* the devil
2. 2-cor. 3 talks about *the blindness that happens to Israel* is a partial blinding

This is what it's talking about, the partial blinding.

2-Corinthians 3:1: "Do we again begin to commend ourselves?...."

If you go to TBN, you'll see how they commend themselves and how great they are and how great the other person is. It's a self-righteous love feast and everything is just hunky-dory and great. This alludes somewhat to that.

"...Or do we, as some, need epistles of commendation to you, or *epistles* of commendation from you?" (v 1).

Because these false prophets would come along and they would listen to them, and say, 'Oh, that's wonderful.' He probably would say, 'Would you write a commendation for me, because I've got to go here, and also speak to these people.' 'Oh, yeah, we'll do that. *This man was a wonderful preacher, really taught us some good things.*'

Verse 2: "You are our epistle, and are inscribed in our hearts, being known and read by all men." In other words, their converted conduct was a testimony of who they are and what they're doing.

Verse 3: "*For* it is manifest that you are Christ's epistle, ministered by us; you were not inscribed with *pen and ink*, but with *the Spirit of the living God*; not on tablets of stone, but on fleshly tablets of *the heart*."

What was on the tablets of stone? *The Ten Commandments!* The first one: God made the tablets and wrote on them. But when Israel sinned, and Moses came down off the mountain, he was so angry he threw them on the ground and broke them. So, God told Moses when he came up there the second time, 'You get yourself tablets of stones, like you had the first time, and I will write on them'—wrote the Ten Commandments.

Verse 4: "Now we have this confidence through Christ toward God; not that we are competent of ourselves..." (vs 4-5). See how that ties in with Matt. 20, not because of who we are, not because of what we are.

"...or credit anything to our own *abilities*: rather, our competency *is* from God" (v 5). That's why we need to:

- continually study
- continually pray
- continually grow and overcome
- use the experiences and things that we have to grow in grace and knowledge

*Over the long haul:*

- whatever we learn
- whatever we do
- how we teach
- how we conduct our lives

*it all comes from God!*

Verse 6: “Who also made us competent as ministers of *the* New Covenant...”

Look at what Paul had to do, coming from the hierarchy of Judaism, knocked to the ground, blind for three days and three nights, baptized, received his vision, told how much he’s going to suffer. Then he had to escape to go to Arabia and there for three years Christ taught him personally and in vision. *Paul’s competency for the New Covenant did not come from Judaism*, which he was thoroughly grounded in. ***It came from Christ, and he had to reject and renounce Judaism as a religion of men!***

“...not of *the* letter...” (v 6). You want to know how the letter of the rule works. I don’t know if you watched the Senate last night. I shouldn’t have stayed up, but I did. I stayed up long enough, I wanted to see if they would pass it or not. The rule is you must have 60 votes. That’s *the letter of the rule*. What happened? 50-49, they didn’t have 60 votes. ***That’s why it has to be of the Spirit!***

What is the real purpose behind the Law? *Not just what the letters say!* That’s why, just take the one: You shall not murder. That is in the letter. But in the Spirit, what did Jesus say? ‘*You shall not hate your brother in your heart.*’ Why? *Because it gets to the root cause of murder, which is hate!* This is what he’s bringing out here.

“...but of *the* Spirit; for the letter kills, **but the Spirit gives life**” (v 6):

- repentance
- mercy
- forgiveness
- Holy Spirit of God
- growing in grace and knowledge

***All of those give life!*** The end result is *eternal life!*

Verse 7: “Now if the ministry of death... [that’s how the Old Covenant was carried out—to the letter and death] ...which was engraved in stones, came into being with glory...”

- they heard the voice of God
- they saw the glory
- they heard the trumpet
- they heard the whirlwind

“...so that the children of Israel were not able to gaze upon Moses’ face...” (v 7)—because the second time Moses went up there for forty days and forty nights he came back and his face was radiant with glory, as proof that he was with God.

Remember the first time they went up there they said, ‘Oh, this Moses, we don’t know what’s happened to him. Besides it’s a volcano up there and maybe he slipped and fell. Maybe he’s all burned up.’ I’m just filling in a little exaggeration there. They came to Aaron and said, ‘Aaron, make us gods.’ So, he made a golden calf.

This time, no doubt, Moses was with God, “...because of the glory of his face, which *glory* is being set aside” (v 7). The Old Covenant *was being prepared to be set aside*. I think in the *King James* it is translated *done away*, abolished.

Verse 8: “Shall not the ministry of the Spirit be far more glorious? For if *there was* glory in the ministry of condemnation, to a much greater degree the ministry of righteousness overflows with glory” (vs 8-9).

As evidenced by the one who committed this sin (1-Cor. 5) and now forgiven (2-Cor.2). Isn’t that better than stoning? *Yes!*

Verse 10: “And even *the ministry of condemnation*, which had glory, was not glorious in this respect, because of the surpassing glory *of the ministry of life.*”

It’s so much greater. The end result is not just blessing in the physical realm, in the physical life, but ultimately to be spirit beings, sons and daughters of God.

Verse 11: “For if that which is being set aside *came into being* through glory, to a much greater degree that which remains *is* glorious. Now then, because we have such hope, we use great plainness *of speech*; for *we are* not like Moses, who put a veil over his face, so that the children of Israel could not gaze to the end upon *the glory* that is *now* being set aside. **But their minds were blinded...**” (vs 11-14).

Partial blinding has happened to Israel (Rom. 11). Let’s see what brought that blinding about.

A lot of people believe that under the Old Covenant, they had salvation by works. There was no salvation given. There was no Holy Spirit given. God blessed the nation and could bless the people within the nation, physically, for the things that He promised. There’s nothing there that says they were going to receive eternal life.

After giving the reiteration of the Ten Commandments; Deuteronomy 5:22: “The LORD spoke these words to all your assembly in the mountain out of the midst of the fire of the cloud and of the thick darkness with a great voice. And He

added no more....”—to the Ten Commandments, but He had Moses add the details in the Book of the Law as to how to administer it.

“...And He wrote them on two tablets of stone and delivered them to me. And it came to pass when you heard the voice out of the midst of the darkness, for the mountain burned with fire, you came near me, all the heads of your tribes and your elders, and you said, ‘Behold, the LORD our God has revealed His glory and His greatness, and we have heard His voice out of the midst of the fire. We have seen today that God talks with man yet he *still* lives. Now, therefore, why should we die? For this great fire will consume us. If we hear the voice of the LORD our God any more, then we shall die!’” (vs 22-25). *Not so! He didn’t intend to continue speaking to them!*

Verse 26: “‘For who of all flesh has heard the voice of the living God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as we *have*, and lived? You [Moses] go near and hear all that the LORD our God shall say. And you speak to us all that the LORD our God shall speak to you, and we will hear *it*, and do *it*.’ And the LORD heard the voice of your words when you spoke to me. And the LORD said to me, ‘I have heard the voice of the words of this people, which they have spoken to you. They have well *said* all that they have spoken!’”

They were well intentioned. Are human beings always well intended? *Yes, indeed!*

Verse 29: “Oh, that there were such a heart in them that they would fear Me and keep all My commandments always so that it might be well with them and with their children forever!” They had no spiritual heart.

- Could they keep the things in the letter of the Law? *Yes!*
- Did that result in a lot of physical blessings? *Yes!*
- Did it result in eternal life? *No!*
- How do we know that?
- What chapter in the Bible lets us know? *Ezek. 37!*

Where God told Ezekiel, *all of these*—bones and everything back to a second physical life—are the *whole house of Israel!*

If they received salvation in the Old Covenant, why would you need Ezek. 37 to explain that they would receive salvation in a second physical life? *Because they didn’t have the heart to believe and God didn’t call them!* God didn’t give His Spirit to them, so therefore there is no eternal life in the covenant that was written on the stones.

2-Corinthians 3:14: “But their minds were blinded; for to the present hour the same veil *has* not *been* removed, *but* remains at the reading of the Old Covenant...”—or Moses.

Isn’t that what has happened to the Protestants? *Yes!* “...which *veil* is removed in Christ” (v 14). So, if they’re truly converted, what would the Protestants be doing? *Keeping the Sabbath and the Holy Days!*

That blindness would have been removed. Israel has always been willing to be partial with God, as evidence by her history. You can go back and you can read and study Psa. 119, and understand about all the laws and commandments, everything about God’s way, *in the Spirit!*

Verse 15: “For to this day, when Moses is read, *the* veil lies upon their hearts. But when *their* hearts turn to *the* Lord... [in repentance and baptism] ...the veil is taken away. Now, the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of *the* Lord *is*, there *is* freedom.... [from human nature and overcoming it] ...But we all, with uncovered faces beholding the glory of *the* Lord as in a mirror, are being transformed... [the whole thing of conversion] ... *into* the same image from glory to glory, even as by *the* Spirit of *the* Lord” (vs 15-18).

There we’ve made some pretty good progress in the 2-Cor. *We’re going to see about the wiles and schemes and craftiness and thoughts of Satan the devil in 2-Cor. 4.*

#### Scriptural References:

- 1) 2-Corinthians 1:3-4
- 2) John 16:33
- 3) 2-Corinthians 1:4-5, 13-22
- 4) John 14:12-23
- 5) Ephesians 1:9-11
- 6) Romans 8:28
- 7) Ephesians 1:12
- 8) 2-Corinthians 1:22-23
- 9) 2-Corinthians 13:1-6
- 10) 2-Corinthians 1:23
- 11) Psalm 119:49-52, 73-77
- 12) Matthew 20:18-28
- 13) 2-Corinthians 2:1-17
- 14) 2-Corinthians 3:1-14
- 15) Deuteronomy 5:22-29
- 16) 2-Corinthians 3:14-18

#### Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Revelation 2; 3
- Matthew 24

- Luke 21
- Mark 13
- Matthew 6
- John 14:24
- 1-Peter 5
- 1-Corinthians 5; 4
- Luke 16
- Romans 11
- Ezekiel 37
- 2-Corinthians 4

Also referenced:

Sermon Series: *Assaults Against the Church #s 1-4*  
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Book: *Josephus*

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- *News, Flesh & Bone, & New Testament Fraud*
- *God the Father Was Not the God of the Old Testament*

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## Second Corinthians III-A The Great System of God for the New Covenant

(Chapter 3)

*In no way does 2-Cor. 3 say that the Old Testament or God's Law has been done away*

Fred R. Coulter

Greetings, everyone! Welcome to Sabbath services. We're going to continue, after quite a few Sabbaths without going through 2-Corinthians. This will help more complete, a verse-by-verse study of all the New Testament.

I got a nice letter from a woman the other day. She said that she really learned a lot from the *Hebrew* series. That's one of our longest ones: 41 studies verse-by-verse. She said, 'I'm getting into Romans. I'm learning so much.' That's what it's for. There are different ways we learn:

- we learn by reading through sometimes
- we learn by comparing Scriptures
- we learn by Old Testament/New Testament
- we also learn by repeat in what we've already covered

When you come back to it at a later date, you're bringing with it everything else you have covered from the last time you read it up to the second time. A lot of things come out when that takes place.

2-Cor. 3:7 and 14 says *done away* in the *King James Version*. Those two words are the Protestants favorite. As we will see, that is incorrect. If you look in the *Faithful Version*, the last line in v 7 is *set aside*, and then v 14 is telling you it's *not removed*. What on earth is this talking about? The Protestants believe this is the basis for getting rid of the Old Testament completely. Let's understand something before we get into it, so that you will see one of the differences in the Old Covenant and the New Covenant.

2-Corinthians 3:7: "Now if **the ministry of death**, which was engraved in stones, came into being with glory..." The *ministry of death* means that they had in the Old Covenant **the power of executing those for capital crimes!**

Where did that come from and why is it different than the Church? Gen. 9 is where we find where God gave to the nations capital punishment, executing those who do crimes worthy of death.

This is the covenant that God made with all the nations and all the creation after the Flood. Notice what He says:

Genesis 9:5: "And surely the blood of your lives will I require. At the hand of every animal will

I require it, and at the hand of man. At the hand of every man's brother will **I require the life of man**. Whoever sheds man's blood, his blood shall be shed by man, for He made man in the image of God" (vs 5-6).

We don't find that in the earlier chapters of the book of Genesis. Apparently, as far as we're able to understand from Genesis, God continued to live in the Garden of Eden, and had the entrance protected with the cherubim. That actually turned out to be a type of the future tabernacle and temple with the cherubim. Also, they could come to the east gate where the cherubim were, and there they could be instructed by God. The tabernacle and temple faces east, and God is to come into the temple from the east.

This brings capital punishment, with the death sentence for those who commit crimes worthy of death. Exo. 20 is where this whole system was given to Israel. Every nation on earth has that authority, whether they use it or not, that's up to the nation. The difference between the Old Covenant and the New Covenant is that the Old Covenant was for the nation of Israel. Israel did not have power outside of its own boundaries, unless God said to go to war and eliminate that one.

Just like today, what is one of the big problems that we have? Every nation is sovereign and within the geographical borders of that nation there is to be one set of laws. How close they are to God's laws or not, that's not the question.

You cannot have two sovereigns within one geographical area. Where do we see how that works out today? *Islam!* They are a political system with their wrap of religion around them. Even the father can kill the daughter if she dates an infidel. That's called 'an honor death.'

What conflict does that present with us here? *It's against the laws in the United States and other countries for individuals to execute the death penalty against someone, because God gave that to the government, to all nations!*

In Exo. 20 we have the giving of the Ten Commandments in glory and power. Even Moses was given the privilege of seeing the backside of God in His glory; but he couldn't see His face.

Exo. 21 is part of the civil law. Remember that in the Old Covenant you have religious law and civil law. Here's part of the civil law:

Exodus 21:14: "But if a man comes presumptuously upon his neighbor to slay him with guile, you shall take him from My altar so that he may die." There is no judgment given that you cannot execute him, not even if he grabs hold of the horns of the altar.

Verse 15: "And he that strikes his father or his mother shall surely be put to death. And he that steals a man and sells him, or if he is found in his hand, he shall surely be put to death. And he that curses his father or his mother shall surely be put to death. And if men strive together, and one strikes another with a stone, or with *his* fist, and he does not die, but is confined to his bed; if he rises again and walks abroad upon his staff, then he that struck him shall be set free. Only he shall pay for the loss of his time and shall cause *him* to be completely healed" (vs 15-19). *Not like you have it today!*

Then it goes on and gets into thievery and things like that a little later. But this ***the ministry of death for capital crimes!***

Let's see that it applies to all nations and that the Church is to honor those civil authorities. We'll see something in Romans that's very interesting, too, because a lot of people say, 'Paul didn't mention the Sabbath.' That's true, but yet, he did. I want you to think about the power of the Roman government. It was an absolute dictatorship. God did not say to rebel against it. He did not say that you do not have to be subject to it.

Romans 13:1: "Let everyone be subject to the higher authorities because **there is no authority except from God...** [all the nations receive their authority from God] ...and those authorities that exist **have been instituted by God**; so then, the one who sets himself against the authority is resisting the ordinance of God..." (vs 1-2). That is deliberate rebellion against it.

- What if they enact a law that's contrary to the laws that God wants us to keep?
- What if they come and try and force us to keep it?
- ***We are not to go against God!***
  - ✓ that's how persecution comes
  - ✓ that's how martyrdom comes

"...and those who resist shall receive judgment to themselves" (v 2)—two judgments:

1. from the authorities
2. from God

If it's really rebellion, rather than standing for the Truth, in spite of what the authorities tell you, you're going to have a judgment from God as well.

Verse 3: "For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil *works*.... [today you see what happens when it's all turned around backwards] ...Do you desire not to be afraid of the authority? *Then practice good, and you will have praise from it.*"

In other words, if you love God, keep His commandments and do the things that are right, regardless of what society you're living in, in the world, you will be able to get along because you will be considered a good person by them. Has anybody come knocking on your door to arrest you recently for:

- Sabbath-keeping? *No!*
- Holy Day-keeping? *No!*
- rejection of Christmas? *No!*
- rejection of Sunday, Easter, etc.? *No!*

That used to be what they did! *Actually execute against the Churches of God!*. That's pretty much the story of all the churches in the Alps, later known as the Waldensians, also known as the Boudois, and the Albigensians.

The way the Catholic Church did it was that they would have the civil authorities kill them after the religious authorities judged them. Even the Catholic Church itself did not execute the death penalty in the form of a regular Catholic ceremony to kill people. They left it to the Catholic civil authorities.

Verse 4: "For he is a servant of God to you for good.... [What if there were no police? How safe do you think you would be?] ...But if you are practicing evil, have fear! For he does not wear the sword in vain because he is a servant of God, an avenger for wrath to the one who is practicing evil. Consequently, *it is necessary to be subject to authority*, not only because of wrath, but also because of conscience. For this cause, you are also obligated to pay tribute; for they are servants of God, continually engaged in this very thing" (vs 4-6).

Where does that go back to? *Israel's rebellion against Samuel wanting a king!* What did God say? *'I'm going to give you a king, and he's going to do this, he's going to do that, he's going to do other things, and he is going to take a tenth!'* In the case of Solomon, he took so much more. In the case of Rehoboam, he said, 'My little finger's going to be heavier than my father's thigh.'



But the rebellion against Rehoboam *was from God*, because God said He was going to take the tribes away from Rehoboam. You can look at that and look at how this country was formed, and that obviously was from God. The Brits never have gotten it. They still look down upon us as ‘the colonists.’

Verse 7: “Therefore, render to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor. Do not be indebted to anyone for anything, unless *it is* to love one another. For the one who loves another has fulfilled *the Law*” (vs 7-8).

Let’s read on and we will see that Paul did include the Sabbath, without naming it.

Verse 9: “Because *it says*, ‘You shall not commit adultery. You shall not commit murder. You shall not steal. You shall not bear false witness. You shall not lust.’ **And if *there be* any other commandment...**”

- Does that include the Sabbath?
- Does that include the first commandment?
- How can you conscientiously do the ones ahead of it unless you had the right God?
- unless you kept the first four commandments?

“...it is summed up in this saying, *even* by this *standard*: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself’” (v 9).

They’ll say, ‘That doesn’t say love God.’ If you keep the Sabbath, and you do what is good and you do things that are right—because you love God, serve Him, and keep the Sabbath—is that not love toward your neighbor? Even those whom you don’t meet? *Yes!* Why? *Because you’re not doing anything against them!*

Verse 10: “Love does not do any wrong to *its* neighbor; therefore, **love is the full expression of God’s Law.**”

Anybody remember 1-John 5? ***For this is the love of God that we keep His commandments!*** So, you see how all of this ties together. You know if a Protestant comes to you next time and says that Jesus didn’t mention the Sabbath.’ Let’s read it: “...any other commandment...” (v 9).

- Is the Sabbath another commandment?
- What do you do on the Sabbath that is loving your neighbor?
- *You’re learning how to love God and serve Him, and you are good to your neighbor!*
  - ✓ Have you robbed any of your neighbors lately?

- ✓ Have you torn down his fence?
- ✓ Have you committed adultery with his wife or daughters?
- ✓ *No!*

When you come on the Sabbath, you learn to love God and keep His commandments, so therefore, that is translated into loving your neighbor as yourself.

One of the biggest problems I have found with Protestants, especially when they are newly converted, is that they like to go to the most difficult Scriptures *first*, rather than the simple ones.

2-Corinthians 3:1: “Do we again begin to commend ourselves? Or do we, as some, need epistles of commendation to you, or *epistles* of commendation from you?”

If you want to know how that works, go to TBN (Trinity Broadcasting Network). They are always giving commendations to one another and patty-cake one another how good they are. I’m going to do a **churchathome.org** on it. Someone sent me all of the leading Protestant ministers and how much money they have. I was shocked at Joyce Meyer, she’s got bucks galore.

Sidebar: I’ve almost given up on TBN, because it’s so sanctimonious, it’s unbelievable. She was being interviewed and she said, ‘I don’t know what God has for me. I’ve had one hip operation already and now I’ve got another one. I’m in a lot of pain. I don’t know what God wants from me.’ Then they started ‘shmooshing’ one another.

Verse 2: “You are our epistle, and are inscribed in our hearts, being known and read by all men.”

That’s talking about the work that they were doing in teaching them the commandments of God, keeping the Sabbath. Paul stayed there in Corinth for 18-months preaching on the Sabbath every week. Corinth started out with really quite a hassle. Paul went into the synagogue for three weeks and then when Timothy and Titus came down, then he declared Christ as the Savior. They had a big hassle and the Church split. The ruler of the synagogue—Crispus—went with Paul, and they went into a building that was right next door to the synagogue.

Verse 3: “*For* it is manifest that you are Christ’s epistle...”—by:

- having repented
- received the Holy Spirit
- keeping the commandments of God
- living by the teachings that Paul was teaching them in addition

“...ministered by us; you were not inscribed with *pen and ink*, but with *the Spirit of the living God*... [they had the Spirit of God] ...not on tablets of stone, but on fleshly tablets of *the heart*” (v 3).

How is that different from the Old Covenant? This is the difference in the covenants, in Heb. 10; this is why it's different. There may be some things that people can see in our behavior from the outside that they can say, 'Yeah, you're a good person.' What makes a person really good or evil?

Sidebar: I heard Brit Hume say that he read that someone said, 'Be kind to people for everyone has a problem/burden that you know nothing about.' We all have certain things we carry in our mind *between us and God!* The things we need to change, to grow and overcome, that's our problem within that *we* know. We may not necessarily tell someone else. You may ask a friend to help you by praying for you. But I thought what Hume said was pretty Biblical. Be kind to people, ***because everyone has a problem that you know nothing about!***

Heb. 10 is the difference between the covenant with Israel, which was the nation and the covenant with the Church. Where was the Church to go? What did Jesus say to the apostles? *Go into all the world teaching them to observe all things I have taught you!*

The difference is, even the Christianity of this world does some good in keeping the civil society with the lower level of crime. Enter in Islam and what do they do? *Another sovereign!* We'll use the Kurdish nation today over there in Iraq; Islam comes in as another sovereign and they start killing those who profess Christ. Wherever Islam goes, sooner or later, they conquer by the sword or by lack of assimilation into the society. This is the problem that they are facing in Europe today.

Lesson from history; 1947 concerning Hindus and Muslims: What happened? India used to include everything that is Pakistan and Bangladesh! After it became a commonwealth county, and the Brits literally pulled out of India, then the Muslims were going around killing people. The Hindus were attacking, killing people. Finally they said, 'Let's end this.' Muslims go to West Pakistan, which is now just plain Pakistan today, and East Pakistan became Bangladesh later. Muslims cannot even get along with themselves, but are duty-bound to kill other people of other religions, so they take that upon themselves.

*This is why the Church does not have the death penalty. We would be arrested for executing people!*

- How do you change and convert the mind?
  - Do you do it from things outwardly?
- or:*
- Do you have to do something inwardly?  
*You have to do it inwardly!*
  - Can people do it themselves? ***No! They need Christ and the Spirit of God!***

People can be good up to a certain degree and certain point, by being very disciplined. But that doesn't mean that they're converted. That means they may be counted as an extraordinary person in the community.

But here's the key: In order for there to be a lasting change in behavior, it must be with the Spirit of God and the commandments of God. You can't have the Spirit of God without the commandments of God. You can have the commandments of God without the Spirit of God, as we find in the Old Covenant. *But that was never able to convert them; That was never able to change them inwardly!*

Here we have the whole operation of the New Covenant; Hebrews 10:4<sup>[transcriber's correction]</sup>: “Because *it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins*. For this reason, when He comes into the world, He says, ‘Sacrifice and offering You did not desire, but You have prepared a body for Me’” (vs 4-5). *That's the physical body that Jesus received!*

Verse 6: “You did not delight in burnt offerings and *sacrifices* for sin.” What does God delight in concerning sin? *When there's repentance!* That's what God delights in.

Verse 7: “Then said I, ‘Lo, I come (as it is written of Me in *the Scroll of the Book*) to do Your will, O God.’”

Jesus said, ‘*Of Myself, I can do nothing. What the Father commands Me, this I do. What He told Me to speak, this I do. I do the will of the Father in heaven.*’ What did He say about those who kept coming to Him, calling, ‘Lord, Lord.’ He said, ‘Why do You call me Lord, Lord, and do not do the will of My Father Who is in heaven?’

Everything shifts around. The authority for law now becomes spiritual—from God the Father Himself directly, through His Spirit. That's the great system of God for the New Covenant.

Verse 8: “In the saying above, *He said*, ‘Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and *sacrifices* for sin (which are offered according to the *priestly law*).... [the law of the sacrifices] ... You did not desire nor delight in.’”

What did God say there in Deut. 5, after reiteration of the Ten Commandments by Moses and then He explained how they didn't want to hear God, but they would hear Moses? What was God's reply? ***O, if there were such a heart in them that they would keep My commandments!***

You can have the physical commandments in the letter, but unless there's conversion, it's not going to have the effect of changing you as a person from the inside out.

Verse 9: "Then He said, 'Lo, I come to do Your will, O God.' He takes away the first *covenant* in order that He may establish the second *covenant*."

What was the final blow to that covenant? *Destruction of the temple in 70 A.D.!* There was the overlap for the 40-years between the Old Covenant and the New Covenant. There was always the tension between the Jews and the Church. One of the last martyrdoms that was, was in 61 A.D. when the Jewish authorities killed James, the brother of Jesus. It was just before that, that Paul wrote the book of Hebrews.

Verse 10: "**By Whose will we are sanctified...** [By the will of God the Father we are sanctified or considered Holy because we have the Spirit of God. How do we receive that?] **...through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.**"

- His blood pays for our sins
- we're justified to God

Verse 11: "Now, every high priest stands ministering day by day, offering the same sacrifices repeatedly, which are never able to remove sins."

Why? *You can forgive the action*, but where does the action come from? *It comes from the mind!* What God is doing, is forgiving the overt sins out here, and also when we repent of the sins—***which are in the mind***—*God forgives those, too!* That could never be done under the Old Covenant.

Verse 12: "But He, after offering one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at *the* right hand of God. Since that time, He is waiting until His enemies are placed *as* a footstool for His feet. For by one offering He has obtained eternal perfection *for* those who are sanctified" (vs 12-14).

It's not just the offering that brings eternal perfection, it is the offering plus the Holy Spirit. In other words, to have your sins forgiven without receiving the Holy Spirit *is not going to change your nature*. That's why we're told in Rom. 12 that we are to be transformed in our mind. That's the process of conversion.

Verse 15: "And the Holy Spirit also bears witness to us; for after He had previously said, "This *is* the covenant that I will establish with them after those days," says *the* Lord, "I will give My Laws into their hearts, and I will inscribe them in their minds"" (vs 15-16).

That's exactly what Paul was talking about in 2-Cor. 3. ***You are our epistle written in our hearts!*** Same thing here!

Verse 17: "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. Therefore, brethren, having confidence to enter into the *true* Holiest by the blood of Jesus, 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" (vs 17-22). *Then he goes on to let us hold fast and not waver!*

All of that has to do with 2-Cor. 3:3. The way we are purified from a wicked conscience is the active working of the Holy Spirit in our lives every day. When you're going along and an evil thought comes into your mind, that's what you need to ask God to help you remove and control.

Remember that the finality of that will be death, then the resurrection. We still have *the law of sin and death* within us. Yes, Christ has delivered us from *the law of sin and death* by giving us the Holy Spirit, ***so we participate in the perfection of God's Spirit by our choices to get rid of the evil that lies within!*** That's all manifested through the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

2-Corinthians 3:4: "Now we have this confidence through Christ toward God; not that we are competent of ourselves..."

Notice what Paul thought of himself. What did he say? *He thanked God that he was put into the ministry, but he said that what happened to him was an example for all of whom I am the chief sinner, because I killed those who were in the Church* (1-Tim. 1).

This shows very clearly—when you tie that together with Matt. 6, forgive us our sins—that's a daily prayer. Repentance comes about ***by the washing of the water by the Word***—that's the Spirit of God, with the Word of God.

How many times have you been studying, reading the Bible, and all of a sudden you saw that there's something there you need to repent of, that

you didn't think about until you read it by the Word. Then God's Spirit is there to convict you in conscience so you will repent.

People in the world don't have this. That's reflected today with all the suicides they're having. People don't know what to do when they get down and out and discouraged. They don't know about God. The society is becoming more and more secular, and it's harder and harder to find out anything about God. Even those who are supposed to tell about God in the churches that they recognize, really are losing whatever they have concerning understanding. So, there are suicides. You add to that:

- all of the music
- all of the entertainment
- all of the extra wealth and things that people have

All of that combines together. Then add to that the prescription and illegal drugs, all of it. So they go to a psychiatrist and they say, 'What's wrong with me?' He says, 'There's something wrong with your brain, so here, take this medication.' Rather than saying that the way you can solve it is:

- get on your knees and repent to God
- ask God to help you out of this depression
- ask God to help you overcome these things then repent and be baptized and receive the Spirit of God

***So you can work on overcoming these things!***

(go to the next track)

2-Corinthians 3:6: "Who also made us competent *as ministers of the New Covenant...*"

Ken and I were talking about this the other day, it's almost like a covenant, the requirements of a minister, but not quite. We can't quite call it a covenant. Everything that is to be done is to help raise the disciple to be as the master, and the master as Christ. To also teach so that the disciple become as the teacher and the teacher as Christ, but actually the Father. It says, ***'They shall all be taught of God'*** (John 6:45). *That helps answer the question:*

- How do you know what you know about the Bible? *By the Spirit of God, with God Himself teaching you!*
- How does that work? *Jesus said that He and the Father would make Their abode, with the Holy Spirit, within us!*

That can't be done under the covenant that Israel was given at Mount Sinai.

All the laws that were given there for the civil society were good. I refer back to this quite a few times, but I think they could stop all car theft if they ran it like they did with the cattle and lambs. You repay it four times. You want to steal the most expensive Lamborghini in the world? *That's a million bucks!* Even the most carnal person would think twice about that.

Here God says He wants ***repentance, forgiveness and spiritual growth***. That's what He wants. "...competent *as ministers of the New Covenant; not of the letter, but of the Spirit...*" (v 6). What did Jesus of all the words that He spoke? *They are Spirit and life!*

"...for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life" (v 6)—because there is forgiveness.

Let's see an example of that back here in Psa. 51 concerning repentance. David and Bathsheba both were responsible for this, but David had to bear the brunt of it because he could have stopped it.

That's not to say that Bathsheba couldn't have stopped it. She could have. She could have said to the messenger who came to ask her to come to spend time with the king, 'Tell the king my greatest regrets are that I have other things, and I cannot come to him at this time. Tell him I'm sure he will understand.' You don't say no to the king, ***David abused his power!*** He should never have done it.

Notice, this tells us the operation of what God wants with us through conversion and repentance as well. How far into his life was David when this occurred? We don't know. But I would assume it would put him pretty close to 55, somewhere around there.

What happened to Hezekiah in his old age? He made a mistake. For all of us old fogies out there, be careful. Just because you're an old fogie doesn't mean you're exempt from doing stupid things. ***Be alert not to do stupid things!*** Because we can say what David did here was the most stupid thing he could possibly do thinking he was right and overriding the conviction of God's conscience to him.

Bathsheba was culpable as well, but she would have known having just bathed on the roof of the house where the king could see her, why he asked her to come. He would have understood the decline of the invitation, because he maybe would have come to the conviction, 'Maybe I shouldn't do that.' What happened to David's kingdom after that? For years it was all upset with the rebellion, and things like that.

Notice what God wants with repentance. He knew better than to do this. There are things that we do, we know better we shouldn't do it.

Psalms 51:1: "Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Your loving kindness; according to the greatness of Your compassion, blot out my transgressions"—*plural!*

He tried to pretend that the death of Uriah the Hittite was just a battle casualty when Joab knew all the dirty linen that David had. Joab was really upset with David for doing it.

Tie this in with *the washing of the water by the Word* (Eph. 5:26<sup>[transcriber's correction]</sup>), *with the Spirit of God*.

Verse 2: "Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin, for I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me" (vs 2-3).

Here is a key thing: Every sin, though it can be against a person, *is actually against God*, because sin is the transgression of the Law.

Verse 4: "Against You, You only, have I sinned, and done evil in Your sight, that You might be justified when You speak and be in the right when You judge."

Everything David did about that whole thing, after it occurred, was wrong. He abused his power as king. So, he had to be forgiven here.

Verse 5: "Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." That's a way of explaining the inner working of *the law of sin and death*. He wasn't born of adultery with his mother, because he was child #8.

Here's what God wants with all of it; this is why God forgives, v 6: "Behold, You desire Truth in the inward parts..." Right here in the mind and heart: *Truth!*

Let's rehearse what the human mind is like. *It is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked!* That's *the law of sin and death within us!* That will never be fully gone away until we die. But we can overcome it through the power of God's Spirit. Let God's Spirit lead us, instead of being led by the lust of sin. That's what happened with David here.

"...and in the hidden part You shall make me to know wisdom" (v 6). How do we do it today if we do something that's not right? I don't know how you do it, but I know how I do it. Dumb, dumb, dumb! It's kind of like the movie, *Dumb and*

*Dumber*. That's just the human nature and we need the wisdom of God.

Verse 7: "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." Tie that in with Isa. 1; *If you repent, God will forgive!* That's what it's all about.

If you have things that you do, that you sin, repent; God will forgive. Don't go around with a guilty conscience and say, 'Why am I sinning, I shouldn't do this.' Yes, you shouldn't do it, but you're sinning because you are not overriding the law of sin and death within you by using the Holy Spirit of God to transform the mind. Transform the mind requires thought, change of thought, as well as action. So this is what he had to do.

Then, instead of being depressed, wouldn't you say David was depressed at this point?

Verse 8: "Make me to hear joy and gladness that the bones, which You have broken, may rejoice. Hide Your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God..." (vs 8-10).

That's what God wants! What does this say in Eph. 2:10? *That we are His workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto the good works that were ordained beforehand!* You see how the Old and New Testament works together, hand in glove.

"...and renew a steadfast spirit within me" (v 10). Then he said don't cast me away or take away your Holy Spirit. He was pretty well on the edge and the brink of doing the thing that would have caused him to lose salvation. David was under a covenant very similar to the New Covenant.

2-Corinthians 3:6: "...for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life." Think of that with this what they're going over in the news now. They can't figure out why there is such an increase in the number of suicides. It's because the nation is becoming more Godless, more satanic, more depressed.

Of course, one of Satan's things that he wants people to do is to kill themselves. If they were counseled that you can get your life squared around. Stop the music, stop the drugs, stop all of the extra marital sex, stop all of those things. Keep the commandments of God, repent, and be baptized. Then you can start repairing your mind and heart with God's Spirit and God's Word.

I think the greatest majority of those who are in those very deep depressed states can come out of it. But the psychiatrist says, 'Here, take this pill.' It makes them more depressed.

Sidebar: On the other hand, every single one of the school shootings were because of *psychiatric drugs*. I'll tell you how I'd run school. I'd have the boys section over here and the girls section over here. Or maybe school/school, not section. For the boys, they come to school at 8 o'clock, 8:30 or 9. First thing we do, sports. Get out there and run and play, do all of these things. Then at 11 o'clock come in and they're going to sit still.

The problem is women don't know how to handle boys the way they should be handled. You give them something to do. They have more energy. Little girls are nice; they can sit there and do things. That's the nature of little girls. They're not as rambunctious as boys. Then you give them the things that they need to learn. First thing you do is give them math, then English. I tell you, if you had a school like that where boys could do that, they would all want to go to that school and have men teachers. That's what they ought to do; change the whole system. That's why I'd never work out in the politics of this world.

Paul is saying that this method of the Old Testament wasn't bringing about conversion, so God is setting it aside for the Church. The ministration of death has been removed for the Church because the Church must go into all the world. The Church cannot set itself up as a competing sovereign against the sovereign civil government.

Verse 8: "Shall not the ministry of the Spirit be far more glorious?" *Yes, indeed!* Isn't that the greatest thing in the world, to convert a mind, to change the heart? *Yes!*

Verse 9: "For if *there was* glory in the ministry of condemnation, to a much greater degree the ministry of righteousness overflows with glory... [because it changes the heart and mind] ...And even *the ministry of condemnation*, which had glory, was not glorious in this respect, because of the surpassing *glory of the ministry of life*. For if that which is being set aside *came into being* through glory, to a much greater degree that which remains *is* glorious. Now then, because we have such hope, we use great plainness *of speech*" (vs 9-12). *That's what we do; tell the truth!*

Verse 13: "For *we are* not like Moses, who put a veil over his face, so that the children of Israel could not gaze to the end upon *the glory that is now being set aside*."

The Protestants read this that this is doing away with the Law of Moses. But it's not. In the *King James Version* instead of saying *being set aside*, it says *done away*. What was done away? *The ministry of death for the Church!* All the other

commandments that pertain to personal behavior and the Ten Commandments all come through to the New Covenant. But the ministration of death does not. ***He wasn't doing away with the whole covenant with Moses and the Ten Commandments!*** That's why the Protestants say, 'All of that has been fulfilled. We don't need to worry ourselves about that at all.'

This answers it, v 14: "**But their minds were blinded...**" Like God said, "Their hearts were hardened" (Deut. 5).

"...for to the present hour the same veil *has not been removed...*" (v 14). What is that veil? ***That veil is the carnal-mindedness of self-will against God!*** God has given independent free moral agency; so rather than choose God, they choose to blind themselves.

How does blinding come? When you know you need to do something from the Word of God, because you either heard it or you read it, the way that you continue in understanding is to *do it*. There are a lot of people who have heard about the Sabbath, *but they don't do it*. I talked to a man recently who said that when he was a Protestant he asked the minister, 'Isn't the Sabbath the 7<sup>th</sup> day in the Bible?' The minister said, 'Yes, it is.' *Why don't we keep it?* The minister said, 'Because our lifestyle is different today.' Whatever thing causes you to reject it, doesn't make it justified. 'Our lifestyle is different.'

Here's the answer; Matthew 13:13: "For this *reason* I speak to them in parables, because seeing, they see not; and hearing, they hear not; neither do they understand."

If you see and you don't comprehend what you're seeing, and you hear, but you're unwilling to change, *you don't have understanding!*

Verse 14: "And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah, which says, 'In hearing you shall hear, and in no way understand; and *in* seeing you shall see, and in no way perceive; for the heart of this people has grown fat...'—and the veil is over their eyes.

You can hear this, when you hear carnal people talk. 'This applies to them, but not to me. Oh, that applies to those over there, but not to me.' That's how it works.

Verse 15: "For the heart of this people has grown fat, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed..." They choose not to, that's what it is. The reason they don't keep the Sabbath is because ***they choose not to!***

...lest they should see with their eyes..." (v 15). 'We don't have to read the Old Testament.' Isn't that closing your eyes?

"...and should hear with their ears..." (v 15). If you try and keep the commandments, don't preach to me about the commandments. You're trying to work out your salvation yourself.

"...and should understand with their hearts, and should be converted, and I should heal them" (v 15). It shows it's available, if they want to, but they choose not to.

Then something else happens. Let's see what God does. This shows the descent into complete lawlessness of any society. Doesn't matter where you are in history, because this has happened over and over again. Rom. 1 says God has showed them about Himself through the invisible things.

Sidebar: Did you know that there are three things that show us about the Sabbath that are not written in the Law?

### 1. beavers

This man studied beavers in northern California for 18 years. *Beavers never work on the Sabbath!* They stay within their little abode, never go out and work on the Sabbath. He's documented this for 18 years. He talked to another man about it and he said, 'I have this orchard and I noticed that the bees are not here on the 7<sup>th</sup> day.'

### 2. bees

### 3. Siberian ox

This one man who was a Sabbath-keeper was given the duty of getting the water and bringing it up to the prison. He had an ox that would pull the wagon. Five days a week it would go slow. On the 6<sup>th</sup> day it ran down to get the water and bring it back. They made the trip so they always had enough water on the Sabbath. This ox was keeping the Sabbath as well. That's pretty interesting, isn't it? I've got the DVD on it. I never knew that beavers kept the Sabbath. They know more than all the Sunday-keepers.

Romans 1:19: "Because that which may be known of God is manifest 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—both His eternal power and Godhead—so that they are without excuse; because when they knew God, they glorified *Him* not as God, neither were thankful; but they became vain in their own reasonings, and their foolish hearts were darkened" (vs 19-21). *Automatic law!*

You can apply this to anything about the creation of God, about how there's no such thing as evolution. You can apply this to Sunday-keepers. They close their mind to the Sabbath and the same thing happens. That's how their minds are closed. That's what Paul is talking about, that *the veil is lifted when the Law of Moses is read for those who are converted!* You can understand the laws: why they're good, why they're right.

Verse 22: "While professing themselves to be *the* wise ones, they became fools and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into *the* likeness of an image of corruptible man, and of birds, and four-footed creatures, and creeping things.... [all different idols of supposed-gods] ...For this cause... [God is not way off someplace doing something else. This happens; automatic law] ...God also abandoned them to uncleanness through the lusts of their hearts, to disgrace their own bodies between themselves, **who exchanged the Truth of God for the lie...**" (vs 22-25). What's the big lie?

1. evolution
2. Sunday
3. holidays

Those are the three big lies!

"...and they worshiped and served the created thing more than the One Who is Creator, Who is blessed into the ages. Amen. **For this cause, God abandoned them...**" (vs 25-26).

This is how lawlessness multiplies in the land. They abandon all the laws of truth and righteousness, even in the letter. That's how all this opioid thing—killing 60,000 people a year. ***They need to come back to God!***

Verse 28: "And in exact proportion as they did not consent to have God in *their* knowledge, **God abandoned them...**" Would you say God has abandoned:

- San Francisco?
- Los Angeles
- New York
- Chicago?

*especially in the area where they have all of these gang shootings*

- Is God there? *No!*

They are abandoned to their own ways. It goes down to the lowest denominator of who has the most power to kill.

"...God abandoned them to a reprobate mind, to practice *those* things that are immoral" (v 28). That ties right in here that unless that is removed—and ***it must be through repentance,***

**baptism, and the Holy Spirit!** Then the constant growing and overcoming with the Spirit of God. That's why we have Sabbath-services.

- How long would you really remember about the Truth of God if you didn't keep the Sabbath?
- If we weren't taught on the Sabbath?

God tells the ministers and elders, **'You who teach others, don't you teach yourself?'** (Rom. 2). *Yes!*

- we have to study
- we have to pray
- we have to really be on top of it in order to continue to understand

*That's how it works!*

2-Corinthians 3:14: "But their minds were blinded... [God abandoned them] ...for to the present hour the same veil *has not been* removed... [because there's no repentance] ...*but* remains at the reading of the Old Covenant; which *veil* is removed in Christ." **What has been set aside?**

1. the death penalty
2. the blindness to the laws of Moses

That has been set aside. The veil has been removed.

Verse 15: "For to this day, when Moses is read, *the* veil lies upon their hearts."

I sure saw that watching TBN when I was going through and looking at what the Protestants were doing. It's far worse than I ever expected. Even one minister stood up there and said, 'If you don't try and follow the Law, you're not going to have any sin. So, forget about the law entirely and you won't have any sin.' ***Without understanding!***

Verse 17: "Now the Lord is the Spirit... [Christ and God the Father are the Ones Who send the Spirit] ...and where the Spirit of *the* Lord *is*, there *is* freedom."

- freedom *from the veil* because it has been removed
- freedom *from sin* because we repent; we're under the grace of God
- freedom *to pray*
- freedom *to study*
- freedom *to understand*

Because we're not reading the Bible from the point of view of rebellion to find out something wrong with the Bible so we can reject it, which is what the atheists do. They say, 'The Bible is full of lies.' *Have you ever read it?* 'Yeah, I read it; couldn't understand it.' *Then how do you know it's full of lies? Perfect example of the veil!*

Verse 18: "But we all, with uncovered faces beholding the glory of *the* Lord as in a mirror... [this is a statement *and* a prophecy] ...are being transformed... [transforming of the mind] ...*into* the same image... [as Christ. Christ in you, the hope of glory] ...from glory to glory, even as by *the* Spirit of *the* Lord."

**In no way does 2-Cor. 3 say that the Old Testament has been done away with and that we have no profitability in Moses!** *All of that is a complete blinded fabrication by religionists who profess Christianity.*

Scriptural References:

- 1) 2-Corinthians 3:7
- 2) Genesis 9:5-6
- 3) Exodus 21:14-19
- 4) Romans 3:1-10
- 5) 2-Corinthians 3:1-3
- 6) Hebrews 10:4-22
- 7) 2-Corinthians 3:4
- 8) Psalms 51:1-10
- 9) 2-Corinthians 3:6, 8-14
- 10) Matthew 13:13-15
- 11) Romans 1:19-26, 28
- 12) 2-Corinthians 3:14-15, 17-18

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Exodus 20
- 1-John 5
- Deuteronomy 5
- Romans 12
- 1-Timothy 1
- Matthew 6
- John 6:45
- Ephesians 5:26
- Isaiah 1
- Ephesians 2:10
- Romans 2

Also referenced: Sermon Series with Transcript Books:

- *Hebrews*
- *Romans*

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## Second Corinthians IV How to Live For God in An Evil World

(Chapter 4)

*How to fight the “reassuring lies” perpetrated by Satan the devil*

Fred R. Coulter—February 3, 2018

Greetings, everyone! Welcome to Sabbath services.

I think 2-Cor. 4 very fitting with the things that have been going on recently, and how it is especially with our conversations that we’ve had before services about how difficult it is to find the Truth, even in places where they say they want the Truth. 2-Cor. 4 becomes very interesting and very helpful for us to understand

- what’s happening in the world
- what’s happening in the churches that call themselves Christians
- how we know who is who and doing what
- *it is very difficult*

Paul writes, 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...” (vs 1-2).

That would be nice if those in Washington, D.C., would do that. Look at all the trouble that we’re having today with that, and also in religion.

“...not walking in *cunning* craftiness... [having a personal agenda] ...nor handling the Word of God deceitfully...” (v 2).

- How is that done?
- How many churches have the Bible?
- How many preach from the Bible?
- How many use the Bible?
- How many don’t handle it honestly?

They may read certain verses, and those verses coming from the Word of God are true, but how do they apply it? It’s been a difficult proposition for centuries.

Here is how it is done, v 2: “...by manifestation of the Truth...” Let’s stop for just a minute and think. What is Truth?

- the Word of God
- commandments of God
- laws of God
- statutes of God
- God Himself: impossible to lie
- Jesus Christ: the Way, the Truth and the Life

The Word of God which has been inspired and caused to be written by God, with His Spirit of the Truth, to contain for us what we need. How then do we avoid the twisting of Scriptures?

2-Corinthians 2:17: “For we are not like the many, who for *their own* profit are corrupting the Word of God... [How can you preach some of the Word of God and corrupt the Word of God?] ...but we speak with sincerity, as from God, *and* before God, *and* in Christ.”

What is one of the things that we are to do in proving what is true, what is right, and what is the Word of God, and how people handle it, even though they’re not honest with it? Or, they have their own agenda that they want to accomplish? What did Jesus say?

We’re going to talk a whole lot about Satan the devil today. Let’s come to Matt. 4 and the temptation of Jesus by Satan the devil, which tells us how we are to look at things and judge things and know what is right and what is wrong. With the Word of God especially today—and we have the whole Word of God—what we need to realize is that using part of the Word of God is like going to court and someone is giving testimony, but they only give part of the testimony.

Right here, this tells us several things. Matthew 4:3: “And when the tempter came to Him, he said, ‘If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread.’” He had full power to do that, without a doubt.

Verse 4: “But He answered *and* said, ‘It is written...’” You have to go to the Word of God. How much of the Word of God? You have those who say ‘we follow the Old Testament only.’ You have those who say ‘we follow the New Testament only.’ But like all of us had to do, in coming to the Truth:

- we had to check it
- we had to prove it
- we had to understand it

*so we would know is it the Truth, the whole Truth, and nothing but the Truth!* Or, is that just a word said, but not really delivered?

“...‘Man...’” (v 4). This applies to every man and every woman. Since Jesus was God manifested in the flesh, as a man, He was speaking of Himself as well.

“...‘Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God’” (v 4).

Since the Word of God is the Truth, it has to be every word. Some words are easy to understand; some words are harder to understand. But that’s where you start. Then with this measure, you follow through with what Paul wrote, **‘Prove all things.’**

We were talking before services and Mack was telling us about his searches over the past 40 years. It’s quite amazing how many churches he has checked out on. We’ll have to have him tell us a little more of that story sometime so everybody will know. He’s really checked them out.

I’m not going to cover it today, but I’m just going to show you what was sent to me by Albert Ackerman in Texas. How did he prove? Remember, every Word of God.

Sure enough, they’re going to say, ‘What about the sacrifices?’ *We have a greater one, we have Christ!* ‘What about a temple?’ *God has a different way of doing today, which is better!*

So, here this man studied, I think it is, 26 different translations. He found in the New Testament alone *over 2900 missing words* in the modern translations.

To show you how they deceitfully use the Word of God with improper translations, rather than going by every Word of God—we’ll just take this one example:

1-John 4:1: “Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are from God... [that’s what you do to prove all things] ...because many false prophets have gone out into the world.... [they keep that verse] ...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” (vs 1-2).

In these 26 translations, only 4 of them—and this one is the 5<sup>th</sup>, he didn’t include this one—have the phrase *‘that Christ has come in the flesh.’* What does that do to the whole Gospel? *It waters it down and can provide something else!* This is why it has to be by every Word of God.

What does this also show us? This shows us the work of Satan. He wants to do all he can to discredit God.

Let’s read something about Satan. What do we also find in the Scriptures concerning Satan? What was his original sin? *He wanted to take over from the Most High* (Isa. 14), replace God. Since he couldn’t replace God, and he lost the battle and was thrown down to the earth, now his goal is to corrupt as much as he can.

Out of that mess, God calls people. So that’s another whole topic, but let’s continue on here. Here’s what happens:

2-Corinthians 4:3: “But if our Gospel is hidden, it is hidden to those who are perishing; in whom **the god of this age...**” What was the temptation of Jesus by Satan concerning the world? *If You worship me, I’ll give it all to You!*

“...**has blinded the minds of those who do not believe...**” (v 4). That’s an interesting statement. How many people actually *really, really believe* every Word of God? That doesn’t mean that they know it, but they understand that it does come from God. What does that do with these 26 translations, that leave out many, many words and phrases? The truth is, it is known. The truth is, you can find the whole Truth.

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

How do you tell a preacher who is preaching the Truth consistently from someone who is preaching it partially?

Verse 5: “For we do not preach our own selves but Christ Jesus *the* Lord...” “Key thing in understanding where the Truth is. If men preach themselves instead of Christ, and preach what they are doing instead of giving all the glory to God that everything is done to serve God and serve the brethren, that’s a good sign for you to understand.

“...and ourselves for servants for Jesus’ sake” (v 5).

Keep this in mind and let’s look and see what else the Bible tells us about Satan—Rev. 12:9—this is one we should all have memorized. How good is Satan the devil? *He’s very good!*

That reminds me of the cartoon I had last week. The problem isn’t that we don’t have access to the Truth, it’s that most people don’t want to hear it. This one here is ***inconvenient truth and reassuring lie!***

What is a reassuring lie about the Christianity of this world? Have you ever heard it from a preacher? It is: ‘God’s love is unconditional and it doesn’t matter what you do as long as you’re

God's.' How do they say you become part of God? *By standing up and making a public profession of Christ!* That may not be exactly what the Bible is saying, but that's what they teach. ***There is the reassuring lie!***

What's another reassuring lie? *Sabbath!* Which day is the Sabbath? So, they say, 'everybody keeps Sunday, so we'll go with Sunday.' How thorough is that. You can add into it the other religions, but we're just focusing on Christianity. All the other religions are deceived, too, and are from Satan the devil.

This is a most important verse for understanding, especially living in the end-time; Revelation 12:9: "And the great dragon was cast out, the ancient serpent who is called the Devil and Satan, **who is deceiving the whole world...**" That is active, present-tense participle, meaning it is ongoing.

Stop and think about it—the whole world. That means that those who are Christ's are very few, and it's intended that way. God has to deal with each one.

Let's see something else concerning Satan the devil. Let's see how he works and we will see how that is multiplied today with all the modern media, all the means that are available to do so.

Eph. 2 tells us quite a bit we need to know about how God deals with us; Ephesians 2:1: "Now you were dead in trespasses and sins." This tells us that if you're actively living in sin, spiritually you are dead.

Verse 2: "In which you walked in times past..." There has to be repentance, baptism, all of these things to bring us out of the world and to receive God's Spirit.

"...according to the course of this world... [which is deceived] ...according to **the prince of the power of the air...**" (v 2)—Satan the devil!

He's able to send *thought-waves* out to people and they're able to receive them because they are not looking to God. Think about what Satan has today to help him: all the technology, entertainment, movies, television, sports, everything.

Just take the Sabbath Day today. What all has been happening from Friday night to Saturday night on the Sabbath Day in whatever city or place you live. ***All designed to break the Sabbath!***

To show you another deceitful thing in the world, they talk about Christ. They talk about all the things that He's supposed to do and be doing. Then they say, 'We'll see you in church on Sunday.'

What's happened to Sunday-keeping churches? ***Satan's confusing them even more and more!***

"...the prince of the power of the air, **the spirit that is now working within the children of disobedience**" (v 2).

What happens when you handle the Word of God deceitfully? *They have Islam come in and you have Chrislam*, where they read the Koran and they read the Bible. Even in the Vatican they have Muslim prayers given. So how deceived is the whole world? Let's look at a couple more verses. People do not think of Satan this way, but this is how it happens when you become complacent.

2-Timothy 2:23: "But foolish and ignorant speculations reject..." We get a lot of those and we have to prove if they are right or if they are wrong, whatever.

"...knowing that they engender arguments" (v 23). Have we been through all of that? *Yes, still go through!*

Verse 24: "Now, it is obligatory *that* a servant of *the* Lord not be argumentative, but gentle toward all, competent to teach, forbearing, in meekness correcting those who set themselves in opposition; if perhaps God may grant them repentance unto acknowledging of *the* Truth" (vs 24-25). What has to happen when you come across Truth?

- you have to admit that it is true
- you have to admit that you've been believing things not true

Verse 26: "And *that* they may **wake up...** [there are a lot of people who are in the category of sleeping spiritually] **...and escape from the devil's snare**, who have been taken captive by him to *do* his will."

Doesn't that describe the world today? Taken captive to do his will. Wrong religion, all the sex problems, drug problems, whatever. Look at all of the doctors we have today. Some of them do pretty good, but how many things kill many people because of the drugs that they have?

How do we live in such a world, with so much pressure against us, from so many different angles?

1. God has provided His Word
2. God has provided His Sabbath

Those who will preach the Truth God can use to call people to understand the Truth! That's another whole subject there, but:

- How does it start in our lives?
- How can we live in this world that is deceived by Satan the devil and yet not find ourselves entrapped by it?

Matthew 22:37: “And Jesus said to him... [after He was asked which is the greatest commandment] ...‘You shall love *the* Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.’”

That’s what it has to be. God first, loving Him with all your soul, with all your heart, with all your mind. That’s how, and with God’s Spirit. Can’t be any other way. If the world is powerless before Satan, we need:

- the Word of God
- the help of God
- the Spirit of God
- the Truth of God

***so that we can survive in this terrible world!*** Look at what’s going on in the world, not counting the political things you see all the time. *Everything is upside down and backward!*

Jesus said, v 38: “This is *the* first and greatest commandment.” This is the whole focal point of what we are to be doing.

Verse 39: “‘And *the* second *one* is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets’” (vs 39-40).

How do we then put this together in a practical manner to do it on a daily basis?

(go to the next track)

Let’s see how we put all of this together. How do you live by every Word of God? The first and greatest commandment is to love God with all your heart, mind, soul, and being, and your neighbor as yourself. We know we have the other commands of loving the brethren, and so forth, even loving your enemies. The best way to love your enemies is pray they’ll stay far away from you. That’s the best way.

Proverbs 3:1: “My son, do not forget my law...” How do you remember the Law of God? *You study it!* If you don’t study something and go over it, you’ll forget it.

Jonathan does drafting, one of the best drafters in the world, architectural drafting. He also writes reviews for all of these very high complex technical things from Samsung. They recognize him as one of the best writers and reviewers. What if he quit using his computer, quit using all of his material in drafting plans, how long would he remember it?

He’s got to continually upgrade, keep ahead of it. Same way with Mack working with metals and welding. Same way with Jack with mechanics. Same thing!

“...but let your heart keep my commandments” (v 1). This tells you it has to become a very part of your very being.

Verse 2: “For they shall add length of days...” Look at all the young people that die early. How many people died of opioid overdose just this year? *67,000! Just that one thing!* How many died because of other afflictions: car accidents, accidents at home. We’re not talking about just a natural death at old age. We’re talking about being cut off at a younger age.

“...and long life, and peace, to you. Do not let mercy and Truth forsake you...” (vs 2-3). We go right back where we started: What is Truth? Don’t let it forsake you. Because what happens? Wherever there is a vacuum, something fills it.

If you forsake the Truth, what will fill that vacuum? *Error!* Where does false doctrine within the Church come? *From ministers and brethren who are not doing what it says right here in Prov. 3!* They get all settled in, they have a routine. They go to Sabbath services and the Holy Days and all of this thing. They have their friends, and they think they’re okay. Then BAM! Along comes a false doctrine.

“...**bind them around your neck...** [make them a part of your being] ...**write them upon the tablet of your heart**” (v 3). How is that done? *By God’s Spirit!*

Hebrews 10:16: “...I will give My Laws into their hearts, and I will inscribe them in their minds.” That’s what it is here in Matt. 22. Does the Old Testament agree with the New Testament? *Obviously, yes!*

Proverbs 3:4: “And so you shall find favor... [grace] ...and good understanding in the sight of God and man.” Whenever you read something like this, say okay, what is the opposite?

- you won’t know God’s way
- your mind and heart will be all mixed up
- you won’t know what to do
- you’ll find you’ll have difficulty wherever you go

What is this to lead to? ***Trust***, which is another word for ***faith***! Trusting means the action of faith-izing toward God. You love God. You believe God. You have faith in God and now you act upon that faith because you believe. *Therefore, you are trusting God for whatever you do!*

Verse 5: “Trust in the LORD with all your heart...” Doesn’t that tie in with that first and greatest commandment: with all your heart?

“...and lean not to your own understanding” (v 5). That’s where people get themselves in trouble. That’s why we have the whole book of Proverbs.

I got an e-mail from a young man who says, ‘What do I do with my life?’ I said, ‘You start with Proverbs. You start by finding out what’s right, what’s wrong, what’s good.’ Actually Proverbs is another proof concerning the credibility of the Bible. Everything in the book of Proverbs tells you what you need to know on a practical, every day basis of living.

It starts out in the Prov. 1. It warns that if you don’t follow wisdom, if you don’t do something with your life and with your mind, you’re going to get in trouble. When you get in trouble, it’s going to get so bad that if you don’t turn, nothing’s going to come and solve the problem.

Then all of Prov. 2 shows how you must apply your heart, your mind, and really seek after knowledge and understanding. Those things on a continuous basis through your whole life.

“...and lean not to your own understanding” (v 5). How does that work? ***The more you put the Word of God into your mind through study with the Spirit of God, the more you will make your decisions based upon the things of God, the laws of God, the commandments of God, the precepts that are there!***

Verse 6: “In all your ways acknowledge Him...” Why? *Think about it for a minute!*

I know I told you, I generally wake up somewhere around midnight and I keep a supply of apples in the refrigerator. I go get an apple and I go sit down in the chair, eat the apple. I enjoy the apple and to me Fuji is the best tasting. I sit there and I think what a fantastic thing that God has done. You look at everything He’s created just for the earth, for all of mankind: food, air, water, things that we can make and build and do, and things like that. God gives that even to people that know nothing about Him.

I am sure that if someone in Japan, or Russia, or China, had a Fuji apple, it would taste really good to that individual, just like it does when I eat it. So that also shows that God is no respecter of persons with those things. That’s quite a thing. He keeps the earth moving, the moon moving, the sun moving in the galaxy and everything God has done.

Therefore, we live and move and have our being within Him, so we need to acknowledge Him in all our ways.

Notice the blessing that will come: “...and He shall direct your paths” (v 6). How does He do that?

- He’s got a lot of angels out there to protect us and watch over us
- He will give us understanding with His Spirit as we need to make decisions
- He will help us see where we’re wrong
- He will help us overcome things and difficulties that come along

One of the greatest verses in the Bible is v 7. This is designed to keep us from thinking more about ourselves than we ought to. When you come to the understanding of how really deceitful and awful that human nature actually is, then you will realize.

The comment was made on Prov. 14:12 and Prov. 16:25. If you don’t follow what’s here in Prov. 3, then you’re going to do those two verses. What will happen, ‘there’s a way that seems right to a man and a woman, but the ways thereof are the ways of death,’ and sorrow and destruction along the way. ***Because you think you’re right!***

When people gives themselves over to evil, if you want to know how that works, watch the program, *I Almost Got Away With It*. I saw one the other night. This man was so smart, so clever, and made so much money. He got in and out of jail and was able to fool everybody. He had 15 aliases, but he got caught, because they always make a mistake, whoever does it. The police know that, so they do all the tracking.

They finally tracked him down and he was out for a long, long time. He escaped out of jail six times. He even had the audacity for one of his friends who was in juvenile detention to pretend that he was a psychologist to help him, and the authorities let him in. He’d go and counsel this young man. They were actually setting up and planning how they were going to get him out of there. ***There is a way that seems right, the end thereof are the ways of death!***

Verse 7: “Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD... [be in awe of God. There are some things that you can do that may result in immediate extinguishing of your life, not all things, but fear Him] ...and depart from evil.”

What does the New Testament say about avoiding fornication? *Flee, get away from it!* Now here’s why: God wants to bless you and even people

in the world that do well. Those blessings come from God. That doesn't mean God is calling them. That just means God is upholding His Word and God is no respecter of persons.

With God calling us to know and understand about salvation, that should tell us an awful lot about God's calling and what we need to be doing.

Verse 8: "It shall be health to your navel..." Where does sickness mostly come? From your mouth down through the rest of your digestive system. What is the center of that? *Your navel!* How did you get the navel? That's because that was connected to the placenta. That's how your mother in carrying you gave you nourishment so you could grow and develop and be born. When it says navel, it means the very inner most part of your being.

Verse 9: "Honor the LORD with your substance..." and so forth.

Let's see some other things that tie right in with this. In Matt. 5 it tells us about our attitudes, about our thoughts, and what we need to do, and how blessings come. Then He also tells us how to keep the commandments in the spirit of the Law in Matt. 5-7. Blessings come this way.

Matthew 5:3: "Blessed *are* the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven"—resulting in eternal life; living in the Kingdom of Heaven.

What is that going to be like? The closest we can understand is read Rev. 21 and 22. But what does this tell us? *Not very much really!*

Verse 4: "Blessed *are* those who mourn, for they shall be comforted." We've talked about *comfort* in the first couple sessions of 2-Cor. That comes from God.

Verse 5: "Blessed *are* the meek, for they shall inherit the earth."

If you want to know what it says about the proud, study the Word through the book of Proverbs. God resists the proud.

Verse 6: "Blessed *are* those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." This ties in with everything that has to do with *how we avoid Satan and not get caught up in his deceptions and his traps*, whether in the world, whether in the Church, whether in false doctrine, or whatever.

That's why study every day is important. Prayer every day is important. That is like *spiritual breathing and eating*—if we could liken it to it.

Verse 7: "'Blessed *are* the merciful, for they shall find mercy. Blessed *are* the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Blessed *are* the peacemakers, for they shall be called *the* sons of God. Blessed *are* those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven'" (vs 7-10).

You go through the whole thing and this tells us about every experience we will have as a Christian living in the world with the Spirit of God, pointing toward the Kingdom of God.

What is all this going to end up in? Sometimes things get so bad you wonder what's up. It's all pointing to v 48, which sums it up:

Verse 48: "**Therefore, you shall be perfect...**" This is what God is doing. He's perfecting us through everything that we do, every experience we go through: some good, some bad. Many of them we have to repent of every day.

Think of this in relationship to what we've been covering in the series, *God the Father Was Not the God of the Old Testament*.

Verse 48: "Therefore, you shall be perfect, even as your Father Who *is* in heaven is perfect."

What does this verse tell us? Think on this verse for a little bit. "**Therefore, you shall be... [become] ...perfect...**" The work of God in us is to *make us like Him!* That's something!

Now you understand why God hates religion, because religions are designed to take you away from God by improperly using and deceitfully manipulating the words of God, or entirely rejecting it and having another religion.

Sidebar: Have you ever seen concerning the Buddhists? Have you ever seen them where they're all together and they're all going, 'Aaaaaaa.' Then on certain days they have these long horns and they blow these long horns. You know what they're trying to do? *Empty their minds of evil*, which in itself is a *deception*, because 'the mind is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked.'

Yes, you may make yourself totally non-thinking while you're doing all of the chanting. You may empty your mind of some things, but when you're done chanting, have you changed human nature? *NO!* God's way is to completely convert and change human nature. The question is:

- Would v 48 be fulfilled at the resurrection? *Partially!*
- How long has the Father been in existence?
- How long has He been perfect?

- How much more do we have to learn when we're resurrected and have the minds and bodies capable of learning spiritual things on a level that's completely different from what we are able to do as human beings?

This verse actually reaches way out into time and space. That's why Satan wants to get at the Church, deceive the Church. How do you do that? Like everything else that Satan does: ***a little bit at a time when you let your guard down!***

Stop and think, our Church experience, what happened? The Church got so filled with carnal-ism and everything, that it just flew apart.

Then we have on what we need to be doing. I'll let you read Matt. 6 and study that; v 33 is the summation. Of course, the whole Bible is built around these two verses. The whole process for eternal life is built around v 48 and everything that has to lead to that is all the rest of the Bible. This is the pinnacle of it. So here is what we are to do daily:

Matthew 6:33: "But *as for you, seek first...* [primary goal, everything that we're doing] ***...the Kingdom of God and His righteousness...***"—*which comes from being perfected!* It is true, we're perfected to a certain degree in our lives and prepared for the resurrection.

The greatest perfection is that when you die, your carnal mind is ended. So, when we're resurrected, we will have a spiritual mind and body. What can we do with that? We'll have to wait until we're there and find out what God has for us.

"...seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you" (v 33). Cannot God provide for us greater than anything we can possibly think of? What's it going to be like to live in New Jerusalem? *That's an amazing thing!*

Everything that Jesus has said is predicated on what happens in your life. There are a lot of people out there who *think* they're Christians, have partial knowledge.

Every time I mention that, I think of this Amoco transmission ad. It shows this transmission just kind of blowing apart, every little piece. Amoco brings it all together so it works. Look at it this way. Human life is like that transmission that has blown apart. The only thing that can bring it back together the way it should be is:

- God
- His purpose
- His plan

Matthew 7:13: "Enter in through the narrow gate..."—*because it's not having partial knowledge.* Just like the transmission. What if you leave out a part?

"...for wide *is* the gate and broad *is* the way that leads to destruction, and many are those who enter through it" (v 13).

Think on this. What if people use part of the Bible and live a pretty good life? *There are a lot of people like that!* It's just like building a house on sand. In Sand City they like to build houses there because the ground is flat, they can compact the sand, they can make the foundation troughs perfect. Everything is easy to build, so they build a house.

What are you going to do when the tsunami wave comes in and it wipes it out? *Think of that!* Doesn't matter what the façade is up here. Doesn't matter how good it is up here if it's not build on Christ, ***the true Christ, the way God wants it built, it will not last!***

Verse 21: "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; but the one who is doing the will of My Father, Who *is* in heaven."

They very rarely read that last sentence of it. What is the will of the Father in heaven? *It's all in the Bible!*

Verse 22: "Many will say to Me in that day..." They're going to be resurrected and think, 'Oh, boy, look we made it.'

"... 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy through Your name? And *did we not* cast out demons through Your name? And *did we not* perform many works of power through Your name?" (v 22).

They don't get the answer they expect, v 23: "And then I will confess to them, 'I never knew you... [Lord, we did this, we did that] ...Depart from Me, you who work lawlessness.'"

I mentioned this a couple weeks ago, but it stuck in my mind. John Hagee, one of the most powerful Protestant preachers, he's talking about how they need to give money to support his ministry. Hagee says, 'You do this. You take care of your responsibility, and keeping Sunday, and being in services, and God will take care of Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday.'

What's going to happen? Is John Hagee going to be one of those who said, 'Lord, look what I did'? ***"...you who work lawlessness..."*** If you reject the commandments of God, ***you're lawless!***

Verse 24: “Therefore, everyone who hears these words of Mine and practices them... [Greek is poieo, continuous doing] ...I will compare him to a wise man, who built his house upon the rock; and the rain came down, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; but it did not fall...” (vs 24-25).

They’re finding this, that insurance companies and builders are wanting to build strong concrete houses in areas where there are hurricanes. Why? *Because they get through it!* Maybe they lose a window or two, but the house is intact.

Next time you watch an aerial photo of an area where there’s been a hurricane and there’s a house that’s still standing, take careful look at it and you’ll see it’s made out of concrete with wrought iron reinforcement.

“...but it did not fall, for it was founded upon the rock” (v 25).

We need to look at it this way. It doesn’t matter what the world is doing, we can’t change that, only God can. But we have to take care of our own lives, as Jesus said, ***and build on that Rock!***

Verse 26: “And everyone who hears these words of Mine and does not practice them shall be compared to a foolish man, who built his house upon the sand; and the rain came down, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell, and great was the fall of it” (vs 26-27).

***So, this gives us how we need to conduct our lives, living in a world that is controlled by Satan the devil!***

#### Scriptural References:

- 1) 2-Corinthians 4:1-2
- 2) 2-Corinthians 2:17
- 3) Matthew 4:3-4
- 4) 1-John 4:1-2
- 5) 2-Corinthians 4:3-5
- 6) Revelation 12:9
- 7) Ephesians 2:1-2
- 8) 2-Timothy 2:23-26
- 9) Matthew 22:37-40
- 10) Proverbs 3:1-3
- 11) Hebrews 10:16
- 12) Proverbs 3:4-9
- 13) Matthew 5:3-10, 48
- 14) Matthew 6:33
- 15) Matthew 7:13, 21-27

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Isaiah 14
- Proverbs 1; 2; 14:12; 16:25
- Revelation 21, 22

Also referenced: Sermon Series: *God the Father Was Not the God of the Old Testament*

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## Second Corinthians V Being Clothed with Christ!

(Chapters 4 & 5)

*What God has done through Christ for those whom He calls, and for the whole plan of God*

Fred R. Coulter

2-Corinthians contains some of the most difficult things that are recorded, that Paul and those with him had gone through and suffered.

Also, it helps us to understand that today we are living in times in which *our stresses and difficulties* are completely different from theirs. They were living under the Roman Empire. They also had the Jews and the Gentiles against them, as well as the Roman government against them.

They had a lot of things that they had to put up with. They had a lot of different things that they had to contend with. Remember what it was in the 2-Cor.1 that Paul said that *it was so difficult, we even were despairing of life.*

All of us are going to come to a time, somewhere in our lives, that we're going to have difficult circumstances come where we feel the same thing. What this does, this gives us the comfort and the Truth that we need from God to help us bridge the gap between the problem and what the solution will be, and how to carry things out.

We have two very important things here for us. In reading some of the things that the Waldensians had to go through, and what their lives were in the Alps, and how much of the Bible they had, they had considerably more than we had anticipated. Also, they were responsible for producing Bibles in the native language.

I also got another report that is the history of the Sabbath down through time. Sabbath has been well known, even in China. Think of that! We sit here and we have no concept of what God has done in the past and how He has done it. Sometimes it gets down to just a few. Remember the situation with Elijah. He said, 'Oh, I'm the only one.' *He wasn't.*

Regardless of where you are and where you're living, we're all going to face difficult times. Those difficult times will be different, depending how society is oriented and where you're living.

However, this verse is true, Matthew 7:13: "Enter in through the narrow gate; for wide *is* the gate and broad *is* the way..." On **churchathome.org**, I've been focusing on *the way of God*. It is a *way of life*!

"...that leads to destruction, and **many** are those who enter through it" (v 13)—that means the majority. It's quite amazing! You think about how deceived this world is. It's absolutely incredible. Look at how many people are in the Catholic Church—1.2-billion. How many Protestants? *Probably 800-million!* They all think they're Christians. That's quite an amazing thing.

The other night I was watching this evangelist and he was talking about the works of the flesh and things like that. It's quite amazing that they really understand to a certain point, but then they don't understand beyond that.

When we have our difficulties, it's because it's the *narrow way*, as He says, v 14: "For narrow *is* the gate and difficult *is* the way...." Jesus said, 'I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life.' Look at what Jesus had to go through. *Everyone was against Him!* Even the apostles didn't understand very much. He willingly laid His life down.

Sidebar on the crucifixion of Christ: Rom. 7 talks about how a marriage is ended. That is with the death of either the wife or the husband. But in Rom. 7 it's talking about Christ and *His* death, to release the Israelites and to bring the Gentiles into the Church. He had to die in order to terminate the covenant with Israel.

Steve Green wrote me a very insightful e-mail; he's the one who did a lot of the answer back to Pacific Church when they were saying that the God of the Old Testament was the Father, not Jesus. His insightful statement was that if God the Father were God of the Old Testament, He would have to have come and died to end the covenant with Israel, *because it was a marriage covenant*. God said, 'I am your husband.'

What's going to happen with the resurrected saints and Christ? *In Rev. 19 we find the marriage and the marriage supper!* Very insightful! I'm glad Steve Green sent that to me. This ties in with this fact here:

Verse 14: "For narrow *is* the gate and difficult *is* the way that leads to life, and **few** are those who find it."

Look at what Paul went through. When Paul went to prison the last time, he said, 'All in Asia

have left me. Only Luke is with me' (2-Tim. 1). That's an amazing statement!

We have another Scripture in Rom. 8; these Scriptures give us understanding when things get difficult. I remember when we had to leave [the WCG]. *If* you're going to stand for the Truth, you have to stand for the Truth. *If* you don't, then you're going to start denying it. You're going to find ways around what you need to do.

When we had to stand for the Truth, it was a difficult time for the whole family, everybody. It's not easy to go out and get a job. You put down on your application, what did you do? *I'm a 49-year old, worn out, rejected preacher!* I finally had to go in business being my own loan broker. That went very well, but today I couldn't do it. There were times we didn't know what was going to happen. We didn't know how we were going to get along.

Delores went to work. She had a terrible commute on one of those jobs. She'd get up at 4:30 in the morning and drive all the way up to Burlingame, 90 miles and back. Our trials are different than Paul's. In 2-Cor. 4 we'll see some of the trials he went through (2-Cor. 1, 4, and 11).

No wonder he didn't charge the Corinthians for tithes, because they were so messed up that had he said, 'You pay your tithes to me,'—if he said it in that language—they would have all left him, and they ended up doing it anyway.

Paul wrote Romans when he was in custody in Caesarea, waiting to have his trial and go to Rome.

Romans 8:22: "For we know that all the creation is groaning together and travailing together until now." *If you think it was that way back then, think about what it is today with nearly 7.5-billion people!*

I thought that was an interesting question that one of the reporters asked Trump, 'Why did you condemn and call him (Kim Jong Un) *little rocket man* and now he's your friend?' Trump said, 'So your family won't be killed in a nuclear attack.' If he pulls that off... Of course, if that's the way that it's going to go, *that's what God wants*, which gives more time for preaching the Gospel.

We can just interject here, *everything's going to work out together for good*, because that's what the verse says. God has to call the people, so that they are able to come to repentance. We have to do our part. All the other Churches of God have to do their part. I'm sure there are more things that we can do, so we'll see what we can do.

But even with us, Betty will remember, it was just Delores, Jim and Betty, and Kip. That's what it was. But it's not a matter of numbers, though numbers would be nice, a few more. So, keep that in mind and pray for it. Wherever we are, there are lot of people up in their 80s. I'll be 84 in July. If God has five more years for me, then that'll bring me to 89. I don't know how long I'm going to live. We're trying to get a manual of operation for the whole Church. It's about 25% done. But we need to get that organized, because I'm not going to be here forever. Even some of the elders are up there in age. They're not going to be here.

There's going to be a time when we're going to see a number of deaths come quite quickly. That doesn't mean that something's going wrong. That means if they die in the faith, which they do, that something is going right. *They're enduring to the end!*

So always remember that on every coin *there are two sides*. That's why Paul could write this: v 23: "And not only *that*, but even we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, also groan within ourselves, awaiting the sonship—the redemption of our bodies."

That's why we're here. That's why we have the Sabbath every week. The Sabbath every week is important. From my point of view, it's this way. We need:

- to learn
- to study
- to have the Truth

***The Truth, the Truth, the Truth in everything that we do!*** We need to have it in a way, which we're getting it now, organized, so it can be passed on to others. That's why we have the Bible.

Verse 24: "For by hope we were saved; but hope that is seen is not hope... [we don't have it made, yet; ***you have to endure to the end***] ...for why would anyone still be hoping for what he sees? But if we hope for what we do not see..." (vs 24-25).

Now we have a clearer picture of it looking through the dark glass because of all of the things that are happening today, which have been occurring. We know we're living in the last days, without a doubt.

"...we ourselves wait for it with patience. Now, in the same way also, the Spirit is conjointly helping our weaknesses because we do not fully understand... [think about this from Paul] ...what we should pray for, according as it is necessary..." (vs 25-26).

- How do we pray?
- Who do we pray for?
- What do we pray for?

Especially living in this age, where the whole age, Paul described as in the last days men shall be lovers of their selves, narcissists. That's what we have today. Ron sent me a song, which he sent on to Jonathan. He's going to send it on to Randy. The song is, 'Oh, how I love me.' We'll have a little fun with that at **churchathome.org**. What does it lead to? *It leads to all the difficulties that we see in front of us!*

"...but the Spirit itself makes intercession for us with groaning that cannot be expressed *by us*" (v 26).

That's quite a thing! Our feelings and our thoughts are communicated to God through His Holy Spirit to Him. Somewhere along the line, there's a translation. How that exactly works I don't know. I know there are many times we go along and we say in our prayers, 'O God, you know.'

Also, I think it that all the extraneous thoughts that come into your mind that have nothing to do with the prayer while you're praying—you know that happens—I'm sure those are edited out.

Verse 27: "And the One Who searches the hearts comprehends..." That's the important thing; **God alone knows the heart** of every person.

When Job repented, he said, 'I know that no thought can be withheld from You.' The whole purpose of what God wants in conversion is that we grow in grace and knowledge and develop the mind of Christ. Today we have that opportunity more than ever before.

Sidebar: Why are the last *first*? *Because the ones at the end of the age are going to be the only ones who understand what really happened!* The saints resurrected on the Sea of Glass; the angels take them up there. Think about those in the first century, second century, third century, and so forth. Think about those who had been martyred, had their heads cut off or racked out on the rack and killed that way.

Here, they're being carried up there, and they get up on the Sea of Glass—I'm sure we can all look down and see what's going on in the world—the first thing they're going to ask is, 'What's going on?' We know what has been going on. Therefore, we will have to be the ones to help lead things when the Millennium begins, because these people who are left through all the things at the end-time are just going to be absolutely out of their minds with shock, grief, terror and fear. It's going to be something!

Being resurrected and look down and say, 'Look at that war going on.' The angel says, 'You wait until you get up here on the Sea of Glass and you'll know what's going on.' Since we have all video recordings, I've often wondered, has God recorded everything visually in history so that we can see what went on? *I don't know!* You go back and you read the first six chapters of Genesis and you wonder what on earth went on. The only clue we have today, Jesus said, 'As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be in the days of the Son of man.'

- What was going on?
- How did that happen?
- Why does it only have three men who were righteous? *Abel, Enoch and Noah!*
- Why was it so evil that God had to destroy everything?

Maybe we'll get some answers. Maybe you'll say, 'Okay, our lesson for today is....' Twenty years after Cain killed Abel, what happened?

Verse 27: "And the One Who searches the hearts comprehends what the strivings of the Spirit are because it makes intercession for *the* saints according to *the will of God*. And **we know that all things work together for good...**" (vs 27-28).

That's the promise. That's why 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Cor. shows all of the downside of:

- what it is to be a Christian
- what it is to put up with human nature
- what it is to fight Satan the devil
- what it is to fight false prophets

**"...to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose"** (v 28). We've been called according to the purpose of God.

2-Cor. 4 is very instructive for us who are elders so that we know how we need to have the relationship with God and with the brethren, and how we can really understand the Scriptures.

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... [that is one of the biggest sins of the leading evangelist on TBN] ...not walking in *cunning* craftiness... [not having a political agenda, not being there as some who snuck in] ...nor handling the Word of God deceitfully..." (vs 1-2).

The Greek can also mean *falsely*. This means false interpretation, deceitfully. This is why always keep in mind when studying: ***prove all things, everything!***

“...but by manifestation of the Truth...” (v 2). That’s what we search for; that’s what we live by. This is what leads us because all of the words that are here are inspired of God.

It’s like one man asked me one time, he said, ‘Have you ever heard the voice of God?’ I said, ‘No, but I read a lot of it.’ That’s why we have the Bible. ***It’s here!*** Does God need to speak to us? If we didn’t have a Bible, He would. But since we have the Bible, He’s not going to speak to us. Will He lead us so that we will think the things we need to? Will He guide us in thought? *Yes, He will, if we’re seeking God!*

Those who handle the Word of God *falsely* try and make it say something it doesn’t. It seems like almost everything from Feast of Tabernacles last year until even past the Passover, that’s all we were doing, *fighting false doctrines and different things coming out*. The ones who were promulgating different things were doing exactly this: ***handling the Word of God falsely or 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; whom the god of this age 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 2-4). *Satan is out there!*

- How does Satan get in?
- How does he inspire handling the Word of God falsely?

There’s one man, every time I say Satan inspires, who sends me a postcard and says Satan doesn’t inspire. I said, ‘How then do you explain the verse where it says that Satan put it in Judas’ heart? Is that not inspiration?’

Verse 5: “For we do not preach our own selves...” *Think on that one statement right there!*

- What was the biggest problem in WCG? *Preaching Herbert and Ted!*
- What happened? *That was successful for a while!*
- But where are they? *They’re not here!*
- Where is what they built up? *All scattered to the wind!*

That ties right in with what we mentioned about men shall be lovers of themselves. If you preach your own self, what are you doing? That’s not to say you don’t relate experiences and things like that. But those who preach about themselves are putting themselves above God.

“...but Christ Jesus *the* Lord, and ourselves your servants for Jesus’ sake” (v 5).

- we are to serve
- we are to help
- we are to teach the Truth
- we are to teach the things God wants

Like we covered at the conference, that we have to take heed to ourselves. How do we get correction? *We get correction if we’re studying the Word of God!* We can get correction almost every time we study, *if* we’re yielded to God.

Verse 6: “Because *it is* God Who commanded *the* light to shine out of darkness, Who shined into our hearts *the* light of the knowledge of the glory of God in *the* face of Jesus Christ.”

What Paul was referring to was undoubtedly when he saw visions of Christ, when he was being taught in Arabia for three years. Paul had an awful lot to unlearn.

What happens when you preach yourself? Or falsely interpret the Word of God? *You lead people away from God!* When you preach yourself, there’s always going to be someone who is savvy enough to be very political, to nuzzle right up to you and tell you how good you are. Who was that in WCG? *Stanley Rader!* What happens when that occurs? *You start changing the Gospel!*

How do you suppose it got from Sabbath to Sunday, where people believed it? This sounds very rational: Christ was resurrected on the first day of the week, and this is the New Testament, and we don’t want anything to do with Judaism. *That’s true, you don’t want anything to do with Judaism!* But when they said that, they’re saying we don’t want anything to do with the Old Testament.

When was Jesus resurrected? *Toward the end of the Sabbath!* He ascended to the Father on the first day of the week. *That didn’t sanctify that day!*

Paul is saying here, Galatians 1:6: “I am astonished that you are so quickly being turned away... [someone is coming in there and teaching them things that they shouldn’t be teaching them] ... from Him Who called you into *the* grace of Christ, to a different gospel, which *in reality* is not another Gospel; but there are some who are troubling you and are desiring to pervert the Gospel of Christ” (vs 6-7).

How? *By preaching falsely the Word of God, dishonestly and by preaching self!* Notice the severity of it:

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 means destined for the Lake of Fire!*

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? 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 do you have? *A fake Christianity, based upon men and based upon lies!* If you examine everything that the Roman Catholic Church teaches, every single bit of it is based upon lies and *deceitfully handling the Word of God*, if they ever open it.

- Peter was never at Rome
- He was never an apostle to the Gentiles
- He wasn't buried in a pagan burial ground

If you haven't gone through that series, go on **churchathome.org** There are 21 half-hour segments on *Was Peter Ever in Rome? NO!*

Let's see what Paul had to do, v 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).

When Paul talks about the glory of Christ, he knows what he's talking about. Just like Peter, James and John were taken up to the Mount of Transfiguration, and they saw Christ in vision in His glorified form, along with Elijah and Moses.

What was this to do? This was a visual education for them to understand that what they were going to preach as the Gospel is on the same level or more than—because Christ was there in the middle—Moses and Elijah. Peter never forgot that.

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. But when it pleased God, Who selected me from my mother's womb, and called *me* by His grace, reveal His own Son in me, in order that I might preach Him as the Gospel among the Gentiles, I did not immediately confer with flesh and blood” (vs 13-16).

Paul also said he was a Pharisee of a Pharisee (Phil. 3). His father was a Pharisee. Concerning law: **blameless!** What did Paul come to in his conversion with all of those things? He said, ‘I count them all but **dung**.’ The Greek word there is ‘skubalon.’

2-Corinthians 4:7: “Now, we have this treasure in earthen vessels... [***the Spirit of God, the knowledge of God, the Truth of God***] ...in order that the supremacy of the power may be of God, and not from us. On every *side we are hard pressed*...” (vs 7-8).

This is why I started out where we did. If troubles and difficulties come along, what do you have to do? *You have to take it one at a time!* Maybe they're going to be really bad. God will help you work it out.

The day is coming—the seeds of it are being sown now in the progressive movement, coming after Christians. Don't you think as angry as they are already, that giving it a few more things like that, they'll be very willing to lop off our heads? Think about it.

Sidebar: I cannot believe the total corruption and deception that is back there in the Justice Department, in the FBI and in the Congress. I can't believe how awful it really is and ***how derelict that the former president really was***, and actively involved in that dereliction himself.

That's why you don't trust in men. You can't trust in men. ***Amazing thing!*** It happened to the Church in almost the same way. Didn't it happen when all the stuff was going on and was really, really bad, that all the ministers around the world lied from the pulpit that nothing was happening? *They lied and said that all of these things that you're hearing about are nothing but rumors, they're not true, **when they all became true!*** So you see how that works.

We have the Holy Spirit and that comes from God and that doesn't come from men. Verse 8: “On every *side we are hard pressed*, but not crushed; perplexed, but not despairing.” Paul said in 2-Cor. 1 that he came even to the point of despairing of living.

Verse 9: “Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; always carrying about in *our* bodies the dying of the Lord Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies.... [for the purpose of preaching the Truth] ...For those of us who are living are always delivered to death for Jesus' sake, that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our mortal flesh. So then, on the one

hand, death is working in us; and on the other hand, life *is working* in you” (vs 9-12).

In other words, he’s saying that *we are spending our lives to preach the Truth* to you, so that *you* can be in the Kingdom of God and in so doing, we’re getting older and we’re wearing out. Paul eventually died. What did Paul say in his epistle to Timothy? *‘I’m ready to be offered; my time is at hand. I’ve run the race; I’ve finished the course.’*

(go to the next track)

Going through verse-by-verse in all of these books is a very good way to study. Sometimes if you just do it by topics—get a verse here and a verse there and put it together—you miss the flow of what is being said. As you go along, and we put it all together, and put in the things from other parts of the Bible, or New Testament, then this helps us to understand it.

Verse 13: “And having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, ‘I believed, therefore, I have spoken,’ we also believe; therefore, we also speak, knowing that He Who raised the Lord Jesus *from the dead* shall also raise us through Jesus, and shall present *us* with you” (vs 13-14).

Paul always looked at the end. When you always keep focused on that, then you never lose perspective when difficulties come. We find this in Heb. 12 where he writes about that exactly. Paul wrote this when he was in prison in Rome the first time in about 60<sub>A.D.</sub>—maybe early 60<sub>A.D.</sub>—James, the brother of Jesus, was martyred in 61<sub>A.D.</sub>

It’s written to the Hebrews, but it’s also written to the whole Church. This was written to those in Jerusalem. It had to be written before the death of James. So, this came before that occurred and to help them with the troubles they were having in Jerusalem. They were having a lot of troubles. All of that would lead up to the Jews rebelling against the Romans. That started in 66<sub>A.D.</sub>

In Heb. 12 Paul is trying to encourage them. Whenever you get down and you get discouraged, think about all that have come before us. That’s more than we can think about because we don’t know many. After we get done with the Church history thing we’re doing from 100<sub>A.D.</sub> to 1600<sub>A.D.</sub>, you’ll have a little better idea of it.

Hebrews 12:1: “Therefore, *since* we are surrounded by such a great throng of witnesses...” He’s talking to the whole Church and obviously the whole Church had the Old Testament as well. He’s talking directly to those in Jerusalem.

I wonder how many in Jerusalem that were clinger-ons, rather than really converted, left and completely forsook everything when the temple was destroyed. Especially if they believed the misinterpretation that Christ was going to come when the temple was destroyed. Paul wanted to remind them and Heb. 11 is about all those who went ahead and were faithful.

“...let us lay aside every weight... [you’ve heard of heavy problems; it weighs down on the mind, heart and emotions] ...and the sin that so easily entraps *us*...” (v 1).

We’re not fighting just against outward expression of sin, we’re fighting against the reality of the thought of sin within. That’s quite a project for God to convert the carnal mind and all that goes on in the mind.

Recently, Brit Hume—a long time commentator on Fox News—was talking about a certain thing with a certain man and the troubles he was going through. He said, ‘I have learned over the years that every person has something inside that they’re working on, that they don’t discuss with anyone else. When I’m dealing with people, I try and remember that I don’t know what it is that they’re working on, so deal with them in kindness.’

I thought that was a very good expression and that would agree with things in the Bible, too. Sometimes you misunderstand what people are going through, and you come on them in a very bad way. I’ve done that many times and I’m sure you have, too.

“...and let us run the race set before us with endurance, having *our minds fixed*... [this is what is the thing of everything that we’re covering here in this chapter] ...on Jesus, the Beginner and Finisher... [the Perfector] ...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” (vs 1-2).

We’re going to see in 2-Cor. 4 & 5 that Paul is emphasizing this very thing. *What it is that God has done through Christ for those who He calls, and for the whole plan of God!*

Verse 3: “Now meditate deeply on Him... [think on Him] ...Who endured such great hostility of sinners against Himself so that you do not become **weary and faint** in your minds”—and give up. *That’s what Satan wants; he wants you to become weary and unable to handle things!* Here’s the reason:

Verse 4: “You have not yet resisted to the point of *losing* blood in your struggle against sin.”

He talks about it here, finishing up 2-Cor. 4 and getting into 2-Cor. 5. Think about when it says that God so loved the world, He gave His only Begotten Son, think about the love that Jesus had to willingly lay down His life, go through what He had to go through, so that He could save them and complete the plan of God. Quite a thing!

2-Corinthians 4:15: "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."

In other words, if we're doing the things that please God, that is to His glory. If we love God and yield to Him, He loves us and all of these things.

Think what the Father had to go through when Christ was on the earth in the flesh. Christ had to carry *the law of sin and death* in Him. If He didn't, He couldn't be tempted. Yet, live a life without sinning. Think about that!

Verse 16: "For this reason, we do not lose heart... [ties in with Heb. 12, don't be weary] ...but if our outward man is being brought to decay... [we're all getting older, all have the problems and difficulties] ...yet, the inward *man* is being renewed day by day."

- with the Spirit of God
- with the Word of God
- with the Truth of God

That's how God wants us to change, grow and overcome when we're confronted with whatever it is. When we're confronted with these problems:

- What do we think about?
- How do we respond?
- What are our thoughts toward God?

Let's understand that here's a promise in 1-Cor. 10. Sometimes you get so overwhelmed, you forget this promise and then once you go through it and look back, you see that God did keep this promise.

1-Corinthians 10:13: "No temptation has come upon you except what is common to mankind. For God, Who *is* faithful... [these are powerful words] ...will not permit you to be tempted... [or tried] ...beyond what you are able *to bear*..."

How much can you bear with the strength of Christ, with the Spirit of God?

"...but with the temptation... [or trial] ...He will make a way of escape, so that you may be able to bear *it*" (v 13). *That's quite a promise!*

How that works out, you never know. Sometimes it will come right away; sometimes it'll come later. Sometimes it'll come along, you'll forget all about it and then all of a sudden one day, you're just doing something, and BING! you say to yourself, 'God did answer that. Look at that!'

What is the whole process of conversion? *The renewing of our mind* (Rom. 12:2) ***spiritually!*** That's the most important. Doesn't matter, the body's going to get old and wear out and be gone. But ***what we do spiritually*** is important. So, it's day-by-day. You've heard the saying in almost every successful sports person has this principle down correct: *Take it one day at a time!* What do they say when they've had, in competition, a severe loss and maybe even kind of a stupid loss?

Recently with the basketball playoffs between the Golden State Warriors and the Cleveland Cavaliers, Cleveland had it won with 4.2 seconds left. There was a man there and Cleveland was behind by one point. The player got fouled, so he gets two shots. If he makes both of them, they win, but he missed. One of his teammates got the ball right under the basket. He could have put it right in and they would have won by two. He was right there! But no, he went out and ran out the clock and it was a tie game, so the Golden State Warriors came back and won in overtime. That is going to be hard to overcome. Because then they lost the subsequent three games after that, so that Golden State Warriors won the championship.

You see how sometimes when a difficulty comes along, imagine what it's going to be with his career. This is why we need the renewal inward. That's the only way that that player's going to overcome that great gaff, because he will always be remembered for losing the game. Whether they would have won the playoffs or not, would have been another thing.

Likewise with us, *if we renew day-by-day!* How do we do that? *By prayer and study every day, every day, every day!*

2-Corinthians 4:16: "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. For the momentary lightness of our tribulation... [think of all that Paul went through] ...is working out for us an immeasurably greater *and* everlasting fullness of glory" (vs 16-17).

That's quite a statement. In other words, regardless of what we go through for eternal life and the glory that will come with that, it doesn't matter. It's worth it. Whenever the problems come, we have to look at it and say, 'Now what do I do?' Some

bloopers are little, some are big. Like that poor guy who lost the game. That was the biggest blooper in the history of basketball. *Likewise with us; we have to take that, focusing in on Christ, on everything.* Here's why:

Verse 18: "While we consider not the things *that are* seen, but the things *that are* not seen.... [that's hard to do; that's why we have to keep our minds fixed on Christ] ... For the things *that are* seen *are* temporary; but the things *that are* not seen *are* eternal."

That means that everything we go through, from conversion forward, is leading to eternal life. In addition to eternal life, there will be rewards. How God does that, He's the One Who is going to determine that. There may be people who do far less than others who get a greater reward because of how they lived and what they did. God is the One Who is in charge of that.

Now then, Paul's very encouraging, continuing right on in 2-Corinthians 5:1: "For we know that if our earthly house of *this* tabernacle... [our body] ...is destroyed, we have a building from God... [a spiritual body and mind] ...a house not made with *human* hands, eternal in the heavens." *Our reward is in heaven and coming when we're resurrected!*

Verse 2: "For in this we truly are groaning, longing to be clothed with our dwelling from heaven." That is, you're looking for the resurrection. You want to hasten it. Isn't that what happens?

Verse 3: "If indeed *that* being clothed, we may not be found naked"—*spiritually as well as physically!* Why does it say *clothed*? *We're looking at spiritual clothing now!*

Galatians 3:26: "Because you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus." Always remember this, having the Spirit of God you are the begotten children of God, not adoption. You are sons. This is sonship, because the seed of the Father remains in us.

Verse 27: "For as many *of you* as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ." In the Greek there it can mean *you are clothed* with Christ. That's what he's talking about in 2-Cor. 5.

Verse 28: "There is neither Jew nor Greek; there is neither bond nor free; there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus."

That's speaking spiritually. In the flesh, we are still all of those things, but God doesn't look at us that way. He looks at us as to what our spiritual end result is eventually going to be.

Verse 29: "And if you *are* Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to *the* promise." There you can have all kinds of different studies on being an heir of God.

***Being clothed with Christ!*** What did Christ tell the Laodiceans? He said put on white garments that your nakedness is not seen. In other words, your spiritual deficiencies are not going to cause you great problems. So, if you put on Christ—and what are the clothes that we put on? ***The clothes of the saints is the righteousness of God!*** The righteousness of God comes with *loving Him, keeping His commandments, growing and overcoming!* All of these things come together here.

2-Corinthians 5:4: "For we who are in *this* tabernacle truly do groan, being burdened; not that we wish to be unclothed, but to be clothed upon so that the mortal *flesh* may be swallowed up by life. Now, He Who is working out this very thing for us *is* God..." (vs 4-5). *God is working in us!*

Sometimes that's hard to realize. It's just like the law of gravity. It's everywhere; it's powerful, but you don't even notice it. ***Same way with the Spirit of God!*** There are times when you know God's Spirit is working more directly with you than at other times. But it is never *not* working with you; it's always working with you. God is the one Who is doing it. What is His workmanship? *Eph. 2!* It's amazing how all the Scriptures hang together.

Ephesians 2:8: "For by grace you have been saved through faith..."—*saved from Satan the devil and the world.* That's not the final salvation. ***The final salvation is the resurrection!*** Between the time of baptism and resurrection, there's a lot of work going on day-by-day.

"...and this *especially* is not of your own selves; *it is* the gift of God, not of works... [your own works; we do the works of God] ...so that no one may boast. For we are His workmanship, ***being created***..." (vs 9-10)—*a process:*

- renewed day-by-day
- being changed day-by-day
- growing and overcoming day-by-day

"...in Christ Jesus unto *the* good works that God ordained beforehand in order that we might walk in them" (v 10).

When it talks about God is working with us, God is literally doing it. I'm sure that we will not fully grasp this until the resurrection. In the meantime:

- we live by faith



- we walk by faith
- we look at the things that are eternal

*Not the things that are spiritual or physical!*

2-Corinthians 5:5: “Now, He Who is working out this very thing for us *is* God, Who has also given us the earnest of the Spirit. Therefore, we are always confident, knowing that while we are at home in *this* body, we are away from *our eternal* home, *which is coming* from the Lord. (For we walk by faith, not by sight.) We are confident, and we are willing to be *away* from *this* home (*that is*, out of *this* body) and instead to be at home with the Lord” (vs 5-8).

Isn't it something, God never told the apostles until the very last minute it's not going to be in their lifetime. With John, in the book of Revelation, He showed its way out there.

The critics say John could not have written the book of Revelation, because it's so different from his Gospel and his three epistles. *It was written by Christ and John was the stenographer!* Therefore, it's more important, because that filled in all the blanks from the time of John to the new heaven and the new earth. That's the framework.

Verse 9: “Because of this, we are also laboring *so that*, whether present or absent, *we* may be well pleasing to Him. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ so that each one may receive according to the things *done* in *his* body—what he has practiced, whether good or evil. So then, *because* we know the fear of the Lord, we are persuading men; but we are fully known to God, and I hope are also fully known in your consciences” (vs 9-11). Paul had to fight that whole Church. Wait till we get to 2-Cor. 13.

Verse 12: “For we are not commending ourselves again to you, but are giving you an occasion to boast on our behalf, so that you may have *something to answer* to those who themselves are boasting in *physical* appearance, and not in *the* heart.”

These false apostles were saying, ‘Look at Paul.’ Remember by this time he probably had some things crippling him. Remember on his first evangelistic tour, he was stoned and left for dead. I'm sure that's why Luke, who was the physician, was always with him. I imagine he had to work over Paul's back, legs, and his feet all the time.

When we get to 2-Cor. 11 you're going to see what he went through. Paul really went through a lot. The next time you say, ‘I've been going through so much, I can hardly bear it,’ read 2-Cor. 11. Ask

yourself, what would you have done if this were you.

I bet when he was out in the deep clinging to something for a day and a night, he thought, ‘That's it.’ When you're out there clinging, all you can see are the waves. You can't see anything very far. There you are, all alone; just You and me, God, and the fish below me.

Verse 13: “But if we are jubilant, *it is* to God; or if we are sober-minded, *it is* for you... [to help you grow and overcome] ...for the love of Christ compels us, *because* we have thus concluded that if one died for all, then all died” (v 14).

Paul said, ‘When I came to the conviction of sin, I died.’ ***He died by baptism!*** This tells us that as far as in this physical life, *we look forward to the eternal life that is coming!* The only reason that we continue in the physical life, is to:

- let us renewed day-by-day
- do what God wants us to do
- how He wants us to do it
- all of that together

Verse 15: “And He died for all so that those who live should no longer live to themselves, but to Him Who died for them and was raised again.”

That's why we live *in* the world, but we're not *of* the world. That's how it is right there. I am sure we'll understand that more when we're resurrected. What is that going to be like? I don't know how to express it.

How much does a child growing in the womb really know? *Nothing!* When he's born, immediately comes from living in water to living in the world; from not breathing, but to breathing. Then everything begins to unfold. Why do babies when they're first born cry so much? *Expand their lungs out so they can breathe!*

- What's it going to be like to be born again of the Spirit?
- What is it going to be like to adjust to a spirit body?
- How is it going to be that we will be able to, however it will be done, appear in a glorified form, or appear in a form that looks like flesh?
- How's that going to be?

These are some of the things that are so fantastic, if we keep them in our mind, and always are headed toward that goal, and day-by-day renewed, that we'll begin to understand.

Verse 16: “So then, from this time *forward* we know no man according to *the* flesh; but even if we have known Christ in *the* flesh, yet, now we no longer know *Him accordingly*. Therefore, if anyone *be* in Christ, *he is* a new creation...” (vs 16-17).

We see *being created* (Eph. 2). The Protestants say, BANG! You’re automatically a new creation. Not true. But what they do with their little prayer, and accepting Jesus is taking the first step over the threshold and then having the door slammed in their face.

“...the old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.... [showing that it’s a process] ... And all things *are* from God, Who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ...” (vs 17-18). *That’s what grace upon grace is, as noted in John 1, direct access to God the Father!*

- He the One Who has drawn us
- He is the One Who has called us
- Christ is the One Who paid the penalty so we could have our sins forgiven
- He is the One Who is working with us with the Father

“...and has given to us the ministry of reconciliation; which *is*, that God was in Christ...” (vs 18-19). Everything that Jesus went through was inspired and directed by the Father.

That’s why Jesus said, ‘I do nothing of My own self, but as the Father has taught Me. As the Father has commanded Me, *I do!* As the Father has showed Me what to speak, *I speak!* The Father, *then spiritually in Christ*, also participated in the suffering of Christ.

“...reconciling *the* world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them...” (v 19)—present and in the future. This is a statement, but a prophecy, because the world has not been reconciled, yet. Have to go through the whole plan of God, the meaning of the Feast of Tabernacles, Last Great Day, all of that together. This will not be fulfilled until there is the Lake of Fire to get rid of the wicked and Satan the devil.

“...and He has entrusted to us *this* message of reconciliation” (v 19). This is an important thing for every minister and elder. You have been entrusted by God *to not preach yourself, to not falsify the Word of God*. That’s why it’s important in serving the brethren.

That’s why Paul said to the elders, ‘Take heed to yourselves, and the flock, the Church of God, which He has purchased with His own blood.’ That’s quite a thing! Entrusted means stewardship, *that you use someone else’s property to increase a*

*profit* for whoever owns that property, likewise with the brethren.

Verse 20: “Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ; *and* God, as it were, is exhorting *you* through us...” If they preach the Words of God, *they are God’s words!* God is doing the exhorting, though we’re the mouthpiece temporarily.

“...We beseech *you* on behalf of Christ, ‘Be reconciled to God.’.... [think of this, how powerful this one verse is] ...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’s an amazing thing! That’s the whole plan of God there!* I think we’re going to learn quite a few things; this is quite a book!

#### Scriptural References:

- 1) Matthew 7:13-14
- 2) Romans 8:22-28
- 3) 2-Corinthians 4:1-6
- 4) Galatians 1:6-16
- 5) 2-Corinthians 4:7-14
- 6) Hebrews 12:1-4
- 7) 2-Corinthians 4:15-16
- 8) 1-Corinthians 10:13
- 9) 2-Corinthians 4:16-17
- 10) 2-Corinthians 5:1-3
- 11) Galatians 3:26-29
- 12) 2-Corinthians 5:4-5
- 13) Ephesians 2:8-10
- 14) 2-Corinthians 5:5-21

#### Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- 2-Corinthians 1
- Romans 7
- Revelation 19
- 2-Timothy 1
- 2 Corinthians 11
- Philippians 3
- Romans 12:2
- Ephesians 2
- John 1

#### Also referenced: Series:

*Was Peter Ever in Rome?* ([churchathome.org](http://churchathome.org))

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## Second Corinthians VI How Are You Building Your Spiritual Life?

(Chapter 6)

*Develop the character of gold, silver and precious stones*

Fred R. Coulter

Greetings, brethren! Welcome to Sabbath services! We've been making pretty good progress in the Epistle of Paul, his second epistle to the Corinthians. It is quite an epistle. There are many things we need to think about when we're going through here. We're going to see some very interesting things as we go along.

We're trying to get through all of these so we can have them as Transcript Study Books with the CDs to go with it. That makes for a very good combination in being able to study the Bible.

2-Corinthians 6:1: "We then, working together *with Him*... [*Christ*; it all works together with God's Spirit] ...are also exhorting you not to **receive the grace of God in vain.**"

What does that mean? *I think one of the ways that you can see very easily is to watch some of the programs on TBN!* They take the grace of God very lightly and they preach their fake Christianity, though they quote the Scripture. If you listen carefully, they really don't quote it most of the time as it should be. There are some few who do a pretty good job. However:

- you need the whole Bible
- you need to love God
- you need to keep His commandments
- you need to keep at it through thick and thin regardless of what happens

Let's look at some Scriptures concerning how not to take the grace of God in vain. One of the ways is to continue living in sin; ***then you are taking the grace of God in vain!*** I think you look at it today, this is the way a lot of people look at it. But here's the Truth of God:

- we must love God
- we must obey Him
- we must keep His commandments

Isn't it interesting that in 2-Cor. 6:1 we find the answer to what it means to ***take the grace of God in vain***, and find that also in Rom. 6. So, Paul says:

Romans 6:1: "What then shall we say? Shall we continue in sin so that grace may abound?... [*that's taking the grace of God in vain*] ...MAY IT

NEVER BE!.... [here's the reason why]: ...**We who died to sin, how shall we live any longer therein?"** (vs 1-2).

How do we die to sin? *Dying to sin is through the operation of baptism by full immersion in water!* That is a symbolic death:

- you're not to *live* in sin
- you're not to take the grace of God in vain by being *willfully* sinning

Let's see what Paul wrote concerning that. Quite a warning, because of what God does:

Hebrews 10:15: "And the Holy Spirit also bears witness to us; for after He had previously said, "This *is* the covenant that I will establish with them after those days," says the Lord, "I will give My Laws..." (vs 15-16).

*That's through grace!* It takes the grace of God to have the laws of God put in your heart and mind.

"...into their hearts, and I will inscribe them in their minds; and their sins and lawlessness I will not remember ever again" (vs 16-17).

This is what is so fantastic about it. Grace means that *we have the ability to approach God the Father directly through prayer!* We pray to God and when we study, His Word teaches us and helps us so that our minds are cleansed and that we can come to God with a pure heart, through Jesus Christ. That's the whole purpose of grace.

It's a continually ongoing thing because we are overcoming. We are going toward perfection. We are not yet perfect, but God:

- through Christ
- through His Spirit
- through His love
- through our zealouslyness in doing our part

***is going to perfect us! The final perfection will be the resurrection!*** Amazing! He's explaining it here in Hebrews:

Verse 18: "Now, where remission of these *is*, it is no longer *necessary to offer sacrifices* for sin. Therefore, brethren, **having confidence to enter into the true Holiest by the blood of Jesus**" (vs 18-19)—*right before God!*

Think about that the next time you pray. That's why we say: *Our Father Who is in heaven, hallowed be Your name; Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven!*

On earth means *all the prophecies to be fulfilled*. That means *working with each one of us individually through the power of the Holy Spirit and the Word of God to teach us and help us*, so we can grow in grace and knowledge and move toward that perfection, and grow in the love of God. *That's the whole purpose of everything that God is doing with us!*

**"...to enter into the true Holiest by the blood of Jesus...** [that's an amazing thing] ...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" (vs 19-21).

The whole Church—wherever they are—scattered or in fellowship groups, large or small, it makes no difference, *God knows who has His Spirit!*

- He loves each one of us
- He cares for us
- He wants us to grow and overcome

Here is how we can approach God in our prayers, in our thoughts, and everything; v 22: "Let us approach God **with a true heart**... [that comes with the washing of the water by the Word] ...**with full conviction of faith**..."

Hebrews 11:1 talks about faith: "Now, faith is *the* substance of *things* hoped for, *and the* conviction of things not seen."

This is *the spiritual substance* that comes from God's Spirit. So, when we approach God, **with full conviction of faith**:

- knowing that it is true
- knowing that His Word is true
- knowing that His promises are true
- that whatever God has said He will do

Remember what Jesus said, 'If you love Me, keep the commandments, namely Mine and whatever you ask in My name, I will do.' *That is if it's according to the will of God!* So, you can see all these Scriptures come together like this.

Hebrews 10:22: "...our hearts having been purified... [constantly, day-by-day] ...from a wicked conscience, and our bodies having been washed with pure water.... [that's baptism] ...Let us hold fast without wavering *to the hope that we profess*, for He Who promised *is faithful*" (vs 22-23).

That's something we need to really do. Let's grasp the greatness of the calling of God. Now then, turn the coin to the other side:

Verse 26: "For if we willfully go on sinning after receiving the knowledge of the Truth, there is no longer any sacrifice for sins."

This is not where we go along and sin, then repent and overcome; *that's part of the grace of God!* But this is taking the grace of God in vain *if we are living in sin!* Let's see another example of taking the grace of God in vain. Paul was writing this to the whole Church.

Sidebar: The reason why Paul didn't put his name here is because if it had gone to Jerusalem, there were so many zealots there—as you see how they came against Paul—that they probably would have burned it on sight. His name is not in here, but we have a lot of indications that it was Paul who wrote it and probably Luke who penned it.

Here's what we need to do; Hebrews 6:1: "Therefore, advancing beyond the beginning principles of the doctrines of Christ... [yes, he wants us to go on] ...we should go on to perfection; not laying again *the* foundation of repentance from dead works, and *of* faith in God."

Paul says here, because if we do this, then we are going to be using the grace of God *profitably*, not in vain. Then he gives another warning here:

Verse 4: "For *it is* impossible for those *who were* once enlightened, and who personally obtained **the heavenly gift**... [the Holy Spirit] ...and became partakers of *the* Holy Spirit, and who have tasted *the* good Word of God, and *the* powers of *the* world to come, if they have fallen away, to renew *them* again unto repentance; *seeing that* they are crucifying the Son of God for themselves, and are publicly holding *Him* in contempt" (vs 4-6).

But he said, 'Brethren, we expect greater things than that from you.' *Yes, indeed!* Let's go forward and look at some things we need to do with this.

2-Corinthians 6:2: "(For He says, 'In an acceptable time I have heard you, and **in a** day of salvation I have helped you.'....)" Note: the *King James Version* says **the** day of salvation.

This is where the Protestants get the doctrine that if you're not saved right now, according to their doctrines, you're all going to burn in hell forever. Because it is *the day*, they say, as the *King James Version*. But it is in the Greek **a day**. We'll look at the prophecy in Isa. 49 in just a minute and see it's the same thing here.

“...Behold, now *is* an acceptable time. Behold, now *is* **a day** of salvation” (v 2).

Isa. 49—I’ll have to bring a message with that as a central theme of it; that has to do with Jesus Christ as being our Savior, being called to do this. Let’s take a look at it and let’s read this prophecy and see that in 2-Cor. 6:2 that it has been translated properly.

Isaiah 49:7: “Thus says the LORD, the Redeemer of Israel, his Holy One, *to Him* whom man despises, *to Him* whom the nation hates, the Servant of rulers... [that’s what it’s going to be in the Millennium] ...‘Kings shall see and arise, princes also shall worship because of the LORD Who is faithful, the Holy One of Israel, and He shall choose You.’” ***That means Christ!***

Verse 8: “Thus says the LORD, ‘In a favorable time I have answered You, and in a day of salvation I have helped You; and I will preserve You, and give You for a covenant of the people, to restore the earth, to cause them to inherit the wasted inheritances.’” ***This is talking about Christ!***

- How does our salvation come? *Through Christ!*
- What was the day that that would begin? *It began on the Passover week when He was crucified, shed His blood—that’s the sacrifice!*
- then the salvation began when He was resurrected from the dead, ascended to heaven, to be accepted by the Father
- then He came back and spent 40-days and 40-nights with the apostles, teaching them
- on the 40<sup>th</sup> day He ascended to heaven and said to them, ‘You wait in Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high’

Pentecost then becomes the beginning, that **day of salvation**. You might liken it now that the Church is in the day of Pentecost, from the time of the giving of the Holy Spirit until the time of the resurrection at Pentecost. It all connects together with all the brethren down through the ages.

A day of salvation means **today is a day of salvation for us through Christ**, Who was crucified, died, shed His blood, and was resurrected. So, He’s our High Priest in heaven right now. It is **a** day of salvation. ***Our day is today!***

Paul talks about his ministry. When we get toward the end of 2-Cor. I’m going to put all these things that Paul had to do and are recounted in 2-Cor. Almost all of them are there. That’s quite an amazing thing.

2-Corinthians 6:3: “We do not give offense to anyone in anything, so that the ministry may not be blamed; but in everything we are confirming ourselves as servants of God...” (vs 3-4).

How is that being confirmed? Remember, there were many false prophets coming around with fake Christianity back then.

Let’s see about Paul’s calling. We will see, as we go along and go through 2-Cor. that Paul did indeed suffer perhaps more than any of the other apostles. ***Quite a thing to understand!***

Here’s Saul in Acts 9. This becomes important because Christ prophesied of what he would suffer for the glory of the preaching that he would do.

Acts 9:1: “Now Saul, still breathing out threatening and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest, asking him *for* letters *to take* to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any who were of that way...” (vs 1-2).

Sidebar: true Christianity is **a way of life**, and is based upon everything that God wants us to do. As Jesus said: ***We are to live by every Word of God:***

- plus the Holy Spirit
- plus the grace of God
- plus access to God
- plus God intervening in our lives
- plus the great reward that lies ahead of us in ruling the world under Christ

Paul got the letters and he’s going to bring them back to Jerusalem.

Verse 3: “But it came to pass while he was journeying, as he drew near to Damascus, that suddenly a light from heaven shined round about him. And after falling to the ground, he heard a voice say to him, ‘Saul, Saul, why do you persecute Me?’” (vs 3-4).

Isn’t that interesting? ***If you are persecuted, they are persecuting Christ!*** Why? ***Because Christ is in you!*** The Spirit of Christ and the Spirit of the Father are in you. So, this is how Christ looks at it. The Church is called the Body of Christ. If you persecute those who are in the Body of Christ, you are persecuting Christ.

Verse 5: “And he said, ‘Who are You, Lord?’ And the Lord said, ‘I am Jesus, Whom you are persecuting. *It is* hard for you to kick against *the* pricks.’”

You’ve seen those long spikes that are on that vine; those are the pricks. You kick against that,

and what's going to happen to you? *That's going to be a disaster indeed!* So, Paul's behavior to Christ was like the same thing.

Verse 6: "Then, trembling and astonished, he said, 'Lord, what will You have me to do?' And the Lord *said* to him, 'Get up and go into the city, and you shall be told what you must do.' Now, the men who were traveling with him stood speechless; *for* they indeed heard the voice, but they saw no one. Then Saul arose from the ground... [he was led into the city] (v 9): But *for* three days he was not *able* to see, and he did not eat or drink" (vs 6-9). Then it talks about Ananias and God called him.

Verse 10: "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'" (vs 10-14).

Here's the Lord's answer. This helps us understand many of the things that Paul went through in suffering:

Verse 15: "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 15-16). *And he did suffer great, great things!*

Today, our sufferings are entirely different than it was back then for Paul or for the early New Testament Church. Let's see what Paul says about his ministry. This is quite enlightening. I'm sure that every minister, and even you yourself have had these contradictions come against you. So, here are the extremes:

2-Corinthians 6:4: "But in everything we are confirming ourselves as servants of God, in much endurance, in tribulation, in necessities, in distresses... [these are plural] ...in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labors, in watchings, in fastings, in pureness, in knowledge, in long-suffering, in kindness, in *the* Holy Spirit, in love unfeigned" (vs 4-6).

That tells you an awful lot what Paul had to go through. In modern vernacular that would be the good, the bad and the ugly, if you want to look at it that way.

Here's why, v 7: "*The Word of Truth, in the power of God; through the armor of righteousness on the right hand and on the left, through glory and dishonor... [this has happened to all of us; you can say goodness or dishonor, glory in that sense] ...through evil report and good report, as deceivers and true*" (vs 7-8).

I look back at some of the things that we've done here in the Christian Biblical Church of God, and over the years, and a lot of these things have come to us the same way. Having left WCG, I've been denounced as whatever by so many different ones. Even one minister, who has since died, disfellowshipped me three times, even though I was never in his organization.

"...as deceivers and true" (v 8). The Jews would look upon him as deceiving the people. You need to go to Jerusalem. You need to have Judaism.

Verse 9: "As unknown and well known; as dying, but behold, we are alive; as chastened, but not put to death; as sorrowful, but always rejoicing; as poor, but enriching many; as having nothing, yet, possessing all things" (vs 9-10)—*that are necessary!*

There are times when Paul was hungry. There are times when they were chasing him. Remember when he was thrown in the prison there in Philippi? Quite a thing! So, he says:

Verse 11: "*O you Corinthians! Our mouths have been opened to you, and our hearts have been enlarged toward you. You are not suppressed by us, but you are restricted in your own hearts*" (vs 11-12).

What Paul is telling them is that here's an illusion to those false prophets who were coming in and they were taking tithes. Paul took nothing from them, *not a thing!* He wanted them to know the truth and sincerity of his ministry to them as compared to the 'hutzpa,' of those false prophets coming in saying how great they were.

This also has to do with tithes and offerings. They were restricted in their own hearts. They gave to the false preachers, but they weren't giving to Paul. So, Paul said, '*All right, I'm not going to take a thing from you, just to show you the difference between the Truth and what these false ministers are teaching you!*'

Verse 13: "Now in return *for our ministry to you* (I am speaking to you as to children), you should also enlarge *your hearts toward us*." That is

in illusion to giving funds and food and things to him. Every one of these things tell us that these were happening in Corinth:

- How bad was Corinth?
- How depraved had it become?
- How easily falling away from the Truth, slipping away from it and getting involved in all sorts of things that weren't right?

We'll go through some of these things and see exactly what it was that they were doing and up against. All of this is in a contradiction to being the children of God and receiving salvation. We will also see just about all these same things we find in Protestantism; certainly find them in Catholicism, without a doubt.

Verse 14: "Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers..." Paul also wrote in 1-Cor. that there will be situations where a husband will be called, but not the wife; or the wife will be called, but not the husband. That is not being yoked to unbelievers in the sense that this is talking about. Paul said, 'Who knows, O man; or who knows, O woman, whether your conduct will help your husband or your wife to be converted?' Unbelievers are people out in the world. This could be in business. This could be in other things. Yoked means *bound together with unbelievers!*

"...For what do righteousness and lawlessness have in common?..." (v 14). ***Nothing, absolutely nothing!*** They are as far apart as the east is from the west.

The righteousness that God wants us to develop is *the righteousness that comes from Him*. That righteousness is based on faith, hope, love, and steadfastness in everything that you do. ***That righteousness cannot have any companionship whatsoever with lawlessness!*** What is lawlessness?

1-John 3:4: "Everyone who practices sin is also practicing lawlessness, for sin is lawlessness." The *King James Version* says sin is the transgression of the Law. That's an acceptable translation, but lawlessness is more precise.

The important thing concerning lawlessness that men have that they do, which is they substitute *their own* teachings, *their own* traditions, and put them together with the Word of God. That's why Paul is saying, **'For what do righteousness and lawlessness have in common?'** *It doesn't!* That's precisely what we see in worldly Christianity today.

Then Paul also says, 2-Corinthians 6:14: "...And what fellowship *does* light have with darkness?" ***It doesn't!***

Let's come here to John 3 and let's see something very important concerning light. Christ is called ***the Light of the world***. He says so three times. The Word of God is also called *Light*. Let's begin with a verse we all know and then we'll go on beyond that, because this becomes an important thing for us to realize and understand.

John 3:15: "So that everyone who believes in Him **may not perish...**" This shows there are conditions to it, as I've said many, many times. Perish means *to have no existence at all and no hope of resurrection!*

"...but **may have** everlasting life" (v 15).

- What is that going to be like?
- What is it going to be like to have a spirit body and a spirit mind?
- What is it going to be like to be perfected in the spirit?
- What's *everlasting life* going to be like?

*All of this is going to be after the resurrection!*

Verse 16: "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, so that everyone who believes in Him may not perish, but may have everlasting life."

This one verse encapsulates the whole of the plan of God in that one verse. The Bible expands it out.

Verse 17: "For God sent not His Son into the world that He might judge the world... [at that time] ...but that the world might be saved through Him. The one who believes in Him is not judged...' (vs 17-18)—*for your sins, because you repent of your sins!*

When you repent of your sins, they're removed from you as far as the east is from the west, so there is no judgment coming upon you because you repent. Let's understand a very simple thing: This is why the model prayer shows we are to repent every day. *Perfection is day-by-day, bit-by-bit*, as we go on. So, that's a wonderful thing to know and understand.

"...but that the world might be saved through Him" (v 17). What other verses comes to mind with this?

- none can come to the Father, except through Me
- none can come to the Son, except the Father draw Him
- I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life

See how all the Scriptures come together with these things?

Verse 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**... [Christ and the Word of God] ...has come into the world, but men loved darkness **rather than the Light** because their works were evil” (vs 18-19).

This is why you can't mix darkness with light. Another way of putting it is this: You cannot take the ways of the world, the religions of the world, and combine them with the Scriptures, and combine them with your beliefs, and say that light and darkness are compatible. *They are not!* It's the Word of God.

What did Jesus say? *‘Man (and woman) shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God!’*

Verse 20: “For everyone who practices evil hates the Light... [can't stand it] ...and does not come to the Light, so that his works may not be exposed.” *Doesn't want to reveal all the evil that's he's doing so he keeps it all in the darkness and hidden!*

Verse 21: “But the one who practices the Truth... [that's what we do] ...comes to **the Light**...” *That is Christ!* How? Day-by-day through prayer, study and the Word of God.

“...so that his works may be manifested, that they have been accomplished by *the power of God*” (21). *The only way you're going to live God's way is with the power of God!* We'll see that here in just a little bit. That's something.

Here's another thing to keep in mind: ***Those who come to the Light, but then begin leaving it....*** It's just like headlights on a car. If you're standing in front of the headlights, and you're looking at the lights, then you turn around and you start walking away into the darkness, as you go there's still a lot of light around you.

We can kind of compare this to worldly Christianity. They still have some things which are pretty good, but the further you go the dimmer the light gets. After you go completely into the darkness, *there's no light left*. So that also fills in with *don't take the grace of God in vain*.

Let's see what else that God told Paul or Saul, what he was called before he was renamed Paul. He explains all about it here. Paul adds some interesting things. Doesn't that happen with you? You tell something and in your mind you bring out certain things that are important at that time. Then later you might explain it again and there are some

things that you may have forgotten and that you fill in this time. If you take a transcript of both...

Sidebar: This is what the FBI is famous for doing: if your testimony is not exact, word-for-word, you're lying. No, you're not lying. It just is you don't remember all the facts at every particular time. You do that; I do that. So, when Paul was explaining here to King Agrippa, he was talking about coming on the road again:

Acts 26:13: “When I saw on the road at midday, O king, a light from heaven, surpassing the brightness of the sun, shine around me and those who were traveling with me. Then all of us fell to the ground... [didn't say that in the first account, but here it is] ...and I heard a voice speak to me, saying in the Hebrew language, ‘Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me? *It is hard for you to kick against the pricks.*’ And I said, ‘Who are You, Lord?’ And He said, ‘I am Jesus, Whom you are persecuting. Now arise, and stand on your feet; for I have appeared to you for this purpose...’” (vs 13-16).

Not mentioned back in Acts 9. He told him this, but it isn't recorded back in Acts 9.

“...to appoint you *as* a minister and a witness both of what you have seen and what **I shall reveal to you**... [notice the importance of the calling of Saul, who became Paul] ...**am personally selecting you from among the people and the Gentiles, to whom I now send you**” (vs 16-17).

This is why he says in 2-Cor. 6, ‘What compatibility is there with Light and darkness?’

Verse 18: “To open their eyes, that *they* may turn from darkness to light, and *from* the authority of Satan to God ... [that's amazing] ...so that they may receive remission of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified through faith in Me.”

#### **What is that inheritance?**

- to be resurrected in the first resurrection
- to be kings and priests with Christ
- to serve and save the world

(go to the next track)

Very interesting things and very important things for us to understand in 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> Cor., since they cover many of the problems that face the Church and face each of us. It's not quite as inspiring as some of the other Epistles of Paul, but these are all necessary for us to understand concerning:

- ourselves
- the world
- the Church
- people in the world



- people in the Church

Through all of that it comes back and focuses on the very purpose of our calling in quite a spectacular way. We just finished with darkness.

2-Corinthians 6:15: “And what union *does* Christ *have* with Belial?...” Belial are those men of worthlessness.

Who can you think of concerning that? *Simon Magus* (Acts 8)! He was a sorcerer deceiving the people. He was baptized, but his baptism was worthless, because he wanted the Holy Spirit and he wanted to pay the apostles for it so he could give the Holy Spirit to other people. Peter told him in no uncertain terms: *You take your money and you go to the place of ever-burning, the theological place!* In other words, it will never happen!

Paul ran into it on the first evangelistic tour that he took with the Apostle Barnabas and they came to the island of Pathos. There they met the governor and there was Elymas, named Bar Jesus, a false prophet. We don’t know what he was teaching the governor. Remember, Paul told him that he had nothing to do with this, and he went blind for a short time. The governor believed! There were some different things going on in the first century that are really quite fantastic. That was one of them.

*Nor with Belial:* that includes all of the false prophets that he talks about in 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Cor. and the other ones. Some of them he names in 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy, *sons of Belial*.

“...Or what part *does* a believer *have* with an unbeliever?... [impossible] ...And what agreement *is there between* a temple of God a And what agreement *is there between* a temple of God and idols?...” (vs 15-16).

Look at what Manasseh did back there in 2-Chron. What did he do? *He put idols in the temple of God, right there!* He also had booths for homosexuals, all around there. How desecrating was that? This is why God sent Jeremiah to warn them that if they didn’t repent and if they didn’t change, God was going to send them into captivity. He was going to destroy the temple in Jerusalem, *which He did!*

God is loving, kind and forgiving. *Great!* That’s what it has to be and we need that, all of us do. ***But God does not compromise with evil***, to let it become joined with what He is doing. Think about that with the fake Christianity in the world and that answers the question.

“...For you are a temple of *the* living God, exactly as God said...” (v 16).

Let’s look at some other Scriptures concerning this. It also shows how important our own activity in our own salvation really is. God is the only One Who can save us; we can’t save ourselves, that is true. God wants us to have our whole being wrapped up in salvation and growing and overcoming, because He wants to bless us, He wants to give us great rewards at the resurrection.

This is why He emphasizes and brings this out in 1-Cor. 3. It’s very interesting, because we’ll see some of this when we get into 2-Cor. 7, but especially 2-Cor. 8. This would be good for a study to show that *we’re all to work together*:

- there is to be order
- there is to be service
- there is to do the things that needs to be done

Just like Jesus said that *the ministers are not to be overlords!* The ministers are not to merchandize the people.

Here we find this concerning how Paul viewed himself and Apollos in serving the people. They were arguing back and forth. ‘Well, who’s the best minister; who is the greatest?’ Paul said, ‘You are carnal. We all follow Christ. That’s what it has to be.’

Paul says, 1-Corinthians 3:4: “When someone says, ‘I am of Paul,’ and another one *says*, ‘I am of Apollos,’ **are you not carnal?**” That’s bringing together:

- the things of the world
- the ways of the world
- the thoughts of the world
- and the ways of God, looking to the man

Verse 5: “Who then is Paul?... [he always remembered who he was] ...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 5-6).

It’s just like we’re doing right here today. We’re studying the Word of God. I’m reading the Word of God, we’re looking at what Paul wrote, and we’re seeing how it applies. We’re seeing how other Scriptures interface with it and how it brings out a more full meaning and understanding of the Word of God.

Christ is the One Who has given the Holy Spirit. Those of us who are elders, ministers and teachers, do that which is *to help you grow*. We’re not some sort of halfway saints between God and men. **No!** We’re just men, like other men, but as

Paul brings out—as we have covered there in 2-Cor. 4—to serve the people of God. That’s the way God has designed it.

“...whom you believed, even as the Lord gave to each one” (v 5). So, as we teach—and you learn—who gives that learning to you? **God! If it comes from the Word of God, that means you’re taught of God!** That’s how ‘all shall be taught by God,’ *through His Word and through His Spirit. An amazing operation! Yes, indeed!*

Verse 7: “Therefore, neither is he who plants anything, nor he who waters; for *it is* God Who gives the increase.” *He says it twice!*

Whatever your growth is, God gives that to you. It comes from His Spirit; it comes from His Word. **But:**

- you have to work
- you have to apply
- you have to pray
- you have to study

*everyone of us do!* Ministers are not in a category that we can say, ‘We have done this so long that Satan has no more interest in us.’ **That’s nonsense!**

- the more we study, *the more we learn*
- the more we learn, *the more we pray*
- the more we pray, *the more we study*

All of this all together, so that we can learn what God wants us to teach all the brethren. The goal is that we all attain to the Kingdom of God.

*God gives the increase!* We’re going to see in a minute, with the Spirit of God the Father in you and the Spirit of Christ, for the mind of Christ, then all of that works together with what we’re doing.

Verse 8: “Now, he who plants and he who waters are one, but each shall receive his own reward according to his own labor.” *You can apply this in two ways:*

1. to the one who is teaching, or watering
2. to all the brethren who are learning

Verse 9: “For we are God’s fellow workers; and you are God’s husbandry, *even* God’s building.” **You belong to God!** You don’t belong to any minister. You are God the Father’s and Jesus Christ’s. **You belong to Them!** That’s an amazing thing to think about.

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*.”

**How are you building your spiritual life?**  
*Think about that!*

Verse 11: “For no one is able to lay any other foundation besides that which has been laid, which is Jesus Christ.” **He is the Rock!**

Jesus Himself said we’re to build on Him. He is called the Chief Cornerstone. We’re to build on Him. Everything has to do that we build and Christ energizes us and God the Father teaches us. There we go!

Verse 12: “Now, if anyone builds upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones...” Those last through the trials of fire and, in fact, they’re generally improved. So, you might kind of examine yourself and say:

- What am I doing?
- How am I building?
- What is my building material?
- Is my building material gold, silver and precious stones?

*That’s in a parable!* Gold is the highest quality of character. Silver is next; precious jewels are next. But all of those are part of what it’s going to be in the Kingdom of God. Let’s go on from here.

Take heed how he builds. That’s also interesting, because God has told through Paul, and also Peter, that the ministers are to *take heed to themselves!* Watch out for your own self. Same way with everybody who has the Spirit of God. **We’re all to take heed in what we are doing!**

Are we doing it the way God wants? **If we are, there are blessings: gold, silver, precious stones!** If you’re kind of halfway in between, taking the grace of God in vain, but still not doing it, then you build with:

“...wood, hay *or* stubble” (v 12). Some wood takes a long time to burn. Some burns up rather quickly. Hay: POOF! Stubble could almost just explode just in heat, if it gets too hot. It’s unstable, not able to endure.

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.”

1-Peter 4:12<sup>[transcriber’s correction]</sup>—Peter wrote: Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery trial among you...” We will have trials. Why?

1. because of our human nature
2. because we live the world
3. because of things around us and what we do and how they affect us

We're going to have those trials. We don't know what it's going to be like when they start clamping down on Christianity. They're already doing it in Canada.

1-Corinthians 3:14: "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*" (vs 14-15).

Now here's the key, why it's important: ***All of these things have to do with conversion and what takes place in our minds, as well as our actions that we do!***

Verse 16: "Don't you understand that you are God's temple, and *that* the Spirit of God is dwelling in you?"

Stop and think about that for a minute! God destroyed the temple in Jerusalem so that all of those who are called, and answer the call, and repent and are baptized, and receive the Spirit of God are then a temple of God. Because ***God, through His Spirit***—the Father and Christ both (John 14)—***are dwelling in us!*** That's an amazing thing, too, isn't it?

The Bible, when you really understand the calling and what God is doing is so awesome and so great and so marvelous, that this is what we have been called to.

Paul gives a warning, v 17: "If anyone defiles the temple of God, God shall destroy him because the temple of God is Holy, which temple you are."

Let's see how this comes out back here in 2-Cor. 6. There are a lot of things going on—*mentally, spiritually, physically*—and as we go down through time different experiences and trials help us to grow and overcome.

Ephesians 2:16: "And *that* He might reconcile both to God... [Jew and Gentile] ...in one body through the cross, having slain the enmity by it. Now when He came, He preached the Gospel—peace to you who *were* far off and to those who *were* near. For through Him..." (vs 16-18)—***through Christ!***

That's why we pray in His name. That's why there is grace. *We receive grace upon grace* (John 1). The grace upon grace that we receive is being able to have that direct access to God the Father and Jesus Christ. That is an awesome, amazing thing!

You go back and you read Rev. 4 & 5 about God's throne, about the innumerable multitude of angels that are there, about God the Father and Jesus

Christ. That's quite a thing! Then you read in Rev. 8 that our prayers go up like incense to God.

- He hears them
- He answers them
- He is dwelling in us by His Spirit

Verse 18: "For through Him we both have *direct* access by one Spirit to the Father... [that's Jew and Gentile] ...So then, you are no longer aliens and foreigners; but *you are* fellow citizens with the saints, and *are* of the household of God" (vs 18-19).

What did Jesus say? ***You believe in God; believe also in Me. I am going to go, but I'm coming back again, and I'll prepare a place for you. In My Father's house there are many abodes or dwelling places!*** That's reference to New Jerusalem.

If you get kind of down and out and sort of discouraged, go read Rev. 20, and what it's going to be like for New Jerusalem. Think about this: ***we will live there!*** That's something! We'll talk more about that during the Feast of Tabernacles.

Verse 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).

That's a marvelous thing to contemplate. When you know and understand every Word of God is true and every prophecy and promise of God will be kept to the fullest, that is wonderful to contemplate.

1-Peter 2:3: "If you yourselves have indeed tasted that the Lord *is* gracious." *He is gracious, merciful, kind and forgiving for all of us!* That's why we have the Psalms; that's why we have things like this written down, ***so we know that God will deal with us.*** He understand our weaknesses, but we have to grow and overcome, and ask God to help us overcome them so we can develop the character of gold, silver and precious stones.

Verse 4: "To Whom coming, *as to* a living Stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God, and precious, you also, as living stones, are being built up *as* a spiritual house—a Holy priesthood—to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ" (vs 4-5).

*What a promise that is!* We are going to be a Holy nation, a priesthood. We're going to serve the people of the world. We'll talk about that during the Feast of Tabernacles coming up here.

Based on that, let's see what we need to do. We have all these promises and they're going to take place. We must work at them. Here's what we need to do, so that we don't get captured back into the world. It's so easy today.

1-John 2:15: "**Do not love the world, nor the things that are in the world.** If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him, because everything that *is* in the world—the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pretentious pride of physical life—is not from the Father, but is from the world. And the world and its lust is passing away, but the one who does the will of God abides forever" (vs 15-17).

Tremendous promise! We have to live *in* the world, as Jesus said, but we're not to become *of* the world, nor love the world. God can love the world in the way He needs and will reserve many for salvation through the second resurrection. This is the kind of attitude and approach that we need to have here.

2-Corinthians 6:16: "And what agreement is *there between* a temple of God... [each one of us] ...and idols? For you are a temple of *the* living God, exactly as God said."

Notice what God has said. Everything that God has said is a promise. Remember what Jesus said concerning His words: Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall never pass away. These words are true and they are going to come to pass. I want you to really think about this as we read them, because this is marvelous indeed.

"...I... [first person, singular: **God**] ...will dwell in them... [that's what it's talking about in John 14, 1-Cor. 3] ...and walk in *them*..." (v 16).

***He's with you!*** When you go through a trial, God is with you; Christ is with you. That's why don't be discouraged. You may be overwhelmed, because it's a pretty heavy trial, but don't be discouraged and down and out, because with the Spirit of God, both the Father and Christ are in you, and They are there to help you internally: ***emotionally, mentally, spiritually, physically!*** Keep that in mind.

Remember, when you get down to these times, remember the things that are important. ***When all else fails God loves you! All things***—all the trials, all the difficulties, all the ups, all the downs, all the good, all the bad—***work together for good for those who love God, and are called according to His purpose!*** Just remember this: at the resurrection, all of this will be over with.

"...I will dwell in them and walk in *them*; and I... [the Father] ...will be their God, and they shall be My people" (v 16).

Who are the chosen ones today? It says in Rev. 17:14 ***that those who are with Christ are the called, the chosen, and the faithful!*** That applies to us.

Today—and it has been for a long time—the Jews have said, 'We are the chosen people.' They were at one time, but now because of what they have done, they have been *the rejected people* for about 2,000-years. But God is again going to deal with them. In the meantime, ***the ones who are really chosen are those who now have the Spirit of God!***

- God loves us
- God works with us
- God dwells in us
- God walks with us

***Amazing!*** That shows He's with us in everything we do every day.

Verse 17: "'Therefore, come out from the midst of them and be separate,' says *the Lord*..." ***Come out of her—Babylon the Great—My people, and do not be partakers of her sins, for her sins have risen to heaven*** (Rev. 18). *God is going to judge them!*

"...and touch not *the* unclean... [that is do nothing that is contrary to the Word of God] ...and I will receive you" (v 17).

***Here's a promise!*** You study in some of the Psalms. You come back here and read a couple of these verses; here's one to read:

Verse 18: "'And I... [God the Father; that's why he's called the Father] ...shall be a Father to you, and you shall be My sons and daughters,' says *the Lord Almighty*." ***That's quite a promise, yes, indeed! Fantastic!***

2-Corinthians 7:1: "Now then, beloved, since we have these promises, we should purge ourselves from every defilement of *the* flesh and *the* spirit, **perfecting Holiness in the fear of God.**" ***That's what we are to do; that's our part!***

- be thankful
- be grateful
- be loving God

Just looking forward to the time when all the struggles, all the trials, all the difficulties, will be over for us. But—as we'll find out during the Feast of Tabernacles—we're going to have to help solve all of the difficulties in the world, and the world's going to be in terrible shape.

All of these things help us to know more about God, the love of God, what He's doing, and how Paul, all the things that he had to suffer, and everything that has been written down, and God has preserved it down through all the years:

- in spite of all of the hatred
- in spite of all of the burnings
- in spite of all of the killings
- in spite of all of the martyrdoms

***The Word of God stays forever and is multiplied in the end-times millions of times over so that the whole world will be witnessed to, as Christ says in Matt. 24!***

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- 3) Hebrews 10:15-22
- 4) Hebrews 11:1
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- 7) 2-Corinthians 6:2
- 8) Isaiah 49:7-8
- 9) 2-Corinthians 6:3-4
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- 18) 1 Peter 4:12
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## Second Corinthians VII Perfecting Holiness

(Chapter 7)

*Sorrow unto repentance before God works out salvation*

Fred R. Coulter

Greetings, everyone! Welcome to Sabbath services. Here we are, the last day of June. We've had five Sabbaths this month.

{announcements left out of transcript}

We'll just do a little review of 2-Cor. 6 and then we'll get into 2-Cor. 7.

Sidebar: I don't know if you've got any new books recently, but I've noticed that all of them are written in dictated speaking. You can tell. If you're writing, you have a completely different style, if you're writing to write. If you're telling a story, or if you're speaking, your speaking is entirely different than your writing.

I just got a book called *Quit Church* by Chris Sonksen, a Protestant pastor. He said to quit church. By that he meant, quit *playing* church. But I was reading it and it's all in a person-to-person narration and things like this; completely different!

Different things you can write in different ways. When you have a personal letter, that's very friendly and personal. When you talk on the phone, you talk differently than if you were going to write.

Remember the book *A Higher Loyalty: Truth, Lies & Leadership* that James Comey, the ex-FBI chief put out; he read it, dictated it. So, take a look at some of the books, if you get any new books, and if it's in a conversation-like presentation it has not been written, it has been dictated.

We have dictated books, recordings of sermons. We're pushing close to 100 right now. When you read those, you will see that's a far different style than when you read the letter you receive. You will notice that when people write, very few have subordinate clauses, pre-subordinate clauses and post-subordinate clauses, or an interjected thought in the sentence. Very few of them have it that way, because they're all dictated now, rather than writing, because very few people really know how to write and writing is hard.

Jonathan has to write, you can't dictate it. He has to write very technical things, for the high-level digital community. He has to have it where everything flows, where everything follows logically, one thing after another. He has to express it in words that they will understand.

The next time you get a letter, compare that with any of the Transcript Books that we have, and you will see the style is entirely different.

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Here is a living principle: *No one can tell God what to do, because God is greater than all!* For proof of that, read and study the book of Job. That'll show that to you very clearly. What is important here in 2-Corinthians is that Paul was fighting the beginning of the subversion of the Church, by those who thought that they had a better brand of Christianity.

Just like today, they want all the religions to get together and be equal. *God doesn't want it!* That's why we just finished the series we're doing for **churchathome.org**: *Come Out of Her My People*. You have to repent and be baptized.

2-Corinthians 6:14: "Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers.... [sooner or later they're going to tear you down] ...For what do righteousness and lawlessness *have* in common?..."

This is interesting that Paul says lawlessness here—in the *King James Version* it says *iniquity*, because they don't translate it *lawlessness*—but this is 'anomia,' which means *lawlessness*. Lawlessness can be even something good to a person's understanding or sight or thought or impression and they think they're doing well if they do it.

If it goes against God's way, that's lawlessness, because you're trying to replace God's instructions with your own instructions. Hence look at the Catholic Church. That's nothing but lawlessness from top to bottom all the way through.

How does Satan try and cover for all of the sins and paganism that he has there? *There are Catholic charities, and 'we do good and we help out the wee little children'!*

"...And what fellowship *does* light have with darkness?.... [it doesn't] ...And what union *does* Christ have with **Belial**?...." (vs 14-15)—a name for the *sons of worthlessness*. He's likening this to some of these teachings of these false apostles, we'll get into when we get in 2-Cor. 11.

“...Or what part *does* a believer *have* with an unbeliever? And what agreement *is there between* a temple of God and idols?....” (vs 15-16).

Think of that! That’s quite a statement. When you look at anything religious and Christian today, what do you have? *Idols!* Bare minimum, *cross*.

“...For you are a temple of *the* living God, exactly as God said...” (v 16). That’s an important thing.

God loves those He calls so much that He puts His presence within us, with His Spirit, by the Father and by Christ *both*. That is the important thing. With that:

- He wants us to develop the character of God within
- He wants us to purify our hearts and minds, through His Spirit

“...‘I will dwell in them and walk in *them*; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people’” (v 16).

Remember that every time you’re going through a trial, ***God is with you!*** Don’t think that God has abandoned you. What did Jesus go through? Was God with Him through the whole thing? *Yes, all the way through to the time when it got right to the end!* Then God had to take Himself from Him; that’s when it got dark. Then Jesus died at the ninth hour.

It’s recorded in Psa. 22 and also in all of the Gospels: ***‘My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?’*** He had to do that from the point of view that it had to be completely, absolutely to the end on His own.

Verse 17: “‘Therefore, come out from the midst of them and be separate,’ says *the* Lord, ‘and touch not *the* unclean, and I will receive you; and I shall be a Father to you, and you shall be My sons and daughters,’ says *the* Lord Almighty” (vs 17-18).

2-Corinthians 7:1: “Now then, beloved, since we have these promises, we should purge ourselves from every defilement of *the* flesh and *the* spirit, perfecting Holiness in *the* fear of God.”

When you come to 1-Chron. 28 you have something very similar. These are the instructions of David to Solomon, just before David died, because Solomon was to take over and be king.

1-Chronicles 28:6: “And He said to me, ‘Solomon your son shall build My house and My courts, for I have chosen him *to be* My son, and I will be his Father.... [very close type relationship] ...And I will establish his kingdom forever, ***if*** he

continues resolute... [notice the attitude] ...in keeping My commandments and My ordinances, as he is today” (vs 6-7).

That’s how Solomon started out. Remember, when God appeared to him, God said, ‘Ask what you will, whatever you want.’ Solomon said, ‘Lord, give me judgment so that I can judge Your people Israel, so great a people. For I am just young.’ God was pleased and He gave Solomon everything. But again, look what happened to him.

Then David says, v 8: “And now in the sight of all Israel, the congregation of the LORD, and in the hearing of our God, keep and seek for ***all*** the commandments of the LORD your God, so that you may possess this good land and leave *it* for an inheritance for your children after you forever.”

Then David tells Solomon something very important; this is New Testament doctrine here when you look at it.

Verse 9: “And you, Solomon my son, acknowledge the God of your father and serve Him with a perfect heart... [What is a perfect heart? *One doing the things of God!*] ...and with a willing mind, for the LORD searches ***all*** hearts and understands ***all*** the imaginations of the thoughts....”

Job had to learn the lesson: ***‘I know no thought can be withheld from You.’***

Notice how this has been written: “...***If*** you seek Him, He will be found by you....” (v 9).

- How are you to seek God? *With all your heart, mind and soul!*
- How often are you to do it? *Every single day!*

*Not just when you get in trouble!* “...But ***if*** you forsake Him, He will cast you off forever” (v 9). We’re looking at:

- a perfect heart
- cleanse your heart
- cleanse your mind

What is God interested in? There are a lot of good people in the society, but when one of them does something wrong, everyone says, ‘I can’t imagine that this would happen.’ Why? ***Because only God knows the thoughts and only God knows the heart!***

When He says, ‘Have a perfect heart,’ what needs to be done? Let’s read it here in Ezek. 14. Since this is some of the elders of Israel, let’s apply this to everybody in Washington, D.C. (District of

Liars and Corruption: DLC). It's sure showing itself that way recently.

Ezekiel 14:1: "And some of the elders of Israel came to me and sat before me. And the Word of the LORD came to me, saying, 'Son of man, these men have set up their idols in their hearts...'" (vs 1-3). **God is the heart knowing God!**

What do you need to do to have a perfect heart? *You need to overcome all of those deep-down secret things in your mind that are contrary to God, whatever it may be. **Those are idols in the heart!***

"...and put the stumbling block of their iniquity before their faces. Should I at all be inquired of by them?... [He says no] ... Therefore, speak to them, and say to them, **Thus says the Lord GOD...**" (vs 3-4). *It's going to be exactly as God says!*

"...Every man of the house of Israel who sets up his idols in his heart, and puts the stumbling block of his iniquity before his face, and comes to the prophet; I the LORD will answer him according to the multitude of his idols" (v 4). Whatever it may be.

- that's all the secret lusts
- that's all the hostility and antagonism against God and His commandments

Verse 5: "So that I may take the house of Israel in their own heart because they have deserted Me for their idols—**all** of them."

Just look at what it is with the people out today. They all have their favorite things. If you talk to them about God, you're going to get laughed at. The only way they're going to learn anything is to have some trials bring them to God.

So, here's what God says, v 6: "Therefore, say to the house of Israel, 'Thus says the Lord GOD, **Repent and turn yourselves from your idols, and turn away your faces from all your abominations.**'"

Don't we have every abomination available in the palm of our hands today with the smart phones and things? *Yes, indeed!* Notice, not just Israel, or the descendants of Israel.

Verse 7: "For every one of the house of Israel, or of the stranger who lives in Israel, who separates himself from Me..."

We should have the Truth of God for the religion of America and every immigrant in here must renounce their past religion, all of their idols and follow the way of God.

On [churchathome.org](http://churchathome.org) that I did, I set up the little town everyone would like to go to. I named it Perfectville. Everybody there pledges to live by the commandments of God. Everything is nice and loving and kind and good. The people in the world today want to continue in their sins and expect to receive everything that you would have in Perfectville.

Sidebar: We are learning God's way so we can be the kings and priests to bring Perfectville to every inhabitant on earth. *That's our goal!*

- that's greater than anything we can think of
- that's greater than anything anyone can offer us in this world

Verse 7: "For every one of the house of Israel, or of the stranger who lives in Israel, who separates himself from Me..." God expects the strangers to come and embrace Him, His ways, His laws.

"...and sets up his idols in his heart, and puts the stumbling block of his iniquity before his face, and comes to a prophet to ask of him concerning Me; I the LORD will answer him Myself. And I will set My face against that man..." (vs 7-8).

If there's any one thing that nobody needs, they do not need God against them. When God comes against people, He doesn't come against them individually, He sends other evil people to do it. When the land sins against God, then He raises up a nation to come and conquer it. Always happens; that's why every empire goes down.

"...and I will make him for a sign and for a proverb. And I will cut him off from the midst of My people; and **you shall know that I am the LORD**" (v 8).

God is going to dwell within us (2-Cor. 6 [transcriber's correction]). Isn't that the greatest thing to happen in the physical life, receive the Spirit of God, have direction from God, understand His Word?

Especially today to have the whole Bible so we can use it. That's why we have to be more diligent than any of the other Churches of God, down through history, because we have it all right here. We have the time to use it, do it, and understand it; whereas, they didn't.

Remember what I read about that man who was facing martyrdom, Pastor Jacob. {note sermon: *The 1569 Inquisition & Be Diligent*} They had the Bible, but they didn't have the understanding we have. There were the Catholics right there to take him and kill him.



Verse 9: “And the prophet, if he is deceived, and he speaks a word, I the LORD have deceived that prophet...” Because anyone who is teacher or a minister, who does not rightly handle and rightly divide the Word of God, and starts bringing his own doctrines, or other past doctrines today that haven’t been proven true in the Bible, God will deceive him with that false doctrine.

Remember what did we go through here recently? Who is the God of the Old Testament? {note sermon series: *God the Father was not the God of the Old Testament*} What happens when you have a false doctrine and you don’t repent of it? *You suddenly discover another one!* Guess what they have discovered? *An old, old fake doctrine that the two goats of Lev. 16 are Christ*; instead of one for Christ, and one for Azazel: Satan. That’s an old, old one.

You can read that in almost any commentary, because the commentaries are so old, written by many, many men who had limited understanding in the Bible.

Verse 10: “And they shall bear the punishment of their iniquity; the punishment of the prophet shall be even as the punishment of him that seeks unto him. So that the house of Israel may never again go astray from Me...” (vs 10-11).

What does the statement in the first part of v 11 tell us? *That everything in this chapter carries all the way through this age, the Millennium and the 100-year period.* That’s why it’s important.

“...nor be defiled again with all their transgressions, but that they may be My people, and I may be their God,” says the Lord GOD.” (v 11). Isn’t that what we just read back there in 2-Cor. 6? *Yes!*

Verse 12: “The Word of the LORD came to me, saying, ‘Son of man, when a land sins against Me by trespassing grievously, and I stretch out My hand on it, and break the staff of its bread, and send famine on it, and will cut off man and beast from it, and *though these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they should deliver only their own lives by their righteousness.*’ says the Lord GOD” (vs 12-14)—*not sons, nor daughters!*

When we come back to 2-Cor. 6, we see that this is a great and fundamentally important thing for us to understand. Also, it teaches us that the Old Testament and New Testament go together.

2-Corinthians 7:1: “Now then, beloved, since we have these promises, we should purge ourselves from every defilement of *the flesh and the spirit*, perfecting Holiness in *the fear of God.*”

What’s God’s plan for us? *To perfect us!* We are to become as perfect as the Father is in heaven, and that is finished by the resurrection. But this means, we are to be developing the character of God. That’s what’s important.

Let’s see what Paul says about character, about trials.

- Would you say that Paul was righteous? *Have to!*
- Would you say that he went through a lot of difficult problems? *Yes, he did!*
- Was that because he was a sinner? *No*, it was because God said because of what he did to the Church, he was going to have troubles and sorrow in what he was doing
- *But God said, ‘Don’t worry, I am with you’*

Notice the attitude that Paul took, and wrote here: 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...**” (vs 1-2). *That grace is access to God!*

Grace upon grace is *a combination of God the Father and Christ in us*, which is by grace. Grace upon grace means *every blessing and every goodness and everything that comes from God is grace from God!*

“...and we ourselves boast in *the* hope of the glory of God... [that’s the goal] ...And not only *this*, but we also boast in tribulations...” (vs 2-3).

We’re going to see Paul actually learned how to do that. I don’t think hardly any of us even come close to it. What happens when something comes up against you? What happens when something comes up against me? Compared to what he’s saying here, I fall really short.

But nevertheless, concerning trials or tribulations: “...realizing that tribulation brings forth endurance” (v 3). You look at all the things that you go through and still remain faithful. Look at your life and many of you have been in the Church for years and years.

- How many trials have you had to go through?
- How many disappointments in some brethren and many ministers you’ve had to go through?
- How many things even in your own life did not turn out the way you thought they would turn out?
- Did Paul’s? *No!*
- Did any of the apostles? *No!*

*They all started out most of them as fishermen!*

Verse 4: “And endurance *brings forth* character, and character *brings forth* hope. 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 is how we are perfecting Holiness: *through everything that comes along!* Always set before us is the battle we’re walking in here:

Galatians 5:16: “Now *this* I say, **walk by the Spirit...**” How do you do that? *That’s with:*

- prayer
- study
- asking God to lead and guide you

“...and you will not fulfill the lust of the flesh” (v 16).

- Have you ever had something in your mind that it’s just banging in your mind like a great sin?
- And it’s hard for you to overcome it?
- And it just keeps flashing back to you?

*here’s what you do:*

- you pray about it
- you ask God to remove it from you
- you get your mind on the things of God

*which is by the Spirit!*

Verse 17: “For the flesh lusts against the Spirit... [you’re going to have that tug of war your whole physical life; that’s just the way it is] ...and the Spirit against the flesh; and these things are opposed to each other, so that you cannot do those things you wish to do.”

Many times that happens. Here is the character that it builds so that we overcome those things. What if you had nothing ever to overcome?

It’s like this automated city. I saw a little video, it was quite an interesting video, of this real ritzy Chinese apartment. Those who were there were all the rich Chinese; they drove Audis. They had a parking garage. It was really quite a parking garage. You take your car, you pull up to the gate and you push the button. The round door opens and then your car is sitting on tracks that pull it in. It pulls your car in and then the door closes. Then you push the number of where your car is parked down below—1<sup>st</sup> story, 2<sup>nd</sup> story, 3<sup>rd</sup> story, 5<sup>th</sup> story. The cars are on this round thing going down, with the tracks on the car.

As you look down, you see there are parking spaces, there are tracks, come out to the edge of the big hole that goes down to where the cars are. You

push in your number where your car is to be parked and the elevator takes it down and it turns to where you park your car. It parks your car right where it needs to be. Then it comes back up to the top. When you want to get your car, you put in the number where your car is, and it goes down and it gets your car and brings it up. Then you go on your way.

I bring that out, from the point of view that everything today is such that there are very few things you have to do.

- How many have gardens?
- How many do not buy anything at the stores?
- How many of us—and I think it’s true the older you get—buy food already prepared.

*Think of it; so spoiled!* This way, then, it accommodates everything. So, now your mind can run wild with the flesh.

Then it lists all of the works of the flesh, I won’t go through all of them. All you have to do is watch your television and you’ll see them all.

Verse 22: “But **the fruit of the Spirit** is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faith, meekness, self-control; against such things there is no law” (vs 22-23).

This is how we purify the flesh, by getting rid of all the lusts, all the idols, that are there. Replace it with the mind of Christ, with the qualities of character that we need. These sometimes are very hard to come by. The reason is because *they’re spiritual!*

Verse 24: “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 vainglorious, provoking one another *and* envying one another” (vs 24-26). *That shows the things that need to be done in order to fulfill the first couple of verses of:*

2-Corinthians 7:1 “...**perfecting Holiness in the fear of God**” That’s our #1 occupation.

(go to the next track)

Paul had to battle a lot of things, and he brings out a lot of them in 2-Cor.

Verse 2: “Receive us...” Isn’t that interesting, because they had the different false prophets coming in saying different things, and *they received them.*

2-Corinthians 11:4—Paul’s talking about Satan and false prophets: “For indeed, if someone comes preaching another Jesus...” There are already different forms of Jesus.

Remember in 1-Cor. there were those who said there was no resurrection. That's the whole purpose of true Christianity. How can they say there's no resurrection?

If you want to know how difficult that is, go on TBN sometime and watch some of these ministers explain about going to heaven, and then try and tie that in with the resurrection. If you go to heaven, why do you need to be resurrected if you're already in heaven? ***That's what happens when you get another Jesus, another way!***

"...whom we did not preach, or you receive a different spirit, which you did not receive..." (v 4).

Let's just stop here for just a minute. Satan does not always appear and palm himself off as being evil. He always comes first to show

- how 'good' he is
- how 'sweet' he is
- how 'right' he is

If you have a chance, watch **churchathome.org** and watch some of the ceremonies that we get from the Vatican, and so forth. You see all these people waving with the incense, nice and sweet and all orderly and things like that. ***That is all demonism! Every bit of it is!***

A lot of those priests have got to be demon-possessed, not with demons that are viciously evil, but those who think that they're doing 'good' and maybe God will recognize how good they are and let them back in the kingdom.

Don't you think that some of them have that going through their minds? You read the Gospels and when Jesus came upon some of the demon-possessed people, what did some of them say? '*Oh, I know You, Jesus, Son of God. Have you come to torment us before the time?*' That's an interesting statement. What is the time they'll be tormented? *Rev. 20 tells us!*

Since the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil basically brings out Satan's way, there are some very good-sounding things that come along. I think one of the first ones was:

- How do we distinguish ourselves from the pagans?
- What do you suppose the first thing that they did?

*Pagans are always used to having idols, rosary's!*

- What would you suppose one of the first things would be?

I'm kind of guessing on this, so I don't know. I suppose the first one was: the way we distinguish

ourselves from the Jews and from the pagans is ***if we have a cross! That's the first step into idolatry!***

"...or you receive a different spirit..." (v 4). Notice he said *receive us* in 2-Cor. 7. Why did he say *receive us*? Were some of them trying to say, 'No, we don't want Paul anymore. We've got better preachers.'

"...which you did not receive, **or a different gospel**... [how about that] ...which you did not accept, **you put up with it as something good**" (v 4).

Look at what Paul had to fight against, v 5: "But I consider myself in no way inferior to those highly exalted *so-called* apostles."

Some of them were probably very eloquent speakers. I just imagine a good number of them were some of the Levites who came out of Israel and palmed themselves off as ministers of Christ.

They could say, 'I was there in Jerusalem and I saw Him and He did this, He said that and by the way did you know this, did you know that?' How many inroads of Judaism come to the Church today when the Jews have virtually nothing to do with the Church?

2-Corinthians 7:2: "Receive us; we have wronged no one... [someone was saying, 'Paul's doing you wrong'] ...we have corrupted no one... [someone's coming along and saying, 'You can't believe what Paul is teaching because that's corrupted'] ...we have defrauded no one."

You know he didn't take any tithes or offerings from them, and left it up to them to do it.

Verse 3: "I do not say *this* to condemn you because I have said before that you are in our hearts—to die together and to live together. Great is my boldness toward you, *and* great is my boasting in regard to you. **I have been filled with encouragement. I am overflowing with joy at all our tribulations**" (vs 3-4).

- What did he say in the 2-Cor. 1? *We had such tribulations that we were despairing of life!*
- When do you have joy in tribulation? *After it is over and you understand what the problem is!*

Verse 5: "For indeed, after we came into Macedonia, our flesh did not have any rest, but we were oppressed in every way—without *were* contentions, *and* within *were* fears. But God, Who encourages those who are heavy-hearted, encouraged us by the coming of Titus" (vs 5-6).

Titus came and brought good news: ‘Guess what, Paul, they all repented because of this man that you told them to put out and they’ve all come back and they’re coming back to you in a way that you need to understand.’ Paul was encouraged with that.

Verse 7: “And not only by his coming to us, but also by the encouragement with which he was comforted concerning you, relating to us your longing, your mourning, your zeal for me; therefore, I rejoiced all the more. For if I caused you to sorrow by the epistle... [which he wrote] ...I do not repent, even if I did regret *it at first*, because I see that that epistle caused you to sorrow for only a short time” (vs 7-8).

Now here’s the whole key area here that’s really important, next couple of verses:

Verse 9: “And *so* I rejoice—not because you were caused to sorrow, but because you sorrowed unto repentance; for you sorrowed in a Godly manner... [that is repenting and purging and getting rid of the sin, stopping the actions and cleansing the mind] ...so that you were not injured by us in any way. **For sorrow unto repentance before God works out salvation...**” (vs 9-10). *Proper sorrow!*

You ever had it, you go along and all of a sudden your mind starts thinking on something—and then you realize how evil that that really was. At the time you did it, you didn’t realize it was that evil.

Who is bringing that to your attention? *God is, through His Spirit, so you can repent of it!* Then you really are sorry about it, because you didn’t realize whatever the situation was. At that time, whenever it happened, you were operating by the lust of the flesh, rather than by the Spirit of God. We all have those times. I think the longer we live, the more these things will happen and go clear back to when we were very young.

Delores and I often say we came into the world with diapers and we leave the world in diapers. That’s the way it happens.

Verse 10: “For sorrow unto repentance before God works out salvation not to be repented of; but the sorrow of the world works out death.” *False sorrow!* Like the murderer who just shot down a lot of people and he says, ‘Oh, don’t shoot!’

Verse 11: “For see how this very thing—your personal sorrow before God—brought about such earnestness in you!....” Why? *Because when you really repent, that brings about conviction!*

- conviction gives you the strength to say *no*

- conviction gives you the strength to repent thoroughly of it

A lot of those things like we read there in Ezek. 14 are like *idols in the mind*. Those things are the hardest to get rid of.

“...And, *what* a defense, and *what* indignation, and fear, and vehement desire, and zeal, and vengeance! In every way you have proved yourselves to be pure in the matter” (v 11).

Let’s look at some things here that are important to understand. Heb. 4 s talking about keeping the Sabbath, and so forth

Hebrews 4:11: “We should be diligent therefore to enter into that rest... [that’s Sabbath-keeping; be diligent every Sabbath] ...lest anyone fall after the same example of disobedience.”

Here’s what we need to understand and this is why we need to study:

- to change
- to grow
- to repent
- to overcome

Put this along with the Spirit of God, Who knows every thought. What did God do? *God gave us His Word so we can read it!* That goes into our thoughts and this helps us to see what we need to get rid of. Helps us to see what we need to repent of.

Verse 12: “For the Word of God *is* living... [Isn’t that what Jesus said? The words that I speak to you, they are life and truth] ...and powerful... [yes it is because it’s going to judge everyone] ...and sharper than any two-edged sword...”—***because a sword can cut off your head, but it can’t revise your mind!*** But it can come to you, to show you what you need to have removed from your mind through the Spirit of God.

“...piercing even to the dividing asunder of both soul and spirit, *and* of both *the* joints and *the* marrow, and *is* able to discern *the* thoughts and intents of *the* heart” (v 12). *No other book is able to do that!*

To make it clear that everybody understands how powerful the Word of God is, v 13: “And there is not a created thing that is not manifest in His sight; but all things *are* naked and laid bare before the eyes of Him to Whom we must give account.” *That’s something!* That’s why we come to God and we:

- ask God to *help* us
- ask God to *inspire* us

- ask God to *change* us
- ask God to *help us repent*
- ask God to *help us see the things we need to do*

*Out of the trials and difficulties to learn the lessons we need to learn, because we're building character to rule the world!*

Going through things for the Feast of Tabernacles and thinking on that, just think what a fantastic job, a huge job it's going to be to take over *the whole world!* So, don't worry. Is there a place for you in the Kingdom of God? *Yes, indeed*, for everybody who is going to be there.

I have a report that shows that the average number of people working in government—some countries more, some countries less—is 20%. The population today is about 7.5-billion, let's just say 8-billion; 20% of that is then 1.5-billion jobs.

How many are going to be in the resurrection? *We don't know*, but we can know that for those people who believe there are only going to be 144,000 in the first resurrection, good luck taking over the world. You're not going to do it.

- Doesn't that help explain why we have Rev. 7?
- What is in Rev. 7? *144,000 from Israel and the great innumerable multitude!*
- What do you suppose the great innumerable multitude is going to do?  
*just take a look at the globe:*
- How many countries are there?
- What are they going to do?

Verse 14: "Having, therefore, a great High Priest, *Who* has passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, we should hold fast the confession of *our faith*. For we do not have a High Priest *Who* cannot empathize with our weaknesses..." (vs 14-15).

Look at the things that He has forgiven. Look at what Jesus said when He got on the cross: Father, forgive them for they know not what they are doing.

Sidebar: I think next year for Passover I'm going to do the last ten days of Jesus' life. I haven't done that in years and years, because I have it in *A Harmony of the Gospels*. But I'm telling you, the more that I read and the more that I study the Gospels—which I'm doing now for my own personal study—the more I understand that that last time... Because it says in John that great multitudes of people came to Jerusalem and the whole area

around there. Why? *So they would be all there when Jesus died on that cross!*

Don't you think that the word got out rapidly? *Yes!* They had tongues flapping faster than birds fly. Don't think that's the reason why there were so many at Pentecost, that followed that Passover? *Come out from out of the countries; come up to Jerusalem* and say, 'I wonder what's going to happen now? They've killed Him and everyone thought He was the Messiah. Some say He was raised from the dead. Some said no, the disciples stole the body, but everybody was looking for the body everywhere and they couldn't find it.' *Not one thing!* They looked in every graveyard, every tomb, everything like that. By the way, Christ got out of the tomb that was sealed. 'I wonder what's going to happen on Pentecost.' So, they get up there and here comes the Holy Spirit. Then they hear all the apostles—in their own minds they're speaking in their own language—and it comes out into the languages of all that were there.

This was a big deal that happened that last ten days before Passover. "...but *One Who* was tempted in all things according to *the likeness of our own temptations*; yet, *He* was without sin. Therefore, **we should come with boldness** to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need" (vs 15-16).

Psa. 86 is quite a Psalm. Never forget this: *When you come before God, there are some times that you know you need to come to God and repent, but you really don't feel like it!* Some people say, 'I'll come and pray after I work it out.' How can you work it out if you don't repent? *So, even if you don't feel like coming to God and repenting, you go find some place and get on your knees and repent!*

You start out, 'O God, I know that this is wrong, and I'm having a terrible time really understanding how I can get it out of my heart and mind. I know it's wrong, but somehow my human nature's working against me that it's just keeping me from coming and repenting. So help me repent.' That's how you do it. You admit to God. Ask Him to forgive you for that *first*.

Psalm 86:1: "Bow down Your ear, O LORD, answer me, for I am poor and needy. Preserve my soul, for I am Holy; O You my God, save Your servant who trusts in You. Be merciful to me, O LORD, for I cry unto You all day long. Rejoice the soul of Your servant, for to You, O LORD, do I lift up my soul. **For You, LORD, are good and ready to forgive, and rich in mercy to all those who call upon You**" (vs 1-5)—meaning, *you have to go pray about it when you find yourself caught in that kind of situation!*

Verse 6: “Give ear, O LORD, to my prayer, and attend to the voice of my supplications. In the day of my trouble I will call upon You, for You will answer me” (vs 6-7).

What happens after that? Verse 11: “Teach me Your way, O LORD; I will walk in Your Truth; unite my heart to fear Your name. I will praise You, O LORD my God, with all my heart, and I will glorify Your name forevermore, for great is Your mercy toward me... [notice the repentance and the forgiveness] ...and You have delivered my soul from the depths of the grave” (vs 11-13).

How deeply in trouble was he? *We don't know!* David lived quite a life: up and down, right and fighting and killing, and all of that sort of thing.

Psa. 119 is quite a Psalm. This shows, without a doubt, the attitude of Jesus toward the laws and commandments of God. We're going to focus just on one thing: *my whole heart and all my heart.*

This is how when we are forgiven, when we have repented of our sins, then this is how that we begin to really repair the damage.

Psalm 119:2: “Blessed are they who keep His testimonies and who seek Him with **the whole heart.**”

That includes everything. That ties in with loving God with all your heart, mind, soul and being.

Verse 10: “With **all my heart** I have sought You...” Compare that to where it talks about the children of Israel in Psa. 78 that they flattered God, meaning they didn't come to God with all their heart.

“...O let me not wander from Your commandments. Your Word I have laid up **in my heart...**” (vs 10-11). That's *how we perfect salvation in Holiness!* Right here, this tells us.

Verse 33: “Teach me, O LORD...” Remember what John 6:45 says: ***And all will be taught of God!***

How do we learn? *By studying the Word of God!* If we study the Word of God and learn, who is teaching us? *God is!* It's that simple. That's why He has it written down.

“...the way of Your statutes, and I shall keep it unto the end. Give me understanding, **that I may keep Your Law and observe it with all my heart**” (vs 33-34).

This is also a good cure for the Laodiceans. What is it with the Laodiceans? *They're half-hearted; half in the world, half in the Church!*

Verse 57: “You are my portion, O LORD; I have said that I would keep Your words. **entreated Your favor with all my heart;** be gracious unto me according to Your Word” (vs 57-58). Isn't that something?

Verse 59 talks about Godly repentance *vs* the sorrow of the world: “I considered my ways and turned my feet unto Your testimonies. I made haste and did not delay to keep Your commandments” (vs 59-60). In other words, stop and repent and turn around and keep the commandments of God. This is something.

I don't know about you, but I think you'll experience this as well. The more I study the Bible, and the longer I have studied the Bible, the more I see how absolutely incredibly fantastic that it is. Awesome! ***That 40 different writers, over a period of 2,000 years, could write different parts of the Bible and they all agree!*** Isn't that amazing. Why? *Because God inspired it!*

Verse 67: “Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I have kept Your Word.” God wants us to learn by our mistakes. That's why He forgives us.

Verse 68: “You are good, and do good; teach me Your statutes.” I couldn't get over it, just going through it here.

Verse 111: “I have taken Your testimonies as an inheritance forever, for they are the **rejoicing of my heart. I have inclined my heart** to perform Your statutes always, even to the end” (vs 111-112).

What does this tell us on all of this? ***Everything that we do, in growing and overcoming, in repenting and studying, doing these things is a choice we make!*** God is not going to come down here and force anyone. If He did, then He could have started with Adam and Eve. But He's given us free, independent moral agency and ***we must choose*** and all of these things in here.

This Psalm has more *I<sub>s</sub>*—135 to be exact, if my memory is correct. More *I<sub>s</sub>* than any other chapter or book in the whole Bible, but none of these are *I<sub>s</sub>* out of pride and vanity. That's an amazing thing to understand. That's why this Psalm is so good to perfect Holiness, because it tells you how to do it.

Psalm 139:23 talks about how God made him: “Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts... [With God's Spirit in

us, does He not do that?] ...And see if any wicked way is in me; and **lead me in the way everlasting**" (vs 23-24).

That shows *repentance, eagerness, willingness, right choice*, etc.

We just did another Transcript Book, a shorter one: *Being Right With God*. That's something we all need to know: how do we be right with God. If you want that, you can write in for it and we'll send it to you. The whole list of the books are so long and we keep making them. This series on Corinthians is going to be made into a Transcript Book.

2-Corinthians 7:13: "Therefore, we were comforted by your encouragement... [and repentance, doing what they need to do] ...and we rejoiced all the more abundantly at Titus' joy, because his spirit had been renewed by all of you."

When everything is right, don't you feel good about it? Isn't that a spirit of goodness and rightness? *Yes!*

Verse 14: "For if I have boasted anything to him about you, I was not ashamed. But as we spoke all things in truth to you, so also our boasting of you to Titus became truth."

In other words, he said, 'I know they're going to repent; I know they're going to turn to God, so you go over there and check out and see how it's going.' And he comes back and he says, 'Yes, it did happen.'

Verse 15: "And his deep affection for you is even greater, as he recalls the obedience of all of you, how with fear and trembling you received him. I rejoice that I have confidence in you in everything" (vs 15-16).

When we come to 2-Cor. 8 & 9, it's a little mundane, and it's about collection, sending relief to Jerusalem, so we'll go through that quite rapidly next time.

#### Scriptural References:

- 1) 2-Corinthians 6:14-18
- 2) 2-Corinthians 7:1
- 3) 1-Chronicles 28:6-9
- 4) Ezekiel 14:1-14
- 5) 2-Corinthians 7:1
- 6) Romans 5:1-5
- 7) Galatians 5:16-17, 22-26
- 8) 2-Corinthians 7:1-2
- 9) 2-Corinthians 11:4-5
- 10) 2-Corinthians 7:2-11

- 11) Hebrews 4:11-16
- 12) Psalm 86:1-7, 11-13
- 13) Psalm 119:2, 10-11, 33-34, 57-60, 67-68, 111-112
- 14) Psalm 139:23-24
- 15) 2-Corinthians 7:13-16

#### Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Psalm 22
- Leviticus 16
- Revelation 20
- 2-Corinthians 1
- Revelation 7
- Psalm 78
- John 6:45

#### Also referenced:

- Books:
  - ✓ *Quit Church* by Chris Sonksen
  - ✓ *A Higher Loyalty: Truth, Lies & Leadership* by James Comey
  - ✓ *A Harmony of the Gospels* by Fred R. Coulter
- Series: *Come Out of Her My People* ([churchathome.org](http://churchathome.org))
- Transcript Book: *Being Right With God*
- Sermon: *The 1569 Inquisition & Be Diligent*
- Sermon Series: *God the Father was not the God of the Old Testament*

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## Second Corinthians VIII Spiritual Warfare

(Chapters 8, 9, 10)

*Run the race and fight the good fight of faith putting on the whole armor of God*

Fred R. Coulter

Greetings, everyone! Welcome to Sabbath services. This is going to work out just a little bit differently, because we're up through 2-Cor. 7. Chapters 8 & 9 are handling kind of administrative things.

2-Corinthians 8:1: "Now, brethren, we *wish* to make known to you the grace of God that has been given to the churches in Macedonia, that in a great trial of affliction, their abundant joy and their deep poverty has overflowed unto the wealth of their liberality. For I testify *that* according to *their* ability, and *even* beyond *their* ability, *they were* willing to give of themselves, earnestly entreating us to accept the gift, and *their* participation in the service for the saints. And not *only* as we had hoped, but they gave themselves first to the Lord, and to us by *the* will of God" (vs 1-5).

Verse 6: "So then, we exhorted Titus that as he had begun *this service*, so he might also with you *make* this gift complete. Now even as you are abounding in every *way*—in faith, and word, and knowledge, and *in* all diligence, and in the love *that* you have for us—so you should also abound in this gift. I am not saying *this* as a command, but *I am exhorting you* through the diligence of others in order to prove the genuineness of your love. For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ: that although He was rich, He became poor for your sakes, so that by His poverty you might become rich. Now I give *my* judgment in this because it is fitting for you, who began a year ago not only to perform *this service*, but also showed *your* willingness. But now complete the service, so that just as *there was* a willing readiness, so also *there may be* a completion out of what *you* have" (vs 6-11).

Verse 12: "For if there is a willing mind, *it is* accepted according to what one has, not according to what he does not have. For *I do* not *desire* that others may be released and you be burdened, but *that there may be* equality—your present abundance *making up* for their deficiency. Likewise, their *future* abundance may also be for your deficiency, so that there may be equality, exactly as it is written: 'He that *gathered* much had nothing *left over*; and he that *gathered* little did not lack.' But thanks *be* to God, Who put the same earnest care for you in Titus' heart. For he truly accepted the exhortation; and being *even* more diligent, on his own initiative he

went to you. But we sent with him the brother, whose praise *is* known in the Gospel throughout all the churches; and that is not the only *reason*, for he had also been selected by the churches to accompany us with this gift, which *is being* ministered by us to the glory of the Lord Himself and *as a witness of* your willingness" (vs 12-19).

Verse 20: "*He is accompanying us* to prevent anyone from accusing us concerning this abundance that *is being* ministered by us; providing honest things not only in the sight of *the* Lord, but also in the sight of men. And we sent with them our brother, whom we have often proved in many things to be diligent, and now much more diligent in the great confidence that *he has* toward you. If *anyone inquires* about Titus, *he is* my partner and fellow worker for you; and *if anyone inquires about* our brethren, *they are* messengers of *the churches and* the glory of Christ. Therefore, show the proof of your love, and of our boasting on your behalf, to them and before the churches" (vs 20-24).

2-Corinthians 9:1: "It is not necessary for me to write to you concerning the ministry that *is* for the saints; because I know your willingness, for which I have boasted of you to *the* Macedonians—that Achaia was prepared a year ago; and your zeal has stirred up a greater number *to participate*. But I sent the brethren *ahead*, so that our boasting about you might not be made void in this respect, *and* that, according as I had said, you may be ready; lest perhaps, if *some of the* Macedonians come with me and find you unprepared, we (in order that we may not say 'you') might be put to shame by this confident boasting. 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, since you had already proclaimed *a willingness*; so that it might be *received* as a blessing, and not as *it were of* covetousness" (vs 1-5).

Verse 6: "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, according as it is written: 'He has scattered abroad, *and* he has given to the poor; his righteousness remains forever.'" (vs 6-9).

Verse 10: "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, *so that you may* in every way be enriched unto all bountifulness, which causes thanksgiving to God through us. For the administration of this service is not only filling to overflowing the deficiencies of the saints, but *is* also abounding by the giving of many thanks to God. Through the performance of this service, *they* are glorifying God for your professed subjection to the Gospel of Christ, and *for the* liberality of the distribution toward them and toward all *the saints*; and in their supplications for you, *there is* a longing on your behalf, because of the surpassing grace of God upon you. Now thanks *be* to God for His indescribable free gift" (vs 10-15).

This is what needs to be done with all the Churches of God and this is what we try and do:

2-Corinthians 8:21: "Providing honest things not only in the sight of *the* Lord, but also in the sight of men." *He did that because of the carnality of the Corinthians!*

Then we have the principle concerning sowing. This is a principle, not only in planting, but in whatever you do in your life:

2-Corinthians 9:6: "But this *I say*: the one who sows sparingly shall also reap sparingly..."

Think about this for just a minute and tie that in with Deut. 15 where it says that if you find someone in need you shall extend your hand; you're not to be a curmudgeon, you are to provide; same thing here.

God says with that, if you provide for the poor, He will bless you. But if you don't provide for the poor, He's going to hold it against you, and you will have blessings withheld from you.

- it works in everything
- it works in tithing
- it works in offerings to God

If you withhold, I guarantee that if people quit tithing, they're still going to tithe. What do I mean by that? *Because they're going to spend all their money on expenses that come along because they're not tithing to God*, and they end up with less use of their extra money that they need, and it goes to other different things.

Either way, you tithe, you get the blessings of God. You don't tithe, then you don't get the blessings. So, you have to take the tithe money and spend it on different things, because you don't get blessings from God. It works both ways.

Also, sowing and reaping—remember the parable of the man who had the tree in the vineyard and it didn't bear any fruit for three years. He comes in there and tells the servant to cut it down. The servant says, 'Wait! Let me hoe it and dung it! If it produces fruit, fine. If it doesn't, then cut it down.' So, he said, 'Okay, go ahead.'

We need to have in planting, likewise with spiritual growth: hoeing. What do you do with hoeing? *You get rid of weeds!* What are weeds? *Nasty little things in your life!* What is *dung*? *Fertilizer, so you give nutrition to the plants.* God's Word is greater than that. It gives spiritual nourishment for us to change and grow. Those are the two parable things that are here out of 2-Cor. 8 & 9.

1-Corinthians 9:7: "Each one as he purposes in his heart..."

If you're going along and you say, 'I think I'm going to do this. I'm going to give this to so-and-so, I'm going to give this to God.' *You do it!* God is not judging just on your actions. Where does the judgment first start? *In the thought!* If you say, 'God,' in your heart, no one else knows. You hadn't told anybody, 'I'm going to do this.' You better do it.

"...so let him give, but not grudgingly or by compulsion... [I'll tithe because God says so!] ...for God loves a cheerful giver.... [notice this promise] ...For God *is* able to make **all grace** abound toward you..." (vs 7-8).

What is ultimate completion of all grace? *Eternal life!* We're not just dealing in a business or with people or things like this, ***we're dealing with God***, and with those who are His.

"...so that in every way you may always have sufficiency in all things, *and* may abound unto every good work" (v 8).

There's so much in 2-Cor. 10, which is one of those chapters that there's a lot buried in here when you put together all the other Scriptures. It's one of those chapters that verifies and tells you the reason for prayer and study. The reason is we are preparing for eternal life; ***we are preparing for the greatest work ever***, to take over the world.

For the Feast of Tabernacles I'm covering how much it says ***all nations***. You get your map and

you look at all nations—and it says unto the ends of the earth, and those in the isles, all the islands.

God has called us to the greatest, biggest, most important eternal thing we could do. It starts within the flesh. What does God want?

Matthew 5:48: “Therefore, you shall be... [become] ...perfect, even as your Father Who *is* in heaven is perfect.” ***That’s what we have been called to!*** How do we do that?

Under the covenant with Israel, as long as your physical actions did not violate the letter of the Law, you were fine. ***But under the New Covenant, there’s a greater, a higher standard, because we’re dealing with eternity!*** We’re dealing directly with God the Father and Jesus Christ.

What is our part in becoming perfect? ***Not*** so you can, ‘O Lord, here I am. I’m this old and everything else.’ Like one man foolishly said, ‘I’ve been faithful for so long that Satan has no interest in me.’ That was like dropping a gas bomb into a bonfire. If you’ve been faithful 50 years, Satan is most interested in you.

2-Corinthians 10:1: “Now, I Paul am personally exhorting you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ...”

A little later when he gets to the end of it, he says, ‘What do you want, do you want me to come with a rod? I’m going to talk to all you rebels straight out.’ He’s approaching them the right way here.

“...On the one hand, when present with you I *am* base...” (v 1). ‘Oh, look at him; how could he be an apostle of God. Look, all the things he went through and just look how difficult it is for him to do certain things because he was nearly stoned to death. If God were God, why didn’t He prevent that?’ If God were God, why didn’t He prevent Christ from being crucified?

“...but on the other hand, when absent I am bold toward you.... [and send these long, strong nasty letters to 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). What does this tell you? ***They were judging Paul!***

Sidebar: We have a sermon series and booklet, *Judge Righteous Judgment*. Isn’t that what Jesus said? Isn’t what the news is doing all the time? Yes, trying to tell you what someone thinks when they haven’t even talked with them.

Like they’ve been doing to the President on fake news, ‘He’s got a mental problem. He’s unfit to be president. I’m a great psychologist and I can tell.’ *Did you ever interview him?* ‘No, but I can look at him and tell.’ ***Really!***

That’s exactly what was going on here. They were judging Paul. You can judge certain things by the covering, but you can’t, for example, if you have a fine vintage wine, but it’s in a horrible looking bottle. You can’t judge the excellence of the wine by the bottle. You must taste it. Likewise with this:

Verse 3: “For although we walk in *the* flesh, we do not **war** according to *the* flesh.” ***We are in a spiritual warfare!*** That’s what’s important to understand. That spiritual warfare is not necessarily external. Probably 10% is external, and 90% is internal. What is it that needs to be perfected? ***The mind, the heart!*** All of those things together.

Verse 4: “For the weapons of our warfare *are* not carnal, but mighty through God to *the* overthrowing of strongholds.”

That’s quite a statement right there. What God is requiring of us is that we cannot do it on our own, but He wants our full participation in active working.

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.” ***Spiritually treating everyone the same way, but with a different reproach!***

Verse 20: “Now, to the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain *the* Jews...” He’d probably say, ‘In Judaism you have all these traditions:

- What have they amounted to?
- Are they compatible with the commandments of God?

We have the Gospel of Matthew already written. Didn’t you read where Jesus said to the religious authorities, ‘Have you never read?’ How many times did He say that? Jesus told them, ‘I know you, the love of God is not in you.’ That also tells us how important all of this is.

“...to those who are **under law**, as under law” (v 20). We have a whole sermon or two on what it means to be under law or under grace:

1. Under Law/Under Grace
2. Under Law? Or Grace?

“...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***)...” (vs 20-21).

That's quite a statement there, even though it's a parenthetical one. This tells you that he's keeping the commandments and laws of God under Christ.

"...that I might gain those who are without law" (v 21).

He probably says, 'I understand how your life has been. It's been a mess, a wreck. Look at it today.'

- How many people are without law?  
*They're lawless!*
- What has that gotten you?
- How many of your friends died early?

*Today we could say:*

- How many of your friends have died of drug overdose?
- How many of your musical stars died at a young age?
- How has your life been with everything all mixed up?

You don't know what's right and don't know what's wrong and you're on the verge of committing suicide.

That's how you reach people in that way. Then you say, 'God has a way to help you, but you have to do something. That something starts with repentance and belief.'

Verse 22: "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. Now, I do this for the sake of the Gospel, that I might be a fellow partaker with you. Don't you know that those who run a race **all run...**" (vs 22-24).

All sports are a type of warfare, but the weapons are different. Some sports it's a hockey puck; some sports it's a football; some it's a basketball; some it's a baseball; some it's track.

"...but *only* one receives the prize?... [eternal life and perfection, because that's where we started] ...That is the way you *are to* run in order that you may obtain the prize. **For everyone who is striving for mastery controls himself in all things...**" (vs 24-25). Is that another way of describing perfection? *Yes, indeed!*

"...Of course, they *do this* so that they may receive a corruptible crown; but we *are striving for* an incorruptible crown.... [we're all going to be winners] ...I therefore, so run, not as one who is uncertain; so *also* I fight, not as beating the air" (vs

25-26). You see boxers preparing and they beat the air. When they get in the ring, it's a different story.

Verse 27: "But I discipline my body and bring *it* into subjection, lest, after preaching to others, I myself might be rejected."

**The war:** that's what we need to look at. That's what we need to fight against.

If you go along and say, 'You know, when I first started, I didn't know it was going to be this difficult.' *Because you were blinded and you didn't know how to control your mind!* We will see that's the important thing.

1-Timothy 6:11: "But you, O man of God, flee these things..."—*all the carnal things!*

- What does it say concerning fornication?  
*Flee sexual immorality or fornication!*
- How many men in the Bible did that? *One! Joseph!* (not counting Christ).

Abraham didn't sin, but he listened to his wife and we've been stuck with Ishmael from that time on.

"...and pursue righteousness, Godliness, faith, love, endurance *and* meekness.... [all of these are spiritual qualities] ...**Fight the good fight of the faith!**...." (vs 11-12).

All of these things in v 11 you have to fight for. The world is bombarding you and Satan is bombarding you, so that you don't do it. In this age today, much more than in any other age.

The other day I was coming home from the grocery store, and I saw different people walking. I think it was 3 or 4 people. They've got to have their cell phone right there. What could come on your cell phone? *All of the deepest perversions in the world!* Those things probably won't take us down, but we have to be careful of the things that *appear good, but are actually lawless*. That's how the apostasy occurred:

- you do it easily
- you do it quietly
- you do it friendly
- you do it with love

Just like the person who says, 'Oh, I love the Lord.' He says, 'I keep the Sabbath.' What's that? So, it's a fight!

"...Take hold of eternal life..." (v 12). How do you take hold of eternal life?

- by using the Word of God
- by studying
- by praying

- by using the Holy Spirit

We're to be led by the Holy Spirit, but we must produce our own choices and energy to do it.

"...to which you were also called, and did profess a good profession in the presence of many witnesses. I charge you in the sight of God, Who gives life to every *living* thing..." (vs 12-13).

That's quite a statement! Give life to everything, even the things that are inanimate. We're sitting on chairs and we have tables and we have Bibles. We're in a building; the lights are on. We call those inanimate, but they still have the life of their atomic construction. Those atoms are in there moving and we don't see it. Did God make those? *Yes!*

"...and Jesus Christ, Who *in* testifying before Pontius Pilate gave the exemplary profession of *faith*, that you keep this commandment without fault *and* without rebuke until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ" (vs 13-14). *That tells you that's another way of saying the one who endures to the end shall be saved!*

Verse 15: "Which in His own times..." Everybody has missed that, including the Churches of God, all the way down through time.

In reading some of these things about what John Guenther is going to bring at the Feast in Blanchard, Idaho—whoever wants to go there, you're going to have a real treat if you go there. He's going to cover from Paul to the 1600s in three seminars that he's going to give. He's going to have charts and he's going to have other things.

The volume of information now is so much greater than it was when we first came into the Church—like with me 58 years ago. We didn't have very much information on the Churches in the Middle Ages. One of the things that got a lot of people to come to the Church was because they knew nothing about anything that went on with Israel and the Alps. Knew nothing about the conspiracy to take the Church down.

When Herbert Armstrong said the true Gospel hasn't been preached in 1800-years, they said what I'm hearing from him is so different, I guess that's true.

But now the facts come out and show that though he said that—and he should have known better, because Jesus said He wasn't going to let the gates of the grave prevail against the Church—it was preached. There were thousands and thousands who gave their lives in martyrdom.

Doesn't that sound a lot like Mormonism? *Yes, indeed!* Mormonism started out this way with Joseph Smith. One day he was going along and he was knocked down on his back and a bright light shone. Who appears as a bright shining light? And said, 'The church has died out and I'm going to raise it up through you.' That was none other than Satan the devil. ***You never worship God prostrate on your back!*** You are on your belly, *with your face in the ground.*

One man who was on the *Plain Truth* mailing list wanted a visit by a minister. So, they sent it out to me, because I was pastoring Salt Lake and Boise. I went out to visit him. I come into his house and sit down and we're talking and then all of a sudden here come a couple of other men. I'm sitting there thinking, 'I wonder what this is?' He said, 'These are elders from the Church of the Latter Day Saints.' I said, 'How do you do?'

We got to talking and then I said—it was my parting comment after talking about different things and they brought up about what Joseph Smith said about it dying out and this great light. That was back in New York. Later I checked where it was in New York and there was a Church of God 50-miles away from him.

We're sitting there talking and I'm thinking what I'm going to say to them. They wanted to come and test me out. It was a setup and I didn't know it till I got there. I said, 'Let me ask you a question. You say that Joseph Smith said the church died out and God raised it up through him. Is that what you're saying?' They said *yes*. In those days I had my little handy small little Bible I took. I opened it up to Matt. 16 and I read where Jesus said that He's going to build the Church on this Rock—Himself—and that the gates of hell, or the grave, *would never prevail against it.*

So I said, 'I'm stuck with a problem. Either I believe Joseph Smith, or I believe Jesus Christ.' I got up and walked out. That you would say would be a spiritual fight. What do we fight against?

2-Corinthians 10:3: "For although we walk in *the* flesh, we do not war according to *the* flesh."

What did Jesus pray for all of the disciples? *I pray not for the world, but I pray for these that You keep them from the evil one* (John 17)—or wicked one—for, that is because, with the Spirit of God, they are not of the world, but are living in the world. ***That's why we have the fight!*** During the Millennium it isn't going to be the fight like it is today.

- that's why we're the first-fruits and the first resurrection
- that's why we are going to take over the government and the world

"...we do not war according to *the* flesh... [we'll see how we need to war with that] ...For the weapons of our warfare *are* not carnal..." (vs 3-4). *In other words, no human psychology is ever going to help you permanently overcome sin within!*

- it may help you be a little nicer person
- it may help you be a little more considerate
- it may help you learn how to speak a little bit better
- it may teach you how to dress a little bit better
- it may teach you how to study a little bit better

*But it doesn't change you spiritually; that's the important thing!*

"...but mighty through God to the overthrowing of strongholds" (v 4).

- Where are those strongholds? *In the mind!*
- Who wants to get in to the stronghold and take over?

These Scriptures we have read before, but now let's read them and apply it with what we're doing today.

The comment was made what if someone in the Church commits suicide? We don't know the inner workings of the individual mind. That will happen occasionally. I know of a man recently who was so overwhelmed because of the death of his father that he couldn't stand it any longer. How God looks at that, *we have to leave that in God's hands.*

When you come to an absolute crisis in your life, don't get so despondent that you give up and take your own life. That won't work. God is the ultimate Judge of the whole thing.

In some cases, some people are so secretive they never tell anybody anything, so you have no warning signs of anything at all. All of sudden BANG! and you say, 'How could that happen?' Some people are like that. They just don't tell you anything and they keep it all bundled up. Unless they're praying and studying and unloading that burden to God, which is what they should do—and that's part of the warfare in fighting that we have to do—then drastic things can happen.

If you start going to the counselors in the world, you're going to the fleshly advice. What most psychologists generally end up doing is giving you a thought pattern to justify your sinful behavior and be comfortable with it.

Sometimes you have to resolve difficulties with people. That's also part of the battle. What is part of the battle? *Terms of peace!* You have to go make peace with them. Don't go around and have thoughts in your head against anybody within the Church that you haven't resolved either by unloading with prayer and the Word of God, or you haven't talked to the person.

Sometimes you can unload the whole thing and put it away. You don't even have to go talk to the person. But when you go, you don't go and say, 'Did you know you offended me?' *Me? I'm kind and good and gentle; how could I do that?*

Let's understand that ***we have to fight Satan the devil and all of his weapons are different!*** Most of them can appear very, very good at first.

I've got a book, *Stairway to Hell: Rescuing Teens From Their Well-Planned Destruction* by Richard T. Jones, he says for teenagers. The devil has a very well thought-out plan to destroy you.

But he doesn't start out by coming up and saying, 'I'm here and I'm going to kill you.' No, he said, *'I'm here. Did you know? How would you like to feel the best you've ever felt in your whole life? It doesn't take much. You just take a little bit of this.'* And BAM! That's true. ***Gotcha!*** First step.

(go to the next track)

We're going to examine Eph. 6 very closely, too, because this has to do with the warfare. There are things we have to fight:

1. Satan
2. sin
3. self
4. society

When all of them come against us—and we're not prepared—this is what happens:

- like when the Laodiceans become lukewarm
- like with Pergamos, they began to allow those who had false doctrines to come in
- like Thyatira who really had a lot of difficulties and problems

You read that; that's the only place in the whole Bible that God says of those who were with Jezebel and her children, and those in the Church who gave up and went with them, *He will kill*—if you kill them

die—with death. What does that mean? *That means the Lake of Fire!*

Those are the things we're fighting against and **Satan is #1** because:

- he controls the *society*
- he is the father of *sin*
- he wants *you*

Before you're converted you have *the law of sin and death* within you that you didn't know was there and you didn't know how to control it. There may be some things you could control.

And then *self*: we could end up being our own worst enemy. ***This is our warfare!*** We have to know the four enemies.

Here it is, this is the one concerning Satan, Ephesians 6:10: "Finally, my brethren, **be strong in the Lord...**"

Think of this for a minute: ***Whenever you are not strong and maintain that strength, you become vulnerable!***

What does Trump say about the army, the armed forces, and everything? *Peace through strength!*

- ***if you're strong in the Lord***, you have peace with God
- ***if you're strong in the Lord***, you'll be able to fight against Satan the devil

But you're not going to do it with carnal means or with human thoughts alone.

"...and in the might of His strength (v 10). What do you do? *When you have something you're working against and fighting against*—and there are some things you have to keep at it—***you can't give up because Satan wants to win!***

Recently, they gave a medal of honor posthumously to one of the soldiers in WWII. He was one of these advanced that he would get up close to the front lines and he would call back the enemy positions to the artillery and they would send the artillery to bombard them. Nearly his whole company got killed. He charged ahead and went way ahead into the enemy territory where he could see all the enemy soldiers and even some of their artillery. So, he was up there alone, no one with him, calling back the position.

Then they would send the rounds in and then he would call back and say to the right, to the left, ahead, behind. That's how the artillery observers do. He alone won the battle, because if he had not been up there, way, way up there—and he went up there,

went running up there, so he could up and see it—they would have lost the battle.

Same with us, we have to have the strength that comes from Christ. There are a lot of people who are good at self-will. That will do you good for a while. But do people who have a lot of self-will still have sin? *Of course!* That's why Paul said the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, or fleshly.

Verse 11: "**Put on the whole armor of God...**" Think of it this way: Lots of time you see the picture of a knight and he's got all this armor on. Think of it that way with God. We'll talk about protecting the head, the heart, the emotions, and so forth.

**"...so that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil"** (v 11). You have to stand against it and you have to overcome it.

Satan comes along, and we'll see a little later how clever that is. He never comes along and says, 'Go rob a bank.' He might do that to someone deeper in sin. For people who are not, he comes along and he says, 'How would you like to earn a little money?' That's how sin comes, a step at a time.

***You have to stand!*** Remember this: when you turn your back and run away from the enemy, unless you have protection to cover you, you're most vulnerable parts are exposed. "...the wiles of the devil," and that's how all the apostasy came in.

We're going to see that the devil is able to project and put in the thoughts of people what he wants to in many different venues today, not only personally, but by his various servants that he has to do it.

Verse 12: "**Because we are not wrestling against flesh and blood...**"

Sometimes something will come along and it will be BANG! Where did that come from? *From Satan!* Wrestling is close-in fighting. When you're wrestling you use leverage. Satan likes to leverage people, catch them where they're vulnerable and get them to the point that they say, 'Okay, just this one time.' ***Then he's got you!***

**"...but against principalities..."** (v 12). Are we going to rule in the Kingdom of God? *Yes, indeed!* Are we going to be some of the principal people who are going to serve Christ in bringing peace to this world? *Yes!* When it talks about principalities, that is *demon spirits in high offices*.

How many of those are there, we don't know. But we know that we have in Rev. 12 and 13

seven heads and ten horns. So that tells you about the principalities.

“...and against powers...” (v 12). These are powers that are able to come after your mind and your emotions, as well as your circumstances.

“...against the world rulers of the darkness of this age...” (v 12). Sooner or later it’s coming against us.

Did you know that right now in Sacramento, in the legislature they are working on a bill to ban all publications that are against the LBGTQ, perverted nonsense, which then would include the Bible.

Who do you suppose is putting that into the minds of those people to do it? *They’ve been serving him for a long, long time!* So, to them this seems natural, because they look at the rest of the world and say, ‘How can the rest of the world say that we’re perverts, when we know we’re not? It’s just those who follow the Bible. It’s just those who preach the things that are old-fashioned.’ That’s how they bring it in.

Will it pass? *Don’t know, but I assume as soon as the ink is dry they’re in court, because of the first amendment!* But that’s what we’re up against—world rulers of the darkness of this age. The higher you go, the more wicked they become. That’s the whole story of Nebuchadnezzar, going clear back to the Babylon #1 and clear forward to the great Babylon at the end.

“...against the spiritual power of wickedness in high places” (v 12). That means where they make laws, where they control religion.

Do you know what the Episcopalians are doing—and I need to do a **churchathome.org** on this. They are taking their prayer book—they haven’t done it yet to the Bible, but there are those who are doing it to the Bible—making it neuter-gender. You don’t call God your Father.

When you look in the world, how did you come here? What are they trying to do? *Create human life outside the womb!* That’s what they’re working on. You can’t say your Father, but they still can’t get away from the contribution of a man and woman, male and female, even if it’s outside of the womb. I don’t know how they’re going to do that.

What does Gen. 11 tell us? *That now anything they imagine to do, they will do!* That’s the danger of human life under Satan’s world with human beings made in the image and likeness of God, who have the ability to think, to reason, to build, to plan and to make. *It’s always led into total sin;* not at first, but it’s always led into it.

Verse 13: “Therefore, **take up the whole armor of God** so that you may be able to resist in the evil day...” *You have to resist in the faith!*

1-Peter 5:5: “In the same manner, *you* younger men be subject to *the* older men; and all of *you* be subject to one another, being clothed with humility because God sets Himself against the proud, but He gives grace to *the* humble. Be humbled therefore under the mighty hand of God...” (vs 5-6).

- through His Word
- through His Spirit

Everything comes back to study and prayer, then living what you study and what you pray.

- study
- prayer
- living

“...so that He may exalt you in *due* time” (v 6). When are we going to be exalted? *The resurrection, the greatest exaltation of all!* He who is least in the Kingdom of God is greater than John the Baptist, who is the greatest prophet of all. That tells you how great the goal is.

Verse 7: “Casting all your cares upon Him... [rather than keeping them bottled up inside; that’s why prayer, you cast them upon Him by praying and repenting] ...because He cares for you.” More than that, *He loves you!*

The reason you are called is because He loves you. Sometimes that love gets pretty tough, because of the circumstances. When you have to stand and fight and defend the faith—remember what I read between Jacob and the Friar concerning his inquisition? {note sermon: *The 1569 A.D. Inquisition & Be Diligent*} That was something. I imagine the many times that that was repeated.

Not like us, we’re detracted with all the modern things we have around us. They were able to study the Bible, perhaps much more than we. Jacob was able to answer with Scripture and fulfill the promise that God will inspire you when you need it. If you don’t pray, if you don’t study, if you’re not ready, how can God inspire you?

Verse 8: “**Be sober! Be vigilant!**.... [that tells you always to be on the alert] ...For your adversary *the* devil is prowling about as a roaring lion, seeking anyone he may devour.”

He doesn’t roar until after he has captured the victim. He sneaks up! If there’s the whole pride, they will come up against some of the biggest animals around. Have you ever seen them take down

a small elephant, just the lions? It takes five of them. It takes at least three to bring down a water buffalo. They all work together.

Satan has a lot of his troops out there working, looking around. They will influence people to try and influence us. ***That's why you have to be strong in the Lord and resist!*** "Be sober! Be vigilant!...."

Verse 9: "Whom resist, steadfast in the faith... [the only way you build the faith is to stay close to God] ...knowing *that* the same afflictions are being fulfilled among your brethren who *are* in the world."

Think about the places in the world where the Gospel is being preached. You might really pray for all the brethren in South Africa, because all of the natives there are into killing all the whites and taking their farming lands. They don't know how to farm and they don't know how to do these things, but because of being driven by wicked spirits and lust and greed they want to take it from them. Their hatred is so great.

Look what they did in Rhodesia. Rhodesia was exporting food everywhere. After all the natives took over and killed off all the whites: famine, starvation, plague; same way in Kenya. This is what's going on in South Africa.

Remember how that started, and that even started under President Reagan. "These people do not have democracy there, everything is unequal. So we're going to sanction all companies that do business with South Africa." So, they collapsed it. Then the natives took over and you have the typical corruption that Africa is noted for. Rather than serving and helping the people in doing good for each one, they used them as pawns and keep them in poverty. ***That's Satan's way! We have to resist in the faith!***

Verse 10: "Now, may the God of all grace, Who has called us unto His eternal glory in Christ Jesus..." That's quite a statement! God is going to give us His eternal glory; that's hard to contemplate. How's it going to be as a spirit being, that you can appear as a human being, and then whatever you do, whenever it's necessary, you can make yourself shine like the sun. ***Think on that!*** That's why it's so much greater than we've ever thought.

"...after *you* have suffered a little while... [there is suffering involved] ...Himself **perfect you...**" (v 10). Where did we start? ***Matt. 5:48! God the Father, Who is perfect, is going to perfect us!*** That's amazing.

**"...establish, strengthen, and settle you.** To Him *be* the glory and the power into the ages of eternity. Amen" (vs 10-11).

Sometime when you're praying about it, think of this: Think of a drop of water. With everything that's in that drop and you would look at it under a microscope. Then think about some of the pictures of the universe that you have seen. Just as you can see all the things in the water, but there are still a lot of things you don't see, and all the glory that's out there in the universe. ***This is what God wants to share with us!***

God says of the world: ***I did not create it in vain; I created it to be inhabited!*** Think of what He is going to do with the universe and think how powerful that is going to be because there's going to be a New Heaven and a New Earth. Then go read about New Jerusalem the way it's described in Rev. 20. See if you can think about what that will be like. I cannot fathom streets of gold, all of those precious stones, all of the colors, and everything being there. And then we're going to live there. We're promised that, aren't we? Didn't Jesus say, *'If I go, I'll prepare a place for you and I'll come again so that you can be where I am.'* That ultimately is New Jerusalem!

So all of the things we go through, and I know sometimes we go through some pretty difficult things. Those are all worth it. He says He will **"...establish, strengthen and settle you."**

You have stand, *stand*, ***stand*** and ***resist***. That defines the warfare; Ephesians 6:14: **"Stand, therefore, having your loins girded about with Truth..."**

Have you ever watched *Forged in Fire*? It starts out they're to make a knife. There's a lot of work to making blades and all the things they have to do. They have these electronic machines now that will stamp it, but think when they had to just have the anvil and the hammer. God talks about the smith in the Old Testament quite a bit.

There are so many things that are necessary to make a blade, the right thickness at the top, the right sharpness on the bottom. You have to make it so there are no cracks. Every once in a while they have a blade that they use to test and blade snaps in two. You can't have any chinks in the blade. You have to have it sharp because the test sometimes is pretty difficult. You take a knife, you have to have the right handle so you can hold onto it, then they start cutting cured bamboo or beef bones.

If it isn't done right, the blade will bend, have nicks and things like this. Some of them they



make so sharp that they could in one whack cut the back of a hanging hog and it'll drop.

Then they take some of these swords and they have this manikin, make it as much like flesh as possible. They take the sword—that's why you don't want to fight with swords. They thrust it into the abdomen and slice across the front of it and smash on the chest. If it's a good sword it will cut right through, break the bone, go right to the heart, or gouge out all the intestines. Look there's no medic on earth, if you get jabbed in the guts like that with the sword, you're a dead dodo. That's just the way it is.

Think of it that way for us. We cannot let these things get the best of us. "...having your loins girded about **with Truth**..." (v 14). That's how you combat a liar. *Satan is the father of lies!*

"...and **wearing the breastplate of righteousness**" (v 14). Isn't it true, when are you more vulnerable to sin? When you haven't prayed, haven't studied. So, the self-deception sets in and you go along and everything's all right. Then the enemy is going to sneak up on you and WHAM-BAM!

Verse 15: "And having **your feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of Peace**." That is always walking in the path of Christ, walking in the way of God.

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; and **put on the helmet of salvation**, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God" (vs 16-17).

This shows us we have to be ready for battle. It can be a fight all the time. Just to give you an example, have you ever had something stick in your mind, you can't get out of your mind? It just kind of plays over and over, like a commercial or a song. The one I always turn off, when it comes on, that's the kids doing their little fake concert for cars for kids. I put that on mute and go to another channel right away. They have such a tricky song.

What happens when you hear music, it goes in your little ding-dong brain, and it plays over and over again. How long do they stay there? Can they stay there and be dormant and don't bother you? That's true, but when do they bother you every year? *Christmas carols!* Yes, indeed!

***There's a whole lot to the warfare that we have!***

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- 6) 2-Corinthians 10:1-4
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- 12) Ephesians 6:14-17

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- Under Law/Under Grace
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## Second Corinthians IX

### Bring Every Thought Into Captivity #1

(Chapter 10:1-6)

*Bringing down the strongholds of the mind with the Word of God and the Spirit of God*

Fred R. Coulter

I want to take the sermon series: *The Washing of the Water by the Word* and this one here: *Bring Every Thought into Captivity*—that's what this is all about—and another one: *The Heart/Mind Connection*—right now Bonnie Orswell is starting to work on *The Heart/Mind Connection*—we will put those together and have a study pack on *how to cope with the world today*.

There were still some places like this at the turn of the century between 1800s and 1900s:

- no phones

*As a matter of fact when I was a kid living on the farm in the 1940s we still had the crank phone!*

- no cars
- no television
- no Facebook
- no Internet
- no computers

*Your biggest problem was putting up with that cantankerous horse!*

- no electricity
- no natural gas
- no thermometers
- no refrigerators

You were lucky if you had an 'icebox' where in the winter you would get your ice and store it up, insulate it. When it gets warm in the summer, you put it in your icebox. I remember an icebox.

Think about it, what distractions did they have? In the schools they had the *McGuffey Readers* and they learned about God. At home they had the Bible to read.

Wouldn't it be interesting if you could project the Apostle John into this age and say, 'We want to show you all the prophecies that you gave and how they have been fulfilled up to this point.' *He would be astonished!*

With all the things that we have, remember that there's good and evil, right and wrong. So all of these things can be used for good. A horse would be a good thing. You could have two kinds of horses, one that would run fast and the big ones that would plow and do the heavy work. But could you take a horse and go rob a bank? *Yes, you could! Wrong use of a horse!*

Same way with everything we have. Right here we have three who follow along with the Bible on their smart phones. At home we have dumb phones, land line.

I was talking to someone the other day and he said—I forget how old he was, but pretty close to my age—he doesn't have a television or anything like that. I said, 'I still use clay tablets,' because that's how they started writing, with clay tablets. I said, 'We've progressed all the way to today. We still have clay tablets, called silicone chips. Let's look at what we need to overcome, the four S's:

1. Satan
2. society
3. self
4. sin

Regardless in the age that people have lived, those are the four things they've had to overcome. Today we have too many things coming in on us and at us that automatically happens.

When they would ride their horses down the trail, were there any billboards? *No!* Today you can get in your car, you can turn on the radio and turn on the air conditioning. You're driving down the road and if there aren't too many cars, you're having a very good time. If it's a song you like, you can sing along with it, and everything will be great. You feel good and the car is kind of bouncing up and down the road with you. You can have your phone hooked up. Someone call you, 'Hello, where are you? Don't forget to go to the store and don't forget to do this.' *All automatic!*

They had none of those to overcome, but with all of those things today, they come right in through the tube, right into our eyes in the society around us. They had to fight that if they lived in one of the cities. They still had a lot of pornography in those cities, carved in stone. So you see, the mind of men and women still run the same as they were back then. *We have a lot to overcome!*

Someone was telling me about a movie the other day, where this man wanted to hook up the brain to a computer—and I need to get some more information from the Singularity is Near University—to find out what it was like. What happened, it got so bad that he killed himself. The

person said it's because people do not understand the evil that the mind can come up with.

Human nature is a combination of good and evil. How many people are called *good* in the New Testament? Even Jesus said, 'Don't call Me good.' What did He say of Nathaniel? *Behold, an Israelite, indeed, in whom there is no guile!* How many other people did you hear that of? *None!* I'm convinced that those who have the most guile belong in politics.

Let's read what we have to do. It's a real challenge, because for us it is more of a full-time job because of the outside interference, but also because of the things that we have *to learn, to change, to grow and to overcome*. We have the tools to do it, which they didn't have back then.

How many people in the New Testament Church in the first century had the complete Bible in their homes? *Not many!* Where did those in Berea have to go to check out whether these things were so or not? *They had to go down to the synagogue where the scrolls were and check it out there!*

2-Corinthians 10:3: "For although we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to *the flesh*."

With everything that we have mentioned so far, we haven't mentioned that ***Satan is out there producing a lot of this!*** "...we do not war according to *the flesh*." How do we overcome? What it is, *spiritual growth is also a warfare* against the four S's.

Verse 4: "For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to *the overthrowing of strongholds*."

That's why we need the Spirit of God. That's the first thing, because all overcoming, and all of the battle to develop character *is in the mind!* Everything else with the body is to support the life so that the brain can work and function. Everything that we do *we choose*, even some things that are seemingly involuntary. Some things you can't control.

How long can you hold your breath? Just take a deep breath some time when the second hand on the clock reaches twelve-up, and hold it. Don't breathe! Don't move! If you do a minute you're pretty good. I don't know how many could do a minute and a half, two minutes, three minutes. There are some who have learned, diving deep to go after sponges and things like that, they could hold their breath for about a minute and half to two minutes. But that's it.

God put it in us automatically to breathe, same way with the processes of the body. All of

those are to support the body, *to support the mind, because that's where all the overcoming takes place, right in the mind!*

The things in the mind are *strongholds*. Addictions are strongholds! This is why Paul said, 'All lawful things I can do, but all lawful things are not expedient.' We have to be able to control that.

Fighting against Satan the devil, because he can put thoughts in people's minds. We saw how ***we have to put on the whole armor of God!*** Our basic battle is with:

- wicked spirits
- principalities
- powers
- the darkness of this age
- the spiritual power of wickedness in high places

What happens when the leaders of the nation give themselves over to sin? *America is a good example! It affects everybody!* When you have righteous leaders, it says in the Proverbs that *righteous judgment establishes the land*. Now that a lot of the evil has been purged out of the government, don't a lot of people feel better? *Yes, indeed!* So that's a good example of it.

- we have to take the whole armor
- we have to resist
- we have to work out all things to stand

In this age, there are so many things against us. I don't think Paul would consider that what he wrote here was a prophecy. He was writing to the Ephesians, and they had their own problems there. What was at Ephesus? *The big temple of Diana!* Don't you suppose there were a lot of demons around there?

You find that Paul was so effective that thousands and thousands brought their occult books and their idols and were burning them (Acts 19). So much so that the idol makers, Alexander the silversmith stirred up a rebellion against Paul and to take him and kill him because they had a great depression in idol making, because no one was buying the idols of Diana anymore. They had their problems there.

***We have to stand!*** Here's how we do it. This ties in with bringing every thought into captivity to Christ. This stands in bringing down the strongholds.

Ephesians 6:14: "Stand, therefore, having your loins girded about with Truth, and wearing the breastplate of righteousness, and having your feet

shod with *the* preparation of the Gospel of Peace. Besides all *these*, take up the shield of the faith..." (vs 14-16).

This is why there's prayer and study every day. This is why you pray even during the day when you're going along and just doing different things and you know you need God to help and intervene and help you to be able to think correctly. All of us have experienced that.

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 becomes the important thing. *Satan can project what he wants to put in people's minds*, and much more today. Because he has:

- television
- all of the social networks on the phone
- all the pornography
- all the sin
- all the gambling

We're all going to have peace because we can smoke 'pot.' If you want to know what happens to a nation when it goes to pot, all you have to do is look at Holland or the Netherlands. Frans Peeters, who runs our office over there, says it's given over to gangsters and crooks.

We're going to have to really be on top of it now with this new president in Mexico. He's going to declare war on the United States by sending thousands and thousands, plus he's going to legalize all the drug cartels. It's so bad there he doesn't know how to stop all of the killing. Did you know that 25,000 people were murdered in Mexico last year? Most of those connected with the government and law enforcement, or anyone who was against the cartels.

If there is not resistance against sin, on an individual level, with the people everywhere, then sin grows; Satan moves in and multiplies it, and he can project it.

Here's what we need to do, v 17: "And put on the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God." *You must have the Word of God in your mind, in your heart, and you must use it to think with and live by!*

I was watching TBN the other night. Hardly anything about Christ, but claim all the promises of God. Then toward the end, get in there and raise your arms and do all your chants and all of the hallelujahs and all the Jesuses. All of that is a satanic

deception. I was amazed the number of people who just go into that. Satan likes to make it appear that his way is good.

This is quite a section here in Ephesians 2:1: "Now, you were dead in trespasses and sins."

If you don't have the Spirit of God, if you don't have the Truth of God, you're "...dead in trespasses and sins," even though you might not be malicious in your sins overtly in the actions that you do. What goes on in the mind? Where did we start this?

Mark 7:21: "For from within, out of the hearts of men go forth evil thoughts..."

A lot of people will say, 'That's not me, I'm a nice person.' A lot of things that they do are sin, but they don't know it's sin, because they've never been taught the difference. So, they are dead in their sins and trespasses.

That's why Jesus said, when the young man came to Him after Jesus said, 'Follow Me.' The young man said, 'I will, Lord, but I have to go bury my dad first.' He said, 'Let the dead bury the dead.'

Today, can you imagine what they would write up in the newspaper if Donald Trump said to someone, 'Let the dead bury their dead,' to some poor person that just lost his father. They would consider that a great insult.

Ephesians 2:2: "In which you walked in times past..." The way we lived is called *walk*. Today we are to walk in the way of the Lord; *that's living God's way!*

"...according to the course of this world..." (v 2). Whatever the world said was good and you thought it was good, and it looked good and was pleasant to you. Sounds like Gen. 3.

"...according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now working within the children of disobedience" (v 2).

Satan is the cause of all sin. What has happened to our mind, beginning with Adam and Eve because they sinned? Our mind is what are called carnal. That means that it does not have the Spirit of God, and it lacks the understanding to know how to live.

Look at the generation today that hasn't been taught anything. They had a segment on Hannity and went out and said, 'Are you proud of America?' *No!* Or asked them a question about the history of America—they don't know. They don't know anything.

When we're born into the world, we don't know anything, except we've sucked our thumb in the womb so we know how to nurse. That's about it. Everything must be taught to us.

A lot of things we can learn ourselves as we get a little older. The course of the world, the world is set in our time when we are born. Look at the kids growing up today. If you ask them when was the cell phone invented, they couldn't tell you, because everybody has one.

We've got a Verizon shop down here and mom and dad bring their little kids in and I'll look at them and they're about 10 or 12, or maybe 8. They come in to get their phones. Everybody's going to have giant thumbs after a while working those phones.

But it's natural. That's the society. The society we grew up in—yellow pencils and then the ballpoint pen. I remember I had a real fine ink pen. It was really a slick one. It had a little rubber container on the inside and you could pump the air out with a little lever on the side, and you could put in the ink. You would let go the lever and it would pull the ink up in there and you could write. What a handy thing! Then out came ballpoint pens. They still have them. I think in our house we must have 200 ballpoint pens.

We grow up in the world and that's the way it is. Today we have electricity; you walk in, turn the switch and there it is. You want to eat, you have a refrigerator, or two or three or four. You want to preserve some food; you have a freezer or two. All of those you just think of. I'm thirsty—go to the refrigerator—would you get that lime bubble fizz drink for me? There it is! You want to get some food, you go to the store.

All of those things—let's add this up. How, then, do you get people dependent on you and corrupt? *By giving them everything they need!* Then Satan knows because of sin, one day it is all going to be gone.

How nice and loving is your neighbor going to be when his stomach is grinding for food and he thinks you have some? Or you may become his food. That's happened over and over again. It's going to happen again, because Satan is 'the prince of the power of the air.'

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."

In all of those things we thought we were pretty good. You can take all the classes you want, and how to be the best person, the best salesman, the number one this or that. If you're not keeping the Sabbath and Holy Days, you're still living in sin. After a while then you learn how to cheat. That always happens. That is the human mind by Satan the devil.

If you want an interesting word study sometime, look up *way*: ***way of Truth, way of life***, and so forth.

Proverbs 12:15: "The **way of a fool** is right in his own eyes, but he who listens to advice is wise."

Let's see about our thoughts, see what we need to do, look at what was written. Believe it or not, I just got a paper yesterday written by someone, I have to figure out who it is. The name is there, but I haven't heard of them. Guess what they wrote concerning the binding of Satan the devil? We've had two things come up. This is the year of all the wrong doctrine being repeated again.

The two goats we have already covered. But the truth of the matter is, they could not really understand the purpose of the second goat being let go in the wilderness alive until Rev. 20 had been written, which says that 'a strong angel comes down, takes Satan the devil and throws him into the abyss, puts a chain around him and locks him up.'

This person said, 'No, that's not correct. The chain is 'symbolic' because Satan is spiritual. The prison is 'symbolic' because everybody's righteous.' Amazing! If that's the case, how did Satan get a third of the angels to go with him? Think about why lax teaching and false doctrine can cause people to believe false doctrine when they come around, because they've never been grounded in the Bible the way that they should.

2-Corinthians 10:5: "**Casting down vain imaginations...**" That's what you have to do. Get rid of the thought in your mind. How do you do that? *You have to pray about it!* That's how you do it.

**"...and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God..."** (v 5). Think about that.

There are a lot of things that appear really good. Look at everything that people do from Friday night to Saturday night, that they think is good and fun, whether it be entertainment. There are those who want to go out and get drugs and all of that. That's the more evil side of it.

But then you have activities and sports, sales and shopping, visiting, and all this sort of thing on the Sabbath. These people would look at these things and say this is good:

- it's good to talk with a family
- it's good to visit with your relatives
- it's good to do this
- it's nice to have a sale on Saturday

We can all go down there and we can get these things a whole lot cheaper, ***because they have no knowledge of God, no knowledge of the Sabbath!*** That which appears to be good is actually evil because of sinning against God.

The same thing applies with false doctrine. You come along, here's this vain imagination. Can't help but think about the hearings with Strzok the other day? Did he not have a lot of vain imaginations, haughty face, uplifting, vanity, and all of that. Incredible! Lying through his teeth. He thinks that he is so good that he can't do any wrong. That he even had the greatest brain to figure out how to stop Trump from becoming President.

**"...and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God..."** (v 5).

I've been working on doing some Greek for the Interlinear we're going to put out. I've been in communication with Maurice Robinson. He and Dr. Pierpont put out a book called *Byzantine Textform*. I'm not going to get into the details of that.

In my second e-mail to him, I commended him for doing such a good job, in doing what he's doing, to bring out the Greek, and all of that sort of thing. I asked him, 'Could you please explain to me how it is that a man can tell God what to do and that God must accept it? For example, Sunday-keeping,' because I knew he was a Baptist.

Then I referred him to Cardinal Gibbons, *Rome's Challenge to the Protestants*. He wrote back and he said, 'I don't mix theology with the Greek.' That's fine, you shouldn't. But from the Greek you should get your theology, don't you think?

He said, 'Cardinal Gibbons was explaining Rome's stance, and he dismissed it entirely. In his dismissal, he actually put himself above God, because God says to remember the Sabbath Day to keep it Holy. But there is a vain imagination that because he puts it in framework of doing good, and 'the other person is not good, it's all right with me. And I don't like to mix my theology with it.'

I thought to myself, WOW! Rome tells him what to do, and then they say Rome is not telling us what to do. There you go!

"...that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity..." (v 5). This takes work. This means you have to know what's going on in your mind and when thoughts come up that ought not be there—because that's where the true self and sin really are, right in the mind.

- we can all smile
- we will all be nice
- we can all shake hands

The truth is, every human being is who he or she is when you get into a room alone and you shut the door, and there you are. *That's you before God!* That's what it is.

What is one of Satan's great deceptions? The Word of God is in the Bible! The Word of God is Truth. So, for the Jews Satan tells them, 'You don't need the New Testament. That guy Jesus was a real renegade. You're right.' So, they cut themselves off from God, while they think they're right.

For the Catholics and Protestants, they say that 'everything in the Old Testament has been fulfilled and that's the old Law and you don't need to do it.'

So, both of them read from parts of the Bible. What happens, because they accept those premises, they're sinning though they may understand certain parts of the Bible. That's an incredible thing. Remember when Jesus was tempted, did not Satan quote Scripture? Reading Scripture doesn't necessarily prove that you are bringing all the Truth of God. It means, if you read it correctly, you're bringing some of it.

- What becomes the question?
- What do you do with it when you hear it?  
*You have to obey it!*
- Where does obedience start? *You must choose!*

Doesn't every minister, every priest, know that the seventh-day Sabbath is of God? *The Jews know it and they know the Holy Days! **But half the Truth will never fulfill all the Truth!*** Remember that. You must have all the Truth. All of these difficulties come because we do not police our minds with the Spirit of God and the Word of God. That is called *self-control*.

Today we live in all lawlessness. If you don't like the law, you just rebel against it. They're not bringing anything into captivity. They're just out there with all their wild emotions and everything like this. They have no control over their minds. Satan the devil is completely controlling them. He's happy as can be.

I can see virtually no difference between and rock concert, with the lights flashing and going on, everything that they're doing and watching some of these things on TBN in the name of God, supposedly praising God with the lights going on and then rocking back and forth, and all of this. And a minister coming along, pushing on their forehead and knocking them down. What he's doing? *He's putting a demon in their brain!*

(go to the next track)

Casting down vain imaginations are all of our thoughts. Look at the vain imaginations of all of those who say they are wise but believe in evolution. They have to imagine billions of billions. Is that a vain imagination? *Yes, it is!* Do they think it's good? Yes, 'because we thought of it.'

What is the point that every person has to come to in order to be able to begin understanding the Bible and these verses that go directly against the thinking of human beings? That's where we started: *out of the heart of men come evil thoughts!*

For all of us as Christians, there are two things we come to. Let's start out with the Apostle Paul in Rom. 7, one of the most difficult chapters in the entire Bible. I won't get into all the difficulties in it, but we want to come to one verse.

Romans 7:14: "For we know that the Law is spiritual... [you have to come to that] ...but I am carnal, having been sold *as a slave* under sin."

You have to understand that you're under sin. Even all the goodness that we may do *can never be the goodness of God*, because God has no sin.

Verse 15: "Because what I am working out myself, I do not know...."

- Who knows what they're doing and where they're going?
- How do you run your life?
- What do you do?
- What do you know?

*You come against a problem, and it just bowls you over and you have no idea what's happening!*

"...for what I do not desire to do, this I do..."  
(v 15).

- Why do you do things you don't desire to do?
- Why do you do things that come along that you know you shouldn't do, but you do them?

People do horrible things and they say, 'Why did you do it?' *I don't know!*

"...moreover, what I hate, this *is what* I do" (v 15). Paul was showing **the inner battle of overcoming sin!** All are under sin; that means we all have sin within. It is called **the law of sin and death!**

- Do we all die? *Yes, indeed!*
- Do we all sin? *Yes, indeed!*

That's why David wrote, 'I was conceived in sin' (Ps 51), because *the law of sin and death* is inherited in us. Those societies, which are generally good in their behavior and so forth, are those who more closely follow the things of God, whether they have the Law of God or not.

You go watch on **churchathome.org**, *Come Out of Her My People* #5. How would you like to live in a town where everybody kept the Ten Commandments? I won't go into detail, but I called it 'Perfectville.' Why can that never be without God?

1. because of Satan the devil
2. because in order for you to begin making progress to overcome, you have to realize how the human mind works
  - there is the way of man that seems good, but the end thereof is the way of death
  - every thought of a man is good in his own eyes

Even those who murder: 'I killed him because he deserved to be killed.' Are you God?

Until you come to the point in your life and in your thoughts against evil, and overcoming the things that you do that you don't want to do that you really hate, you've got to understand this verse right here:

Jeremiah 17:9: "The heart *is* deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?"

Can anyone really truly know his own heart and mind? *No, you can't!* That's why when all of these good pleasures that we have at our fingertips today are gone, which keep us from acting on our most evil impulses, then you will see the truth of human nature revealed; neighbors will kill neighbor for food.

Jeremiah 17:1—when you give yourself over to evil: "The sin of Judah *is* engraved with a pen of iron..." You etched your conscience so deeply that it's like it's etched in stone. This is pretty well describing *the unpardonable sin*. You can't change.

You see some of these documentaries in prisons and they talk to some of these killers.

They've been there long enough to face the fact that they're really killers. The one who interviews them will hear this from some of them: 'If you let me out, I'll do it again.'

"...with the point of a diamond; *it is* carved upon the tablet of their heart and upon the horns of your altars" (v 1). In other words, their very inner most beings, plus what they consider their religion, it is engraved right in it there.

***Until people come to the point of understanding how desperate and evil the human mind can be, you can't start bringing into captivity those thoughts that are contrary to God!*** You just don't have the power to do it, because you don't have the Holy Spirit of God.

Let's see what God says; Jeremiah 16:10: "And it shall come to pass, when you declare to this people all these words... [that everything's going to take place, all the evil is going to come] ...and they shall say to you, 'Why has the LORD pronounced all this great evil against us?... [because of Jer. 17:1] ...Or what *is* our iniquity, or what is our sin that we have committed against the LORD our God?'—" *because every way of a man is right in his own eyes.*

'What am I doing that's wrong?' Look at Job, one of the oldest books in the Bible and one of the first lessons to learn. Even if you do everything that God says to do, you're not greater than God.

Verse 11: "'Then you shall say to them, 'Because your fathers have forsaken Me,' says the LORD, 'and have walked after other gods, and have served them...'"

That's why the first commandment is '***I*** am the Lord your God that brought you out of the land of Egypt.' In other words, '***I'm the only one that can get you out of sin.***' (paraphrased it for a modern spiritual equivalent). '***You shall have no other gods before Me.***' Look at how many gods of how many things we have today. All the gadgets and devises and things like that.

"...and have worshiped them, and have forsaken Me, and have not kept My Law. And you have done worse than your fathers; for, behold, you walk each one after the stubbornness of his evil heart, ***without hearkening to Me***" (vs 11-12).

They got to the point of having no conscience. Everyone has to come to the point that they acknowledge that the heart that they have, deep within, can produce every evil under the sun. The only way to stop that is with God's Spirit so you can overcome.

Jeremiah 17:5: "Thus says the LORD, 'Cursed *is* the man who trusts in man...'"

What was the greatest error of the church we've been in? *You looked to the man instead of God!* The man told you to look to him instead of God. ***We're not to look to any man!*** Even Jesus said to the rich man who came and said, 'Good, Master.' Jesus said, 'Don't call me good; there's none good but God.' Why? *Because Jesus had to carry the law of sin and death in Him and not sin and not be overcome by sin Himself!* He had to do the impossible to make it possible to save mankind.

"...and makes flesh his arm, and whose heart departs from the LORD" (v 5). *This happens!* So look at the contrast. Look at how God looks at people here.

Verse 6: "For he shall be like a shrub in the desert, and shall not see when good comes. But he shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, in a salt land that is not inhabited."

This is going to get some people mad, but all those people who live in the worst and most hideous places in the world, examine what your forefathers did and you'll have the answers as to why you're living there.

Verse 7: "Blessed *is* the man who trusts in the LORD and whose hope is the LORD." Even in the letter of the Law, that is good.

Verse 8: "'For he shall be like a tree planted by the waters... [if you read Psa. 1 carefully and think about it, there's the whole plan of God] ...*it* sends out its roots by the river, and *it* shall not fear when the heat comes, but its foliage shall be green; and he is not worried in the year of drought, nor will it cease from yielding fruit."

Verse 10: "I the LORD search the heart, *I* try the reins, even to give to each man according to his ways, according to the fruit of his doings."

Let's see how Job expressed this very same thing, after he learned his lesson. Remember the moral of the story of Job is *you better be careful what you wish for*, especially if you're arrogant, which he was. He got so arrogant, he says, 'I'm just as righteous as God, maybe even a little more than God. Look at all the good that I've done.'

Job said, 'I want God to talk to me.' God said, 'All right, I'm going to talk to you.' He appeared in a whirlwind. After God got done with him, let's go over this here. *Sometimes it takes some very deep experiences for people to understand the evil that's in their hearts*, even if their actions appear



good. And even if they do a lot of the things that God says to do, but do not give God the credit.

What did Paul write about every man, woman, and child in the world? ***In God we live and move and have our being!*** Everything comes from God! If we acknowledge God, use His Spirit, love Him and keep His commandments, then we will be productive spiritually and God will bless us. Sometimes we need trials so that we understand how we need to stay close to God.

God answered Job, Job 40:1: “And the LORD answered Job and said, ‘Shall he who contends with the Almighty instruct *Him*?...’” (vs 1-2).

Think about Sunday-keeping, holiday-keeping, all of the things of the religions of this world. We are all instructing God, because we know better than Him. That’s why Job is one of the oldest books in the Bible, so that men would get the point.

“...He who reproves God, let him answer it” (vs 2). *That’s what Job was doing!*

Remember this one point he said, ‘This is so terrible. I’m suffering so much. I wish there was an umpire between me and God, to put his hand on His shoulder and on my shoulder, and declare to Him what I have done.’

Job didn’t thank God that he could do these things. He didn’t recognize that he lives and breathes and moves within God! Everything that there is, anything that he did, ***it all came from God!*** Whether he fed the poor or took care of the cattle, took care of his servants, or whether his own children. ***It all came from God!***

Then for him to stand up and say, ‘My righteousness is more than God.’ That’s why God said, ‘Where were you when I created the heavens and the earth? Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth?’

Really when you think about it: you can examine a drop of water and there is more understanding in that drop of water to see what’s in it, than you could possibly imagine, especially if you dip it out of a creek and then look at it under a microscope. You might even decide not to drink it because you see some parasites in it that you can’t see. ***All comes from God!***

Verse 3: “And Job answered the LORD and said, ‘Behold, I am vile!...’” (vs 3-4). That’s the first start of repentance. You see the evil within, even though you may have done some good things.

“...What shall I answer You? I will lay my hand on my mouth. Once I have spoken; but I will not answer; yea, twice, but I will proceed no further” (vs 4-5). *It’s about time to shut up, Job!*

Everyone who says they have something better than the perfect God could produce, regardless of what it is, all the way from laws and commandment-keeping to things that they may think of or invent or put together.

Verse 6: “And the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said, ‘Gird up your loins now like a man. I will demand you, and you declare unto Me. Will you even annul My judgment?...’” (vs 6-8).

What was the first judgment against human beings? *The law of sin and death, passed on to all the children!* God has a way to work that out.

“...Will you condemn Me so that you may be righteous? And *have* you an arm like God? Or can you thunder with a voice like His?” (vs 8-9).

‘Okay, Job, We are going to try you right now. Here you are full of puss, blood, maggots, flies all around, dust all over you. You haven’t shaved in weeks and your hair is all full of dirt and grime.’

Verse 10: “Deck yourself now with majesty and excellency, and array yourself with glory and beauty.” What a perfect thing to ask him: If you’re so good, Job, change what you are right now immediately.

Verse 11: “Cast abroad the rage of your wrath; and behold everyone who is proud, and abase him. Look on everyone *who is* proud, *and* bring him low; and tread down the wicked in their place. Hide them in the dust together... [by eliminating and exterminating them, that would have to be] ...*and* bind their faces in darkness. Then I will also confess to you that your own right hand can save you” (vs 11-14).

What was God doing here? He was *trying the reins* of Job, showing him who he really was. God does that to us, when we come to really deep repentance. Repentance comes in various stages, at different times. We see the complete futility of man. ***This is how we begin to really bring those thoughts into captivity!*** We have to understand from whence they come.

- Satan himself
- society
- the sin within

Here’s Job’s repentance, Job 42:1: “And Job answered the LORD and said, ‘I know that You can

do all things, and *that* no thought can be withheld from You” (vs 1-2). *All those thoughts!*

Like Abraham Lincoln said, ‘You can fool part of the people some of time; you can fool all the people part of the time; but you can’t fool all the people all the time.’ We’ll add onto it: ***you can never fool God at any time concerning anything!***

The Psalms and Proverbs are real good in helping us overcome human nature. When you read some of these Psalms, it makes you wonder how David thought a lot of these things when writing them down.

What he would do in many cases, he would write down the Psalm. He would compose it on his instrument of strings and then he would go before the little tabernacle/tent that was in his house and sing to God. Quite a thing! None of us ever had a relationship with God like that. God exposed him for what he was.

Psalms 44:20: “If we have forgotten the name of our God, or stretched out our hands to a strange god, shall not God search this out?...” (vs 20-21).

We can be thankful that God gives us lots of space, gives us lots of time, and let some of our mistakes correct us, if we can see that we’ve done wrong. Know this:

“...For He knows the secrets of the heart” (v 21). God knows that and has exposed it. This is how we bring every thought into captivity to God.

Psalms 94:11: “The LORD knows the thoughts of man, that they are vanity.... [notice the solution] ...Blessed is the man whom You chasten, O LORD to teach him out of Your Law that You may give him rest from the days of trouble until the pit is dug for the wicked” (vs 11-13). That’s another summary of the whole plan of God.

How then do we start bringing every thought into captivity to God, ***bringing down strongholds so they don’t have a grip on our lives?*** *We just saw it out of the Law of God!* Through the Word of God, coupled with the Spirit of God together. Then this helps us bring every thought into captivity to God, because it’s a stronghold and it then is something we can get rid of.

What you do, you get rid of what is in the mind, by replacing it with what needs to be there. Here’s the process. We’ve covered this before, but just like everything else, when you study some things in the Bible in one place, and you come back and you study again what you’ve already studied previously, you bring to it the things that you’ve learned in the meantime and it means so much more.

Proverbs 2:1: “My son... [we’re going to be the sons and daughters of God] ...***if*** you will receive my words and treasure up my commandments within you... [in your mind] ...so that you incline your ear to wisdom and apply your heart to understanding; yea, ***if*** you cry after knowledge *and* lift up your voice for understanding; ***if*** you seek her as silver and search *for* her as for hidden treasures, ***then*** you shall understand the fear of the LORD and find the knowledge of God” (vs 2-5).

That’s how you do it. You come to repentance and then the Word of God comes alive to you and you understand it. Can people read the Word of God without understanding? *Yes, of course!* Here’s how you do it:

Verse 6: “For the LORD gives wisdom; out of His mouth *comes* knowledge and understanding.” *That’s what we are to use to overcome!*

We’ve covered this before, but let’s just add it in here. Proverbs 3:5: “Trust in the LORD with all your heart...”

That might be a good study. Look up all the places where there is *your heart, your whole heart, all your heart*, and see how our attitude toward God is to be.

“...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 5-7). *That’s what we are to do!*

Proverbs 4:10: “Hear, O my son, and receive my sayings; and the years of your life *shall be* many.... [we’re dealing with eternal life forever] ...I have taught you in the way of wisdom... [God does teach us in the way of wisdom] ...I have led you in the right paths. When you go, your steps shall not be hampered, and when you run, you shall not stumble. Keep hold of instruction; do not let go; keep her, for she *is* your life” (vs 10-13)—*and all the instruction of God!*

Our mind is made to learn and re-learn, be renewed and renewed, added to, and develop the character. That’s the whole core of what God’s wants us to do. ***That’s how we bring every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ!***

Verse 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).

Philip Neal just completed a book. It’s called *Good Sense*, which is Proverbs for teenagers. This is kind of the core of what he’s doing. The big

Achilles heel of all teens is you're no longer a child and you're glad you're almost an adult, but you probably know more than adults, because you can see a lot of their faults. But you don't see your own. That's why you need the Proverbs.

Here it is with the wicked. How many have watched National Geographic where they show some of these drug dealers and how they sell it, how much money they make. They plan every bit of it. Everything is planned and worked out.

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" (vs 16-17).

They're always worried: Will they get caught? What's going to happen? They know that if they cross the one from that is the supplier of drugs, they're gone.

Verse 18: "But the path of the just *is* as the shining light, that shines more and more to the perfect day." The perfect day is the day of resurrection, the day of perfection.

Verse 19: "The way of the wicked *is* as darkness; they know not at what they stumble. My son, attend to my words; incline your ear to my sayings. Let them not depart from your eyes; keep them in the midst of your heart" (vs 19-21).

***That's how you bring every thought into captivity to Christ!*** That's what it's all about. God's Spirit is there to help you to reinforce and to bring you to these things, the way that God wants it.

Verse 22: "For they *are* life to those who find them, and health to all their flesh.... [v 23 is the big one, which ties right in with 2-Cor. 10:25]: ...**Above all guard the door of your mind...**"

- Why is that important?
- Why does it call your mind a door?

Because you can let things into your mind or you can expel them out of your mind. Some of them are harder to get rid of than others.

I think I mentioned it last week about the advertisement, Kars for Kids. Whenever that comes on I hit that mute because the music is so catchy, if I don't, I spend two or three days trying to get it out of my thoughts.

You think about it. You watch an ad and if there's a catchy tune there, what happens if your mind picks it up?

- guard the door of your mind

- casting down vain imaginations

Verse 23: "Above all guard the door of your mind... [or your heart] ...with diligence, for out of it *are* the issues of life." *That is really quite a Proverb!*

When I first went to Ambassador College, I said to myself, where do I start? So, I started in the Proverbs. I got these 3 by 5 cards and I would write down by topic: fear of God, obey God, all the different topics. I ended up with a whole slew of those. I didn't realize how much that at the beginning this helped to get my thoughts in order the way that they should be. I'm not saying that to brag on it or anything, but I'm just saying:

- What are you going to do?
- How do you start?
- *You start right there!*

2-Corinthians 10:3: "For although we walk in *the* flesh... [we are *in* the world, but not *of* the world and we're still flesh] ...we do not war according to *the* flesh. **For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty...** [spiritually] **...through God to the overthrowing of strongholds**" (vs 3-4).

***Only with the Spirit of God can you overcome those strongholds.***

Verse 5: "Casting down *vain* imaginations... [all those stupid foolish thoughts that come into your brain] ...and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God... [Job] ...and bringing into captivity every thought into the obedience of Christ; and having a readiness to avenge all disobedience... [he's saying disobedience is one of the strongholds in the mind] ...whenever your obedience has been fulfilled" (vs 5-6).

***That is the whole key of bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ!***

This is why this portion of 2-Cor. 10 is one of the most important sections in the Bible. Then combine this with other things. I'll leave the rest of it to you to study, to finish off.

#### Scriptural References:

- 1) 2-Corinthians 10:3-4
- 2) Ephesians 6:14-17
- 3) Ephesians 2:1
- 4) Mark 7:1-3
- 5) Ephesians 2:2-3
- 6) Proverbs 12:15
- 7) 2-Corinthians 10:5
- 8) Romans 7:14-15

- 9) Jeremiah 17:9, 1
- 10) Jeremiah 16:10-12
- 11) Jeremiah 17:5-8, 10
- 12) Job 40:1-14
- 13) Job 42:1-2
- 14) Psalm 44:20-21
- 15) Psalm 94:11-13
- 16) Proverbs 2:1-6
- 17) Proverbs 3:5-7
- 18) Proverbs 4:10-23
- 19) 2-Corinthians 10:3-6

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Acts 19
- Genesis 3
- Revelation 20
- Psalms 51, 1
- 2-Corinthians 10:25

Also referenced:

Sermon Series:

- *The Washing of the Water by the Word*
- *The Heart/Mind Connection* (coming soon)

Books:

- *Byzantine Textform* by Robinson & Pierpont
- *Good Sense* by Phil Neal (coming soon)

Booklet: *Rome's Challenge to the Protestants*

Series: *Come Out of Her My People* ([churchathome.org](http://churchathome.org))

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## Second Corinthians X

### Bring Every Thought into Captivity #2

*Our part in the process of conversion and battle against Satan*  
Fred R. Coulter

In connection with what we are doing with *bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ*, what we're doing is having the transcripts prepared for *The Heart/Mind Connection*. Then we want to do a special study pack that we will entitle *The Process of Conversion*. We will add to that the booklet *The Washing of the Water by the Word*, and the sermons we're doing now *Bringing Every Thought into Captivity to the Obedience of Christ*. That tells us the whole process.

It's interesting the way that the Bible is put together. It starts out with the whole, and over a period of time seven divisions were created:

1. the Law
  2. the Prophets
  3. the Psalms
  4. the Gospel and Acts
- that's the fourth one, in the middle of the seven*
5. the General Epistles
  6. the Epistles of Paul
  7. Revelation

So, you've got the whole structure of the Bible, then you have the key things:

- Sabbath—the first step to begin to know God
- Passover and Holy Days—the framework for the plan of God

*Then this is going to show the framework of conversion, **our part!***

The Protestants say that there's nothing more you have to do; if you say you believe in Jesus, it's all over and you have eternal life secure. Then they tell you that it doesn't matter what you do because God's love is unconditional.

Very few people know **our part!** Let's look some verses that will give us a clue concerning *our part!*

After telling us the thing we need to do in keeping the Laws of God in the letter of the Law, and our attitude and all of that, Jesus says:

Matthew 6:33: "But *as for* you, seek first... [Greek: 'protos' meaning *your primary goal*] ...the Kingdom of God and His righteousness..."

Matthew 5:48: "Therefore, you shall be perfect, even as your Father Who *is* in heaven is perfect."

Matthew 6:33: "...seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness... [*Look how those go together!*] ...and all these things shall be added to you." *That is whatever physical things we need to live.*

Matt. 7:7—here's **our part**. You always hear us talk about prayer and Bible study, and that is the key: ***your personal prayer and your personal study every single day!***

Matthew 7:7: "**Ask**, and it shall be given to you. **Seek**, and you shall find. **Knock**, and it shall be opened to you." ***That's our part!*** That's a brief description of everything that we do.

Then you can find many other places where it says to seek this, that and the other thing; you can do word studies on that.

Verse 8: "For everyone who asks receives..." But not everything you receive is *yes*, or what you necessarily expect. It may be more, or it may be less.

You may need a new car and ask God to provide you with a Cadillac, and He gives you a mini-coupe. But you got your car.

- you also have to ask and *not doubt*
- you also have to ask and *be persistent*

It make take a long time of much of the same prayer, because God wants to know if you are really, really sincere in it. Do you *really* want it! And you have to ask in faith.

What did this little discussion prove? *Everything in the Word of God is not found in one place!* There are many parts to it, so that when you have one part, you look for the other parts that come along with it and put it together. That's called *rightly dividing the Word of God!* You can look at it this way: Atheists believe in the 'Big Bang' and everything came from the 'Big Bang'!

We have the Bible, the Word of God and the Spirit of God, and everything is like a *big bang* out of that. But it's not an explosion, you have to dig for it, you have to work for it. There's another proverb that says it's a 'glory to God to hide and the honor of the king to find it.'

"...and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it shall be opened" (v 8). That tells us part of the things of what we are to do. This is a

general framework. All of those are structured on the seven divisions of the Bible.

Psa. 33 is an interesting Psalm, and it really tells us a summary of God's plan. Also, it tells us that God is very musical.

Psalm 33:1: "Rejoice in the LORD..." That's part of what we're to do. Do you think you're going to get blessings from God if you're angry at Him? How did Jonah do? *He had to spend some time in a whale's belly!* Can you imagine breathing that air?

"...O you righteous ones; praise is becoming for the upright. Praise the LORD with a lyre; sing unto Him with a harp of ten strings. Sing unto Him a new song; play skillfully with shouts of joy" (vs 1-3). *There's room for everybody who doesn't know how to sing!*

Verse 4: "For the Word of the LORD is upright..." The Word of God is true. Do a study on *the Word of God and the Word of the Lord!* The words of Jesus. Put it all together.

So, a lot of these Scriptures come along and they give us a starting point. Or, as in our previous study, it gives us another point to add to what we've already done.

"...and all His works are *done* in faithfulness. He loves righteousness and justice; the earth is full of the loving kindness of the LORD" (vs 4-5).

It also says in Matt. 5 that He even causes the rain to fall on the just and the unjust.

Verse 6: "By the Word of the LORD were the heavens made... [by His command] ...and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth. He gathered the waters of the sea together like a heap, putting the depths in storehouses" (vs 6-7).

They have discovered that below the surface of the earth and below the oceans there's a huge layer of water that is specially there, which is more than all the water that is on the earth. So, when God broke up the fountains of the deep, you see what that does. Do you know the Word of God? When God broke of the fountains of the deep when the Flood came, there was plenty of water to cover the whole earth!

If you break of the fountains of the deep, what happens to the land? *It goes down!* When you put the water back in, the land comes up.

Verse 8: "Let all the earth fear the LORD; let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him, for He spoke, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast. The LORD brings the counsel of

the nations to nothing..." (vs 8-10). Read what's going to happen in the book of Revelation. Is that nothing?

"...He frustrates the plans of the people. The counsel of the LORD stands forever, **the thoughts of His heart to all generations**" (vs 10-11). *His plan is going to encompass everyone!* You'll find that when you come to The Last Great Day. The greatest secret listed in the most unusual place called *the eighth day*. Look how great that's going to be!

Verse 12: "Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD..." That used to be Israel. Still is to the extent of the prophecies and blessings that God gave to Israel.

We are called *a nation of priests* (1-Pet. 2). Didn't Jesus say to the scribes and Pharisees that 'you've been evil and rejected everything of God, the Kingdom of God is going to be taken from you and given to a nation that bears fruit.' That's talking about *us!*

"...and the people He has chosen for His own inheritance" (v 12). Look up *inheritance* in the New Testament. We're going to be '*joint heirs with Christ*!' That's a pretty high level. What I want you to do is see how great the Word of God is, what He's doing, His plan and so forth.

Verse 13: "The LORD looks down from heaven..." Does He know what's going on in the earth all the time? How does He look down from heaven?

Someone is going to say, 'How can God know everything, everywhere at all times?' *He's got angels, the seven spirits of God, etc.!*

"...He beholds all the sons of men. From His dwelling place He looks intently upon all the inhabitants of the earth. Together He fashions their hearts alike; **He considers all their works**" (vs 13-15).

- you can look at what God did to the nations before the Flood.
- what happened after the Flood
- what happened to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Israel and Judah
- look at all the other nations that God has dealt with
- God says that He judges the nations, whether they do good or evil, having nothing to do with Israel or Judah (Jer. 18)

*Even though, He is still judging Israel and Judah!*

All of this shows *God's part* in conjunction with ours. Now let's see *our part* in these three

things:

1. the heart/mind connection
2. the washing of the water by the Word
3. bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ

I think that will represent a really, really good study for people to go through all of that. And here's another basic thing, *the woman at the well*, as she was talking to Jesus:

John 4:20: "'Our fathers worshiped in this mountain... ['Aren't we good?'] ...but you say that the place where it is obligatory to worship is in Jerusalem.'.... [that was true then] ...Jesus said to her, 'Woman, believe Me, the hour is coming when you shall neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem worship the Father.'" (vs 20-21). ***This is signaling the change that is coming!***

What is that change? *He tells us right here;* v 22: 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...***" (vs 22-23).

That's an interesting statement! What is He saying? *If all worship of God was worship of **God**, how could there be **true** worshipers?* If there are true worshipers it tells you that there are **false** worshipers! It's famous to say today that there is *fake news*. Well, there is **fake Christianity and fake Christians and fake worshipers!**

Verse 22: "***You do not know what you worship...***" *Think about that!* How many people have a worship of God that they don't know what they're doing? ***God wants us to know what we're doing!***

"...We know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews" (v 22). Where did all of the New Testament come from? *All the apostles came from the tribes of Israel, mostly Benjamin!*

Verse 23: "But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in Spirit and in Truth..." ***That is our responsibility back to God!*** So, we have our part to do and God has His part to do.

"...for the Father is indeed seeking those who worship Him in this manner" (v 23). He's got the seven spirits of God that go into all the earth seeking that all out.

Verse 24: "God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must... [it's obligatory] ...worship in Spirit and in Truth." ***That's the whole summary of conversion!***

- in spirit with God's Spirit
- in Truth; the Word of God is true

- truth within us

*That's how we overcome the sin within!* You can't overcome the sin within if you don't put in truth! Can you overcome a deceitful nature with more lies? *No you can't!*

Let's see *our part* and what we have to do, how we have to look at it and how these things come together. We have to fight off Satan the devil. We covered some of that in Eph. 6. This is the battle that we are facing every day:

- spirit and truth toward God
- Satan and his powers today

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...**" (vs 1-2). Who is the 'god of this world'? *We read it! We studied it!* (2-Cor. 4:4)

"...according to **the prince of the power of the air...**" (v 2). What does he do? Remember that it says that we use the shield of faith to thwart off the fiery darts of Satan (Eph. 6). What is he doing? *He's got a lot of things to do it today, and you can carry it right in your hand wherever you go!* It's called a *cell phone, the Internet!*

Sidebar on the Internet: I learned something watching the History Channel. Where is the cloud? Everybody thinks it's in a satellite somewhere in space. It's not! It's in servers on the earth! How do all of these servers communicate? *Some of it's satellite, but most of it is cable laid in the bottom of the ocean around the world!* It showed a picture of all the cable that is there. It's an amazing thing!

I thought, it's interesting that you call it *the cloud*, but it's not up there, and you call it the *worldwide net*, and you think it's in satellites, but it's at the bottom of the ocean.

Then it showed that when they had the terrible earthquake off of Formosa or Taiwan now. That disrupted everything for about two weeks until they could get it connected again.

What amazed me was that they have these ships that lay the cable. They have special plow that goes all the way to the floor of the ocean, and it digs a ten foot trench and lays the cable. I was thinking when I saw that: I wonder what's going to happen when all these earthquakes in Revelation take place?

"...the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now working within the children of disobedience" (v 2). If you don't think that's true, all you have to do is turn on your news and watch it for a while and see how that works.

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*.” *Then God calls us!*

***Bringing every thought into captivity*** is what’s important! Let’s see how that works. We have:

- the heart/mind connection
- the washing of the water by the Word
- led by the Holy Spirit
- bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ

***All to develop the mind of Christ!*** All of those things come together, but the whole plan of God is laid out in many different aspects. What is all of this based on in every part of the Bible? *To love God with all your heart, mind, soul and being! To love your neighbor as yourself!*

Philippians 2:1<sup>[transcriber’s correction]</sup>: “Now then, if *there be* any encouragement in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of *the* Spirit, if any *deep* inner affections and compassions.” This shows how we’re to develop this kind of character.

Verse 2: “Fulfill my joy that you **be of the same mind, having the same love, being joined together in soul**, minding the one thing.” What is the one thing? *Seek the Kingdom of God!*

See how the Bible all comes together! Isn’t this the ultimate goal of the Kingdom of God? Phil. 2:1-2? *Yes, indeed!*

Verse 3: “**Let** nothing *be* done through contention or vainglory, but in humility, each esteeming the others above himself.” That’s a hard thing to do!

Verse 4: “**Let** each one look not *only* after his own things, but *let* each one also *consider* the things of others. **Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus**” (vs 4-5).

That means that *God is not going to put it in there unless you desire it!* You have to agree with God and want it! All of these things are choices that we must act upon, and God will fulfill. But if we don’t act upon them, God will not fulfill.

Verse 6: “Who, although He **existed** in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God... [*‘existed’ means was God*] ...but emptied Himself, *and* was made in *the* likeness of men, *and* took the form of a servant; and being found in *the* manner of man, He humbled Himself, *and* became obedient unto death, even *the* death of *the* cross” (vs 6-8).

I just did a couple of Church at Home on *the*

*Shroud of Turin*. Steve Green did a good job in working up all the details for us to help put it together. Jonathan did a good job of running the camera. I was reading out of *A Harmony of the Gospels* so fast that he didn’t know where I was, because I didn’t give him *A Harmony*.

We talked about the scourging. Randy Vild got a really good picture of a ‘cat o nine tails’ and what it was like. All the sharp barbs on the end to tear the flesh. I pointed out that the prophecy of Christ, looking down at His ribs when He was on the cross, He could see His bones.

When you look at the shroud there’s nothing there to show that He was ever hit with a scourge. So, they give 40 lashes, and Randy got the footage to show what the back of a man would look like with 40 scourges. Every time of those 40 strokes, there would be eight red lines that would come down, showing that it’s drawing blood.

The back—because those scourges would come around and rip the flesh... You rip one way and pull and it rips the flesh. The whole back was red. Then it showed the shroud with a few little ‘tinker-toy’ marks on the back. When I saw that, and Randy did a great job on it. Steve did a good job in writing up all the things that we used to cover it.

Christ prophesied that His body and his visage would be more harmed, more marred than any other man in history. Think about what this tells us about the love of God. How much does He want us in the Kingdom? *So much so that He gave up being God:*

- to hold just a little bit of God
- to become a human being
- to be born of the virgin Mary
- grow up
- called the apostles
- have His ministry

***Then He knew that He was going to die this way!***

Now you know why the night of the Passover He prayed until the sweat was like great drops of blood coming down. Your back is the most sensitive part of your body.

“...obedient unto death, even *the* death of *the* cross. Therefore, God has also highly exalted Him and bestowed upon Him a name, which *is* above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of *beings* in heaven and on earth and under the earth” (vs 8-10).

Read Rev. 5 where there’s the praise of God, all the angels, everything on earth and everything under the sea. I don’t know how a whale is going to praise God, but it says that all that is in the sea is



going to praise Him. Think of God's desire for us, and think about how we need to seek God.

Revelation 5:11: "And I saw and I heard the voices of many angels around the throne, and the voices of the living creatures and the elders, and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice, 'Worthy is the Lamb Who was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory and blessing.' And every creature that is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and those that are on the sea, and all the things in them, I heard saying..." (vs 11-13).

To me, this is the most astounding statement in this chapter, "...**To Him Who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, be blessing, and honor, and glory, and sovereignty into the ages of eternity.**" And the four living creatures said, 'Amen.' And the twenty-four elders fell down and worshiped *Him Who* lives into the ages of eternity" (vs 13-14).

***Look what Jesus had to do so that we could be co-heirs with Him!*** That is an amazing thing! All of this is in the Bible!

Now let's look at some of the things that we need to keep in mind. There's a lot we can learn in the Psalms and in the Proverbs on how to get our minds focused to think and to understand.

Think about how foolish it is for human beings to say that we don't need the Old Testament. Or for the Jews to say that 'we reject Christ, we don't need the New Testament.'

This helps us understand how God intervenes in our lives in an evil world; Psalm 64:1: "Hear my voice, O God, in my complaint; preserve my life from fear of the enemy."

When we get into the history of the Church, stop and think about this: Every one of us has trial we're working on, and each one is a little different. Compare that to the Church of the Alps. They were being hunted down by the Romans: arrested, tried, persecuted, chased from place to place.

After being questioned they were taken out, lined up on the stake, lit the fire and burned you. Now then, how bad is your trial today compared to that? *Very light!* But it's still very heavy because we have more mental things to fight against than they did. Today we live in an age when more things can come into our mind through all the digital apparatuses and printed word and everything that we have.

So, our minds are really subject to more attacks of a greater intensity than the persecution that they suffered physically. This is why it's so

important that ***we learn to bring every thought into captivity to Christ!***

Verse 2: "Hide me from the secret counsel of the wicked, from the rebellion of the workers of iniquity, who sharpen their tongue like a sword and bend their bows to shoot their arrows, even bitter words; so that they may shoot at the blameless from concealment—suddenly they shoot at him, and fear not" (vs 2-4).

Isn't that true? Don't we have a lot of subversive things going on today? That are coming after people to take away their lives? Their rights? *Yes!*

Verse 5: "They encourage themselves in an evil plan; they talk of laying snares secretly; they say, 'Who shall see them?' They plot injustices, saying, '**We have made a perfect plan.**'..." (vs 5-6). What is that today? *The world order!*

"...For the inward thought and heart of man is [very] cunning.... [that's what we have to fight against] ...But God shall shoot at them with an arrow; suddenly they shall be wounded" (vs 6-7).

Up against all of these things, ***how do we bring thoughts into captivity to the obedience of Christ*** in a way that we can exercise our thoughts and know what to look for so that we don't get ensnared in their traps.

James will help us understand that many of the accidental things that get into our mind, ***as long as we are expelling them***, there is no sin!

(go to the next track)

We know that in the Psalms and the Proverbs that it tells us that the thoughts of man are vanity, especially when they exclude God. God calls us, and then we start applying our mind. It's quite amazing that we really haven't used our minds the way that they should be until God calls us.

- How do we know what to do?
- How do we know what to think?

God has entrusted us with His Spirit and with His Word! Now we have the time to study, to pray, to do all of these things. We're not chased from place to place, from city to city. The day will come when things like that will happen.

Here in James 1 it tells us ***the steps on how to bring every thought into captivity*** and to avoid sin. Not every thought that comes into your mind constitutes a sin that you have committed. It may be an evil thought thrust in there by Satan, 'the prince of the power of the air.'

What do you do when that happens? We have enough evil from our past lives that keeps coming up, that we need to get rid of, as well. So, the whole point of conversion is a complete renewal of the mind. Then, at the resurrection, the total transformation and elimination of all sin.

- What does God do for us so we can follow along and complete what we're going to read in James 1?
- In the New Covenant, how does God want us to handle His laws and commandments?
- How does God want us to accept them?

*He's writing them in our heart and mind, inscribing them!* The mind is inscribable, meaning that you can write something right on the very neural processes of your brain. Some of those things can be changed in a short period of time. Some of them it takes a longer time. But it's with the Spirit of God.

Now, tie all of that together with the first Psalm, the one who meditates on the Law of God.

What does that mean? Do you just sit around and meditate? *No! It means that you think with the laws and commandments of God, and the Word of God! That's how you think!*

James 1:1: "James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes, which are in the dispersion: Greetings!"

Would you send a letter to people you didn't know to whom it was going, or where it was going? What does this tell us? *They knew where the 12 tribes were!*

Sidebar on James: There's no mention of the Gentiles. So, this is before 42 A.D.

Verse 2: "Consider *it* all joy, my brethren, when you are beset by various trials." The first time you read that, you think: *this must be insane!* Why do you count it *joy*? *He answers the question:*

Verse 3: "Knowing that **the testing of your faith produces endurance.**" Who is going to be saved? The one who is well-intentioned? **or** The one who endures to the end? *The one who endures to the end!* Isn't that what Jesus said? *Yes!*

Verse 4: "But let endurance have *its* perfect work, **so that you may be perfect...** [Matt. 5:48] ...and complete, not lacking in anything. However, if anyone lacks wisdom, 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..." (vs 4-6).

This is all telling us *the things we need to bring every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ!*

"...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 6-8).

Now James is getting into the kind of faith we need, and how we need to handle it. I've said this: *double-minded is one foot in the world and one foot in the Church!* That's another way of expressing it.

Verse 9: "But let the brother who is in humble circumstances rejoice in his elevation, and *let* the one who is rich *rejoice* in his humble condition, because as *the* flower of *the* field, he himself will pass away" (vs 9-10). Isn't that true? *All of us here can attest to it!*

Verse 11: "For the sun rises with *its* burning heat and dries up the grass, and its flower falls off, and its beautiful appearance perishes. In the same way also shall the rich man wither in his pursuits. Blessed is *the* man who endures trials..." (vs 11-12)—*proving and testing and bringing every thought into captivity!*

"...because after he has been proved he shall receive a crown of life, which the Lord has promised to those who love Him" (v 12).

With all of that as a preface, then James begins telling us *how we bring every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ!* Though, he doesn't say that here.

Verse 13: "Do not let anyone who is tempted say, 'I am being tempted by God'..."

- Who is the tempter? *Satan the devil, and our own human nature and lusts!*
- Who is the 'prince of the power of the air' to stir up the lust of the mind, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the heart? *Satan!*

In this society, he doesn't have to be there personally. You can see it on television, in a movie, on a billboard, in a magazine, going through the checkout line at the supermarket.

Survey: Next time you go out to the supermarket and go through the checkout, ask yourself: How many magazines are advertised for men? Compared to how many are advertised for women? It just shows that Satan is clever.

"...because **God is not tempted by evil, and He Himself tempts no one with evil.**" What does this tell us? *Everything that comes along is a choice!* We have to exercise our free moral agency to choose what is right, to do what is right, and *this*

*is our part! God has His part, and this is our part!*

Verse 14: “But each one is tempted when he is drawn away...”—from what? *From the thoughts of God, from the Word of God!* And his own human nature is beginning to take hold.

“...and is **enticed by his own lust**” (v 14). Notice that at every point *you can choose* to reject it. *It’s a choice!*

- that looks pretty good
- I wonder if God would allow that?
- it might be...

Notice that it’s over a period of time, v 15: “**And after lust has conceived...**” *You have convinced yourself that it’s okay to do!* We’ve all done this at one time or another.

“...**it gives birth to sin...**” (v 15). You don’t want to get into sin. But how many times do we ask ourselves, ‘Why did I do that?’

Notice the steps; at each one of these points we can cut it off. Each one of these points requires a choice, the exercise of God’s Spirit and God’s Truth to do it! That is called *building character!* That’s why they come along.

“...and sin, when it is completely finished, brings forth death” (v 15). *The wages of sin is death!*

If you stop and repent of it at this point, it’s over with. But if it comes to the point that it is sin, and there are more things involved, then there’s more repentance that is required, and more changing of your mind and attitude to correct the problem that went on in order to *bring every thought into obedience unto Christ!*

One of the things they have right now to get everybody all excited with emotion. They’ve got to bring all the children to the parents that they have separated from the immigrants coming in. They have a two-week period to do it. They never tell you that 80% of the children didn’t come with their parents.

So, the next time you watch the news, don’t get all involved with what a terrible thing separating the children from the parents.

Why did they leave home? Those that came with other than parents, why did the parents give the kids to the ‘coyotes’ to bring up here? What are you going to do? Everybody gets all excited over it, and ‘we’ve got to solve the immigration problem.’

- How are you going to solve the immigration problem?
- Do you know what the true cause is?

That’s why it’s important that you know the laws and commandments of God, and the Truth of God,

so that when something comes along you can make the right choice. What is the bottom line problem?

1. leaving God
2. in the political landscape, *abortion*

Could it be that for every aborted baby God sends an immigrant? *The numbers are almost equal!* So, you can build all the fences you want, you can have all the law enforcement you want, but unless you get rid of the problem, you’re never going to get rid of the results of the sin!

That’s all part of the things we need to do when we choose. Some things are big problems! Some things are smaller problems! ***But they can all be overcome!***

Verse 16: “**Do not deceive yourselves**, my beloved brethren....” Don’t do that. Trust in God, *keep your mind on what He’s called us for!* Then James brings us back on how to think:

Verse 17: “Every good act of giving and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with Whom there is no variation, nor shadow of turning. According to His own will...” (vs 17-18).

Then he brings you right back to why you were called and what God is doing:

“...He begat us by *the Word of Truth*, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of all **His created beings**” (v 18).

Prov. 16 is quite a chapter, talking about how to change, how to overcome, what is right, what is wrong.

Proverbs 16:25 {also found in Prov. 14:12}: “There is a way that seems right to a man...”

Think of it today. How many people are out there doing whatever they want to do, going hither and yon, doing their yard, shopping, visiting relatives and all of this sort of thing going on. They’re all having a good time and they all think that what they’re doing is right and good.

If you went up to them and said, ‘Do you know that you’re breaking the Sabbath of God by doing that?’ *Huh! It seems right to them!* Is society facing a lot of death because of the things that they are doing that seems right? The pleasant thing soon go down into the abyss of the evil things.

Just like drugs. I don’t know how on earth that NatGeo does it, but they get someone to go with the druggies and the dealers and follow them along when they do their work of selling, measuring it out and all of this sort of thing. All they’re doing is getting in there with lust and greed on both sides.

It seems good to the one who is doing it, even though he knows he's doing evil! 'If I don't get caught, it's good.' Well, the one who buys it says, 'If I don't become an addict, this is okay.' Both of them are wrong because they're caught in the trap of death.

Proverbs 16:2: "**All** the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes, but the LORD weighs the spirits." *God knows!*

What was the repentance of Job after he finally came to himself? *I know no thought can be withheld from You!* Furthermore, it's all recorded into your brain! *So, God will know anytime He needs to know!* Did Job think he was right? *Yes, he did!* Read through the book of Job; how much credit does he give to God? and How much credit does he give to himself?

Very few people understand that Job's problem was that he was setting himself above God. That's what his sin was. His actions were right and good, but he didn't give God any credit. He even said, 'My righteousness is more than God's.'

I wonder how he felt with boils from head to toe? Can you imagine that? Can you imagine that you just sit down covered with boils, and your wife says, 'Curse God and get it over with!' *I'll maintain my righteousness.* It was the only thing he could do. His three friends came and say before him, and they sat there for seven days and just looked at him. There he was with a potsherd scraping the puss off the boils everywhere! Imagine the flies, and throwing ashes on himself to keep the flies away!

Then by the time you get to Job 14, it says, 'The worms destroy this body.' What does that mean? *Maggots in his flesh, eating his puss!* Flies everywhere! This description doesn't do justice to what actually happened, but he thought he was good. *Every way of the man is good in his own eyes!*

- Who gave the laws that Job kept? *God did!*
- Who gave the crops that he harvested? *God did!*
- Who gave him his sons and daughters? *God did!*
- Who give him all the animals that he had? *God did!*

*God created all of them!* Job said, ***'I know that no thought can be withheld from You!'***

Think of this in relationship to v 2: "All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes, but the LORD weighs the spirits."

Verse 3 is the solution: ***bring every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ!*** That's what it says in the New Testament.

Verse 3: "**Commit your works unto the LORD, and your thoughts shall be established.**" This tells us how to do it.

If it doesn't tell us in one place in the Bible, study and find out where else in the Bible it does tell you.

Verse 3: "**Commit your works unto the LORD, and your thoughts shall be established.**" That's a promise.

If you have thoughts that are hard to overcome, ask God to help you with it. *He will!* Is a thought also work? *Yes, it's a mental work, not a physical work!* Have you ever been so intense in doing something mentally? You work and work on it!

Jonathan draws all these plans for all these fabulous houses that people build. He makes some great plans, and there's demand for his good work. But there are times when he works on it so hard to finish the plan that he's exhausted! Why? *Because it was work!* Not only your works, but your thoughts!

Verse 4: "**The LORD has made all for His own purpose;** yea, even the wicked for the day of evil."

- Why does He do that?
  - Do you want God to come down against every person whenever they do wrong?
- or
- Would you rather have God have people come after you?

Sooner or later God is going to take care of it, v 5: "Everyone who is proud in heart *is* an abomination to the LORD; *though joined hand in hand, he shall not be unpunished.*"

Here's another way of bringing every thought into obedience to Christ; v 6: "By mercy and Truth iniquity is **purged**..."—*gotten rid of!*

Do our minds need to be purged? *Yes! Especially when we have a lot of things in there cluttering it up aren't good!*

"...and by the fear of the LORD *men* turn away from evil" (v 6). I really think that this chapter is right on for bringing every thought into captive to the obedience to Christ.

Verse 7: "When a man's ways please the LORD, He makes even his enemies to be at peace with him." That's a great one! Let's see how we do this.

Col. 3—the whole chapter focuses in on what we need to do with our thoughts. Changing our thoughts from what they were before we were

converted to what they need to be after we were converted, and how to maintain that.

Colossians 3:1: “Therefore, if you have been raised together with Christ, seek the things that are above...”

Where did we begin? *See the Kingdom of God first!* Ask, knock and seek and you’ll get your answers all right there.

“...where Christ is sitting at *the* right hand of God. Set your affection on the things that are above, and not on the things that are on the earth” (vs 1-2). Those are all going to perish!

Verse 3: “For you have died... [How did you die? *Through baptism!*] ...and your life has been hid together with Christ in God. When Christ, *Who is* our life, is manifested, then you also shall be manifested with Him in glory” (vs 3-4).

What does Paul do? *He starts out and shows the goal:*

- pointing toward the Kingdom of God
- pointing toward receiving eternal life

Verse 5: “Therefore, put to death...” How do you put to death? *By expunging these things out of your mind, rather than letting them rule your thoughts!* That’s how! Tie that in with Prov. 16; you get your life right with God and your thoughts will be established.

Verse 5: “Therefore, put to death your members, which *are* on earth: sexual immorality...” *That’s everywhere!*

We’re faced with it every time we turn on the television, every time we turn on the news, every time we read the newspaper. Every mystery, every novel, everything that men have done, you go back and look at it all the way through all of history, sexual immorality is the main crime that causes so many problems!

“...uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil desires... [lusts] ...and covetousness, which is idolatry” (v 5). Remember what we talked about where the idols are. ***Idols in the mind!***

People can have very nice good behavior out here, but they may be plotting to kill you, or to rob you, whatever.

Isn’t that the source of the mystery movies? Who did it? How was it done? Who thought of it? How about those who *almost* commit the perfect crime? *Almost!* One case I remember, it was a splatter of a different blood that came from the killer. Blood doesn’t lie!

Verse 6: “Because of these things, the wrath

of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience, among whom you also once walked, when you were living in these things” (vs 6-7). When you’re living in these things, it’s hard to come out of them.

Verse 8: “But now, you should also put off all *these* things... [bring every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ] ...wrath... [that’s a hard one to get rid of] ...indignation, malice, blasphemy, and foul language from your mouth.”

I suppose that everyone of us could say, ‘What did I do this past week? *Did you do any of these?* ‘Yep! Probably did!’ *Repent!*

Verse 9: “Do not lie to one another, *seeing that* you have put off the old man together with his deeds.” What do you do? *You don’t put it out and leave a vacuum within!* So, you put in!

Verse 10: “And have put on the new man, who is ***being renewed...***”—*a process, the process!* That’s why we want to get all three if these together:

1. *The Heart/Mind Connection*
2. *Washing of the Water by the Word*
3. *Bringing Every Thought Into Captivity to the Obedience of Christ*

***That is the process of conversion!***

Verse 12: “Put on then, as *the* elect of God, Holy and beloved, deep inner affections, kindness, humility, meekness *and* long-suffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another if anyone has a complaint against another; **even as Christ forgave you, so also you should forgive**” (vs 12-13).

When you get on your knees and ask God to forgive you for your sins, and then you get up and you don’t forgive someone for their sins. That’s what it’s talking about here; all the character.

Verse 14: “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).

In other words, you need the Spirit of God and the power of the Spirit of God ***to give you the choice to choose to let those good things of God rule—control—your mind,*** because you’re controlling your thoughts. That’s the hardest thing to do.

“...to which you were called into one body, and be thankful” (v 15). How do you do this? *He gives a summary of it here:*

Verse 16: “Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly...”—abundantly. How do you get the Word of Christ? *That’s the message of Christ!* Everything that is there! Everything that is in the Epistles and so forth.

“...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*” (vs 11-12)—***by bringing every thought into captivity to Christ!***

In Eph. 5 it shows the same thing, the putting away of sin, the avoiding of sin, the avoiding of deception.

Ephesians 5:1: “Therefore, be imitators of God...” Doesn’t that tie in with ***become perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect? Yes!***

“...as beloved children; and walk in love...” (vs 1-2). *Everyone of these things is a choice!*

“...even as Christ also loved us, and gave Himself for us *as* an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savor.... [then reject what is wrong] ...But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, do not permit it even to be named among you, as is fitting for saints; nor filthiness, nor foolish talking or jesting, which are not becoming; but instead, thanksgiving” (vs 2-4).

All the way through here it talks about resisting the sin and doing what is right.

Verse 5: “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; for because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience. Therefore, do not be joint partakers with them” (vs 5-7).

All of these things are telling us what we need to do. When you get through all of this, not only is it Christ, but every part of the Bible is telling us how we need to live.

***That’s how we bring every thought into the obedience of Christ!***

#### Scriptural References:

- 1) Matthew 6:33
- 2) Matthew 5:48
- 3) Matthew 6:33
- 4) Matthew 7:7-8
- 5) Psalm 33:1-15
- 6) John 4:20-23, 22-24
- 7) Ephesians 2:1-3
- 8) Philippians 2:1-10
- 9) Revelation 5:11-14
- 10) Psalm 64:1-7
- 11) James 1:1-18

- 12) Proverbs 16:2-7
- 13) Colossians 3:1-10, 12-17
- 14) Ephesians 5:1-7

#### Scriptures quoted, not referenced:

- 1 Peter 2
- Jeremiah 18
- Ephesians 6
- Psalm 1
- Proverbs 14:12
- Job 14

#### Also referenced:

- Sermon Series:
  - ✓ *Heart/Mind Connection*
  - ✓ *The Washing of the Water by the Word*
- Sermon: *Bringing Every Thought into Captivity to the Obedience of Christ* (2-Corinthians series #9)
- Study Pack: *The Process of Conversion* (coming soon)
- Church at Home *The Shroud of Turin* {[churchathome.org](http://churchathome.org)}
- Book: *A Harmony of the Gospels* by Fred R. Coulter

FRC:bo  
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## Second Corinthians XI Survey of False Prophets

(Chapter 11)

*If they do not speak according to God's Word, it is because there is no light in them*

Fred R. Coulter

Greetings, brethren! Welcome to Sabbath services! We're going to see that the more things change the more they stay the same. The Apostle Paul had to fight a lot of false prophets.

Of course, there were a lot of very unusual people that would come, because there would be those traveling who actually had been in Judea and Galilee among the multitudes that heard Jesus speak and saw Him heal the sick. They could come along and say, 'I believe in Him, I saw Him, I heard his words.' They could actually tell lies because there were no recordings. Today it's entirely different.

Let's see what Paul wrote; 2-Corinthians 11:1: "I would *that* you might bear with me in a little nonsense; but indeed, do bear with me. For I am jealous over you with *the* jealousy of God because I have espoused you to one husband, so that I may present *you as* a chaste virgin to Christ" (vs 1-2).

We know nothing about this really until we get to Eph. 5, and that still doesn't tell us too much. Then we have to wait until we get to Rev. 19 to get some more substance on it. But this also reflects back to the covenant with Israel, because when the covenant was made with Israel it was *a marriage covenant*. In order for the New Testament Church to begin, He had to die to end that covenant. So, here is the covenant with the marriage to come.

Verse 4: "For indeed, **if** someone comes **preaching another Jesus...**"

What is another Jesus? *There are many forms of them!* Look at it today. How many do you have? We just got done doing three segments on *The Shroud of Turin*, so go on **churchathome.org** and watch those. I think you'll find them really, really very good.

- the shroud is *another* Jesus
- the picture of one hanging on the cross is *another* Jesus
- Sunday-keeping is *another* Jesus
- holiday-keeping is *another* Jesus

The *true* Jesus was the One Who was the Lord God of the Old Testament, Who became Jesus Christ manifested in the flesh. *That's the true Jesus!* You might even have some people admit to that.

Today we have to be really, really careful with false prophets. Jesus said, 'For there shall arise *false prophets* and *false christs* who perform signs and wonders to deceive the elect (Matt. 24). *That's who Satan wants to deceive!* The world is *already* deceived.

"...another Jesus, whom we did not preach, or you receive a **different spirit...**" (v 4). What does that mean?

There's one scene on *The Shroud of Turin* #3. There were three senior citizen ladies who went to see the presentation of the shroud. 'It was such a wonderful experience.' They had tingling spines, and it was so moving and emotional that they 'will never forget it,' they said.

All just to look at a copy of a piece a canvas that's *fake*, because once false prophets come, there are *false spirits*. All false spirits appear 'good' at first, as Paul points out.

"...a different spirit, which you did not receive, or a **different gospel...**" (v 4).

What is the true Gospel? It's the Gospel of the Kingdom of God and the Grace of God, and it entails:

- commandment-keeping
- forgiveness of sin
- baptism
- receiving the Holy Spirit
- growing
- overcoming
- preparing to enter into the Kingdom of God
- rule with Jesus Christ on the earth

*So a different gospel would be:*

- an immortal soul
- going to heaven
- keeping Sunday
- keeping the holidays
- a wrong understanding of the Scriptures

*They can understand it to a certain point and then BANG! it switches!*

"...which you did not accept... [that is from Paul] ...you put up with it as *something good*" (v 4)—*because we want to hear the whole story!*

Don't you want to hear both sides? Like Fox News fair and balanced: 80% truth and 90% lie. That will help you make a good decision—won't it? If you want all lies turn to the rest of it.

They would come and what did they have to do? *They have to put down the Apostle Paul!* 'He's really not too good a looking' with everything he's gone through. 'He writes great but his speech is contemptible. We're better apostles because we like the philosophy of the Greeks and we can work that in.'

Do you think all those Greek philosophers did all that in vain? Weren't they smart people? That's how these things come about!

Example: When I went to the University of San Francisco—which I didn't stay there very long—one of the classes I had to take was Philosophy 101. I was getting the *Plain Truth* magazine, and I was reading the literature and listening to the radio program and all of that. I said what is this? They were running through a series of in the *Plain Truth* magazine *Satan's Great Deception*.

So, here I am sitting in a Catholic university, because I was going to take a business major at that time, but I had to take Philosophy 101. Guess what they were teaching? *Evolution!* In a Catholic school! ***A different gospel! "...you put up with it as something good."***

Verse 5: "But I consider myself in no way inferior to those highly exalted *so-called* apostles." *That's what the Greek means; they weren't true apostles of Christ!*

Verse 8: "I robbed other churches, receiving wages *from them* for ministering to you. And when I was present with you and in need, I was not a burden to anyone (for the brethren who came from Macedonia fully supplied my needs); for I kept myself, and will *continue to* keep myself, from being burdensome to you in anything" (vs 8-9).

Don't you think that's a little extreme? Well, it had to be because the situation was really very bad. How many of those who would come as false apostles were Levites? Nowhere does it say—they didn't have the whole New Testament, yet—that you can give tithes and offerings to apostles? That's why he had to say in 1-Cor. 9, 'Yes, the Lord commanded it.'

'We're Levites; if you want to give some money you give it to us, because God said it had to go to us. After all, we know the Bible,' because the Gospel had to be preached out of the Old Testament most of the time. So, you can see the problems that

they had at that time.

Verse 10: "*As the Truth of Christ is in me, no one shall stop me from this boasting in the regions of Achaia. Why? Because I don't love you? God knows I do. But what I am doing, I will do, so that I may cut off any occasion from those who are desiring an occasion...*" (vs 10-12). *So, I'm not going to take a penny!*

They could come along and say, 'The Apostle Paul, is he a Levite?' *No! He's in the tribe of Benjamin!* 'When we look at the Old Testament, it doesn't say anywhere about giving tithes to those from Benjamin.' Would that not be a true statement? *Sure!* They had a lot more problems than we face in some ways and much different than we do in many other ways.

But today we've got recordings, pictures and smart phones. Look how many people get in trouble because someone was standing there watching it go on and put it on his smart phone and releases it to a news outlet. 'Look at what I have. How much are you going to pay me for this?'

Verse 12: "But what I am doing, I will do, so that I may cut off *any* occasion from those who are desiring an occasion; so that in the things they boast of, they also may be found even as we *are*."

The next two verses are important because this helps *define false prophets throughout the whole Bible* and we'll look at some of them.

Verse 13: "For such *are* false apostles... [fake gospel, fake apostle, fake salvation] ...deceitful workers who are transforming themselves into apostles of Christ"—*when Christ never chose them!*

Verse 14: "And *it is* no marvel, for **Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light**. Therefore, *it is* no great thing if **his servants** also transform themselves as ministers of righteousness—whose end shall be according to their works" (vs 14-15). In 1-John 4 we find *wherever there are:*

- false doctrines
- false apostles
- false ministers
- a different gospel
- a different spirit
- a different salvation

***you're dealing with demonic spirits along with the prophets!***

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.”

You test it this way; this is part of the test, not the whole test, v 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. And every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not from God. And this is the spirit of antichrist, which you heard *was* to come, and even now it is already in the world” (vs 2-3).

He talks about in 1-John 2 that *there many antichrist* and they left us. When he first came into the congregation there weren’t too many of them. We’ve experienced this, too! Then you found out that there were a lot in the congregation who are with them instead of with God.

One of the doctrines they were teaching was Docetism. It teaches that Jesus was really not fully human. Rather there was the body of a man called Jesus and the Christ possessed that body. When Jesus was killed it didn’t kill the Christ. Therefore, his death was a fake death.

What if you have a lying spirit that says, ‘I know He was God manifested in the flesh.’ Why? Because when Jesus was casting out demons what did some of the demons say? *Oh I know you. Have you come to torment us before time?* What are some of the other tests that you use?

Isa. 8:19 will tell us a part of the other test that we are to do. This was part of the teaching from the Old Testament that could be used. These things and these doctrines *repeat in every generation* and lap over and carry over and so forth.

Isaiah 8:19: “And when they shall say to you, ‘Seek unto them that have **familiar spirits** and to **wizards who peep and mutter**’...”

They may not say it directly that way like with these women who were in the group that looked at this picture of the shroud, ‘Oh, it’s so wonderful.’ Well they are seeking *familiar spirits*.

“...*but* should not a people seek unto their God?... [Isn’t that what they say? Shouldn’t we seek God?] ...*Should* the dead be *sought* on behalf of the living? **To the Law and to the Testimony!**... [the New Testament] ...**If they do not speak according to this Word, it is because there is no light in them**” (vs 19-20)—*that’s part of the test!*

Let’s see some other things that we are to be on guard against. This is quite a thing.

Jeremiah 23:1: “**Woe to the shepherds**

**who destroy and scatter the sheep of My pasture,**’ says the LORD.”

- How do you destroy them? *By not teaching them the Word of God!*
- How do you scatter them? *You chase them away!*
- How many have been disfellowshipped?

Verse 2: “Therefore, thus says the LORD, God of Israel, against the shepherds who feed My people, ‘You have scattered My flock, and have driven them away, and have not taken care of them. **Behold, I will bring upon you the evil of your doings,**’ says the LORD.”

Verse 11: ““For both **prophet and priest are ungodly**; yea, in My house **I have found their evil,**’ says the LORD.” *Go back to Jer. 7 and see all the things they were doing right at the temple of God!*

Verse 14: “I have also seen in the prophets of Jerusalem a horrible thing; **they commit adultery and walk in lies....**”

What happened to the to the bishop of the Catholic Washington, DC, diocese? *Cardinal Theodore McCarrick was caught with pedophilia*, as well is 30 other bishops down in Argentina. Another way to know false prophets is that you *know them by their fruits the fruits of their lives and the fruits of their teachings*.

“...They also strengthen the hands of evildoers, so that none returns from his evil; they are all of them like Sodom to Me, and her inhabitants like Gomorrah” (v 14). Is this Scripture up-to-date or not? *Yes, indeed!*

Sidebar: They are now depicting pedophilia lust and sex with minors as ‘those who are attracted to adolescents.’ It makes it some politically correct and nice.

Verse 15—God says: “Therefore, thus says the LORD of hosts concerning the prophets, ‘Behold, I will feed them wormwood, and make them drink poisonous water; for from the prophets of Jerusalem **ungodliness has gone forth into all the land.**’”

That’s where all the evil starts from, *the pulpit*. Verse 14 says they’re going back to Sodom and Gomorrah so that tells you all you need to know.

Here’s how you protect yourself against false prophets; v 16: “Thus says the LORD of hosts, **‘Do not listen to the words of the prophets who prophesy to you.** They make you vain; they speak a vision from **their own heart**, not out of the mouth of

the LORD. They still say to those who despise Me.' The LORD has said, 'You shall have peace!' And they say to everyone who walks after the imagination of his own heart, 'No evil shall come upon you!' For who has stood in the counsel of the LORD to see and hear His Word? Who has attended to His Word and heard *it*? Behold, the tempest of the LORD has gone forth in fury, a whirling tempest. It shall fall grievously upon the head of the wicked. **The anger of the LORD shall not return, until He has executed and until He has performed the purposes of His heart; in the latter days you shall understand it perfectly**" (vs 16-20).

So, look at the length of time that these prophecies cover down through the centuries.

Verse 21: "I have not sent these prophets, yet, they ran; I have not spoken to them, yet, they prophesied. But **if they had stood in My counsel and had caused My people to hear My words, then they would have turned them from their evil way and from the evil of their doings**" (vs 21-22).

Verse 25<sup>[transcriber's correction]</sup>: "I have heard what the prophets said, **who prophesy lies in My name**, saying, 'I have dreamed, I have dreamed.'"

When I was doing my research on TBN almost every single one of those ministers one time or another said, 'I had a dream.' One egregious thing is happening in one Church of God. The lead minister says that he has a rock which actually gives him the authority that that's the rock that the former apostle used to pray over up in Oregon. And now because he has it he has the kingship of Israel. 'Oh, isn't that wonderful!' **In the Church of God!** That's why you always must stick with the Truth, *always!*

Verse 26: "How long shall *this* be in the heart of the prophets who prophesy lies and who are prophets of the deceit of their own heart?"

I tell you that perfectly describes that! Did this so-called apostle notify the Queen of England that he now has the right of the throne?

Verse 27: "They scheme to cause My people to forget My name by their dreams which they tell, each one to his neighbor, as their fathers have forgotten My name for Baal."

Now here is a key Scripture, v 28. This is how we stand against all false prophets all false teachings all clever presentations etc.:

Verse 28: "The prophet who has a dream, let him tell a dream. **And he who has My Word, let him speak My Word faithfully....**"

- that's why we have *The Faithful Version Bible*

- that's why we stick to the Truth, *the Truth, the Truth and nothing but the Truth!*

They even have a book called *All Faiths*; they're trying to amalgamize them together. What is the end-time religion going to be like? *They will probably exalt Mary even more*, and everybody—because of miracles—will fall into it.

That may or may not be true. But I suspect that. I've got a book at home—and I'm going to have to do some sermons on it—*When God was a Woman* by Merlin Stone. Now even the Episcopal Church is neuter-gendering everything in their prayer books.

It's like the stupidity of this: 'I've been thinking today and I've been dreaming and you know what, I'm now a woman!' ***That's the stupidity of this perversion of any sex goes!*** 'Tomorrow I may change my mind.' ***That's nothing but pure satanism!***

"...What is the chaff to the wheat?" says the LORD. 'Is not My Word like a fire?' says the LORD" (vs 28-29). What's the final solution for unrepentant sinners? *Lake of Fire!*

"...and like a hammer *that* breaks the rock in pieces? (v 29). *Good description of Pasadena! and Big Sandy! and Bricket Wood! Yes, indeed! And Rome and all the Protestants?*

Verse 30: "'Therefore, behold, I *am* against the **prophets who steal My words** each one from his neighbor. Behold, I *am* against the prophets who use their tongues and say, 'He says,' *when I did not say*. Behold, I *am* against those who prophesy false dreams and tell them, and cause My people to go astray by their lies and by their wantonness. Yet, I did not send them nor command them; therefore, they shall not profit this people at all,' says the LORD. 'And when this people, or the prophet, or a priest, shall ask you, saying, "What is the oracle of the LORD?" You shall then say to them, "What oracle? I will even forsake you, says the LORD"' (vs 30-33).

Now then, let's do a little surveying here so we can see that this same kind of thing came from the beginning. What did Paul write about? '*As Eve was deceived by the cunning craftiness of the serpent!*' What happened with that whole generation on into the time of the Flood? *Look at the evil that took place; they all went after Satan the devil!*

Jesus said, 'As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be in the days of the coming of the son of man.' That's verified by Rev. 13 that 'the world worships Satan,' and the world's going to worship

*the beast.*

Now we come on down after the Flood. Can you imagine what they thought of Noah building the ark? *One man!* I wonder what people thought when the animals started coming to him? You could all mathematically figure it out. All clean animals came by seven, unclean by two, that is pairs. One pair vs seven pair.

Sit back and you think about it. Okay, just over across from of the valley where they were building the ark here's a place where you could look down and watch. Just suppose you were sitting there and you were living at that time and you saw two elephants are coming, some giraffes, rhinoceros and hippopotamuses. Look at all those monkeys and apes coming. Two and two and two! Maybe there's something to this that there's going to be a flood. But all of *our* ministers tell us, 'No! Don't believe Noah, he's just a quack. He's all alone; who is with him besides his sons and their wives? *Nobody!*'

But Noah walked with God and he found grace and favor, and he was obeying God and built the ark. So then came the day and you're still sitting on top of this mountain looking down at the ark, because you want to know what's going on. When the animals quit coming and then where they went into the ark that part of the ark was closed and everything was locked in there.

So, you're sitting there the first day and it's dry as a bone. Second day dry as a bone. Third day dry as a bone. Fourth, fifth, sixth, and seventh day, BANG! Here come all these dark clouds and earthquakes and it starts pouring down rain, and you think, it going to happen! Good example of what's going to happen in the near future. *It's going to happen!* Then it did.

It rained and rained and rained! It wasn't just a little dribble drabble/dribble drabble! It was probably like 10, 12, 14 inches an hour and gushing up from underneath. And if you get the water from underneath what happens? *The land sinks down!* Great earthquakes, thunder, lightning, darkest clouds and sitting up on the top of the mountain here comes the water and the ark starts floating, too. They're all safe, and you missed it!

Sidebar: Guess what they found in China? in one of their big lakes? *A huge pyramid under the water!* All the ancient aliens get all excited. You better get excited, *because God is going to destroy the world!*

Now then, after the Flood what we have? The first thing is you have trouble with the grandson of Noah<sup>[transcriber's correction]</sup>: Canaan (Gen. 9:24). Then

the population increases and now they say, 'Let's build a tower that reaches to heaven.'

God comes down there looks at that—the Most High Who became the Father and the One Who is Lord God who became Christ—said, 'Look at what they're doing! Anything they imagined to do they can do. So, they said, 'Let Us go down there and confound their languages.'

BOOM! They stopped building the tower. Can you imagine that you're working long with a worker and you speak English and all of a sudden he's speaking Japanese or whatever, so they left it!

Sidebar: One of the models of IBM is that they show a picture of the half constructed Tower of Babel and they have this motto: *What they started, we will finish!* Doesn't that tell you what this modern age is all about today? *Yes, indeed!* So, then we come down to the time that God had to call Abraham out, and we have Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Then we have the time when all their children go into captivity in Egypt, end up being slaves, God brings him out gives them His Law and tells them that *they need to walk in His way!* Well, they've been so steeped in all the Egyptian religion and everything and they just can't quite give it up. But this also reveals to us how powerful the Word of God is, and *what He says He means!*

We will read in Deut. 12 & 13 so you understand the severity of a false prophet. They've all been trained to really be 'nice.'

If you have TBN on your on your television, watch a little bit of it. The best speaker that I've found is Charles Stanley. He says that we are to ought to obey God. That's fine, but he doesn't keep the Sabbath, he doesn't keep the Holy Days; he keeps Sunday, Christmas, Easter and so forth, and he is one of the best!

How many times do we see this through the Bible? Deuteronomy 12:28: "**Be careful to observe and obey all these words, which I command you,** so that it may go well with you and with your children after you forever when you do *that which is good and right in the sight of the LORD your God.*"

That's why God has it written down, *so we all know!* That's why it's translated into so many languages. Yes, there are some very bad translations, and there are some very good translations. But we're to check them out so that we know what is right and true. That is all based on the Ten Commandments, Sabbath and Holy Days. That's the framework on which everything has been laid from the time of Israel going forward. It was with Abraham, Isaac

and Jacob, but those were individuals and they were close to God.

Verse 29: “When the LORD your God shall cut off the nations before you, where you go to possess them, and you take their place and dwell in their land.”

Let’s put it this way for us: When God calls you out of the world and you repent and are baptized, and now you have the Spirit of God; *same thing*.

Verse 30: “**Take heed to yourself...**” One of the most important things that there is for us to do *is to have self-control and use the Word of God and the Spirit of God so we do what is right!* Sometimes you have to resist evil directly and firmly. If you do, *do!*

“Take heed to yourself...” Isn’t that what Paul told the elders when they came down to Miletus, when he was on the way to Jerusalem? He said, ‘Take heed to yourselves and the flock to which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers to feed the Church of God, which Christ has purchased with his own blood.’

Now every minister needs to read that burn it into his brain so that he will remember Who he serves and represents. He’s a steward, **not his own!**

Verse 30: “Take heed to yourself that you do not become ensnared by following them, after they are destroyed from before you, and that you do not ask about their gods, saying, ‘How did these nations serve their gods that I may also do likewise?’”

This ties in where we began with Isa. 8: *to the Law and the Testimony!* Verse 31. “You shall not do so to the LORD your God, for every abomination to the LORD, which He hates, they have done to their gods; even their sons and their daughters they have burned in the fire to their gods.”

Look at it today. You go on the History Channel and they talk about these wonderful civilizations, so advanced and way ahead of us, down there in Mexico and in Central America. Yes, *human sacrifices!* Oh, they were so advanced! Did Israel end up doing that? *Yes, indeed!*

What does it take to apostatize? *Probably about four or five generations and you can do it*, as you inculcate different things. Then you end up with rebellious young people that say, ‘I will not. I’m going to do what I want to do.’ God says that *those should be executed!* ‘Oh, how terrible!’ Yes, it is. Of course, they would be given chance to repent. But look at our society today because we don’t do it. Look at the societies from whence the illegal

immigrants come *as punishment to us because of our sins against God!* He doesn’t send nice people; He sends those who will punish us with their crimes and their iniquity.

Why would God do that? *God is a God of love!* Well, that’s true. But when was the last time you showed your love for God?

- keeping His commandment?
- loving Him?
- doing what He says?

*He says, ‘Don’t do it!’*

Verse 32 “Whatsoever thing that I command you, be careful to do it. You shall not add to it, nor take away from it.”

(go to the next track)

The reason I’m going through this is *to show you how seriously God takes false prophets and false doctrines*. Very important! This is pretty tough, but it’s coming from the God of love, **because He loves the people and wants to bless them!** But He can’t bless people in their sins. *Satan can!* That’s why the wicked prosper. Who is prospering them? *Their god: Satan!*

Deuteronomy 13:1: “If a prophet rises among you, or a dreamer of dreams, and gives you a sign or a wonder, and the sign or the wonder, which he foretold to you comes to pass...” (vs 1-2). *Think of Rev. 13, calling fire down from heaven!*

“...saying, ‘Let us go after other gods, which you have not known, and let us serve them’” (v 2). *Another way is:*

You don’t need this commandment but you can do this over here. And after all, look at these pagans over here, they have such nice things they do for their kids. They have Christmas and Easter, and the kids have a lot of fun. Oh yeah, they go to church on Sunday and all of that stuff and keep those days, but look at what nice people they are.

Isn’t that what is said? *Yes, indeed!*

Have you ever seen this ad for this guy is in the dental chair and he’s got this brace in his mouth and the dentist looks in there and he says, I’ve never seen a cavity as bad as this, and then he walks out. The guy mumbles! The dentist says, ‘I’m not dentist, I just analyze the problem.’ I went to the dentist and she was cleaning my teeth and she was telling me all about Easter. Well, since she had all the implements in my mouth, I decided not to say anything. But I felt like that poor guy in the chair!

So, it comes to pass and what did they tell

you? *Seeing is believing!* If they do it in the name of God and it happens... ‘See?’ That’s why it goes right back where we started, Isa. 8: *to the Law and the Testimony*.

Verse 3: “You shall not hearken to the words of that prophet or that dreamer of dreams, for the LORD your God *is* testing you...”

That’s why we have trials and tests, so that we know what we have to choose and do, and *God knows how we respond to Him!*

“...to know whether you love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul” (v 3).

If you do that, God is going to give you the understanding of the things that are wrong when they come up. Either way you won’t know when it will come up. You don’t know how far down the road; you don’t know how close. You don’t know through whom or how it may come. But if you stay in right standing with God by:

- loving Him
- keeping His commandments
- prayer and study
- growing and overcoming

Then when the occasion arises *you will know!* But if you’re not *you won’t know!*

Verse 4: “You shall walk after the LORD your God and fear Him, and keep His commandments, and obey His voice, and you shall serve Him and hold fast to Him. **And that prophet or that dreamer of dreams shall be put to death...**” (vs 4-5). *That’s what God thinks of false prophets!*

We’ll double-check that in the New Testament in just a minute. The Church does not have the administration of death so we cannot execute them. The best we can do is disfellowship them or leave ourselves. *Sometimes you have to leave them, and serve God alone, and God will bless you in it!* You may be lonely, that’s true. It may be difficult, that’s true. But:

- Is it right with God? *Yes!*
- Is it true with God? *Yes!*

1-Tim. 6:3 says that ‘if they speak not according to the sound words of Jesus Christ, there is no Truth in them’ *and you are to separate yourself from them!* That’s what the New Testament says. We can’t execute them, but look at how important this was concerning the people there and what God said to do. “...shall be put to death.”

Verse 6: “So **you shall put the evil away from the midst of you.** If your brother, the son of your mother, or your son, or your daughter, or the wife of your bosom, or your friend who *is* like your own soul, lures you secretly, saying, ‘Let us go and serve other gods’—which you have not known, you nor your fathers, that is, of the gods of the people who *are* around you, near you or far off from you, from the one end of the earth even to the other end of the earth—” (vs 6-7).

- Is at all inclusive?
- Does that cover all religions for all time?
- *Yes, indeed!*

Verse 8: “You shall not consent to him nor hearken to him. Nor shall your eye pity him, nor shall you spare, nor shall you conceal him. But you shall surely kill him....” (vs 8-9).

That is take him to the judges, the judges *judge*, and they do the executing. That doesn’t mean you yourself pick him up and kill him. But you’d be right there with it, because you have to be a witness against him.

“...Your hand shall be first on him to put him to death, and afterwards the hand of all the people. And you shall stone him with stones... [v 11]: And **all Israel shall hear and fear...**” (vs 9-11).

How many times did Jesus warn against false prophets? *Here is the classic one in Matt. 7;* it shows the contrast. This fits in exactly the same way with the commandments that I just read in the Old Testament.

Matthew 7:13: “Enter in through the narrow gate; for wide *is* the gate and broad *is* the way that leads to destruction, and many are those who enter through it.” *That’s the whole world!*

That’s what they want to do with Christianity. Make it simple; make it easy! Well it is simple: **obey the voice of God!** But sometimes even the voice of God gets in detail, because He wants you to know that He *is* God. He has greater understanding and greater knowledge than any human being.

That’s why He can take a verse and have it written down but to Him he’s buried within there for five different meanings and understandings, which you have to study over and over again to begin to understand them.

Verse 14: “For narrow *is* the gate and difficult *is* the way that leads to life, and few are those who find it. But **beware of false prophets who come to you in sheep’s clothing, for within**

***they are ravening wolves***" (vs 14-15).

Today it's almost getting to the point that they've had so many sheep's clothing that everyone has been dumbed-down and now they like the ones who are evil and destructive and all this kind of thing. Look at how it is with all the movies, entertainment, computer games and all of this. ***It's all death destruction and evil!***

That's what they're going to get, because Christ is going to bring death and destruction and evil upon this whole world as He returns to this earth!

Verse 16: "You shall know them by their fruits...."

- What are the fruits?
- Do they *love* God
- Do they *keep* His commandments?
- Do they *obey* His voice?

***As God has said!***

Verse 15: "But **beware of false prophets** who come to you in sheep's clothing, for within *they* are ravening wolves. **You shall know them by their fruits.** They do not gather grapes from thorns, or figs from thistles, do they? In the same way, every good tree produces good fruit, but **a corrupt tree produces evil fruit.** A good tree cannot produce evil fruit, nor can a corrupt tree produce good fruit. Every tree *that is* not producing good fruit is cut down and is cast into the fire. Therefore, you shall assuredly know them by their fruits" (vs 15-20).

God is going to take care of executing the sinners. One good thing about the whole process is that ***at any time there can be repentance!*** That's why we are to separate ourselves from them, maybe the trial that they will go through will bring them to repentance. If it doesn't then it will all be on their head. But for us we don't have to live with the anguish.

- How many of you sat sermons that you wish you just never came to church?
- All the anguish of it.
- Why are they doing that?
- How or why did they say that?
- How did that come about?

***If you've been studying and praying you'll be able to spot those things pretty well right up front!***

Verse 21: "Not everyone who says to Me 'Lord, Lord' shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; but the one who is doing the will of My Father, Who *is* in heaven."

Now let's understand something very

important here: Everyone who serves God only teaches what God said that you should do. It's simple! That's what God said! It's not 'we love the Lord and by the way here's a nice little thing that we could do'—whatever it may be. That's how it starts out.

Steve and I were talking up here and he said they started out in WCG and was told that what we need to do is go out and do good works like the other churches in the world and take care of the poor and do those things. How can you say *no* to that? That's a start. Then something else, *then something else, then something else!*

"...doing the will of My Father, Who *is* in heaven" (v 21).

Remember that ***none of the teachers or prophets of God ever spoke anything that is not what God said to speak!*** That's why I've said how many times, you look through all the five books of Moses, can you find one law were Moses said, 'This is my law'? ***No!*** It came from God! The Lord said to Moses, '*Speak to the children of Israel and say...*'

- How many hundreds of times is that in the first five books of the Bible?
- What did Jesus say?
  - ✓ I did not come to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me!
  - ✓ I can do nothing of Myself, but as what I see the Father do that's what I do!
  - ✓ I speak and teach what the Father has commanded Me!
  - ✓ I don't speak for Myself!

Think about that for just a minute, ***because He was God before He became Christ in the flesh!*** Was He practicing the will of the Father in heaven above as a human being? ***Yes! Teaching the way of God!***

Verse 22: "Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy through Your name? And *did we not* cast out demons through Your name?....'"

Lord, I have 2,000 Sunday sermons that I gave and just brought so many people to You. God said that they all flunked! Look at what they say:

"...And *did we not* perform many works of power through Your name?" (v 22). That's admirable to cast them out through your name, but did you tell the people to start keeping the commandments of God?

I was watching this advertisement for this church and here was this minister coming out, and it was one of these big shout, yell, scream and jump up

and down ceremonies. He would bring the people up and he would, I think it was Benny Hinn, and he would hit them on the forehead and they would go ‘Ohhhh...’ and fall over backwards and think that’s such a wonderful thing. ‘Oh. we had such a wonderful experience. And it was... the shivers up my spine when he touched me. It was just so magnificent I’ll never forget it.’ ***It was a demon!*** Think about that!

“...And *did we not* perform many works of power through Your name?’ And then I will confess to them, ‘I never knew you. Depart from Me, you who work lawlessness’” (vs 22-23).

Where do they depart to? *The Lake of Fire!* So, yes, they suffer the death penalty by the edict and command of Christ.

There are two categories of those who don’t belong to Christ but use His name. *The first category is:*

Luke 9:49: “Then John answered *and* said, ‘Master, we saw someone casting out demons in Your name, and we forbid him because he does not follow with us.’ But Jesus said to him, ‘Do not forbid *him*, because **everyone who is not against us is for us**’” (vs 49-50).

So, there’s that category that are *for* Jesus they’re not against Him but they’re not ***with*** Him. There may be a good number Protestants like that. That doesn’t mean they’ll be in the first resurrection; probably end up in the second.

*The other category is* Mathew 12:30: “The one who is not **with** Me is against Me...”

You have a lot of those in Protestantism and Catholicism. Some in Protestantism may be *for* Christ and not *against* him, but not ***with*** Him. Virtually all of the others, whatever they are—Catholic or whatever—are not ***with*** Christ.

“...and the one who does not gather with Me scatters” (v 30).

Now let’s see how this plays out a little further in the New Testament. What is the first encounter of a false prophet that is written down? *Simon Magus (Acts 8)!* He was one who wanted the Holy Spirit and wanted to do miracles because he used sorcery before, *which means that he was following Satan and using Satan’s spirit!* He wanted the Holy Spirit and he wanted to pay the Apostles Peter and John.

Peter told him you take your money and, in the modern vernacular: ‘go to hell.’ You cannot buy the Holy Spirit, and you cannot merchandise the people. He didn’t like that very much so he went off

to Rome and that’s how we got the first pope in Rome: *Simon Magus*. That’s a short summary there is a lot of history in between.

What was the one that Paul came across? *Elymas the sorcerer whose name was Bar Jesus (Acts 13)!* Then what do we find in Acts 20? *The seven sons of the priests were trying to cast out demons out of this man!* The man had some money and they were so powerful he beat up on the seven of them and sent them away bloody.

James doesn’t say much about it, but Peter wrote; 2-Peter 2:1: “But there were also false prophets among the people, as indeed there will be false teachers among you, who will **stealthily**...”

- sneakily bring in
- begin to wear you down
- begin to compromise
- begin to teach—not doctrine—how to get along with each other

*More like a social club!*

They’re still keeping the Sabbath, they’re still doing these things, but at the right moment guess what do they do? They say, ‘We have new insight into doctrine. We just came back from Azusa College and they now have a greater understanding concerning the grace of God.’ And part of that grace of God means ‘you don’t have to keep the law of clean and unclean meats’!

What happened when that was preached at the headquarters auditorium? They all gathered afterwards and all of those who had given up unclean meats—and really, really desired and wanted them—were planning to go to the Red Lobster after services and get some of that lobster and some of that shrimp and so forth.

Once you do that, think of what happens then. You might say well that’s a small thing. Well it may be. But when you walk a mile, you have to take your first step. Then are many other steps.

“...stealthily introduce destructive heresies, personally denying *the* Lord who bought them, and bringing swift destruction upon themselves. And **many** people will follow *as authoritative* their destructive ways; *and because of them, the way of the Truth will be blasphemed*” (vs 1-2).

Oh, you don’t need to keep the Sabbath anymore. Look at these wonderful services that they have Sunday morning down at this cathedral. Look at the wonderful choir that they have. Listen to the words of the choir. Aren’t those beautiful hymns and songs to the choir?

***But it's all on the wrong day!*** How can you say that those people are against God? ***Because God says remember the Sabbath*** and they all have forgotten it! Remember what happened when the two sons of Aaron were to keep the fire going on the altar? The reason is because ***God put the fire there*** by bringing fire down from heaven to start it. So, He said that you're never let it go out. That would always be the fire of God.

They messed up and it went out. So, they said, 'We better take care of that and they put some fire there that was not from God and ***He struck him down right on the spot!*** That's how important it is that we don't take for granted the things that God has said. They will follow.

Verse 3: "Also, through insatiable greed they will with enticing messages exploit you for gain; for whom the judgment of old is in *full* force, and their destruction is *ever* watching."

It hasn't happened, yet. It's like Adam and Eve, Adam was sitting there watching Eve and he was coming around to the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. A serpent was there and said, 'Look, you ought to try this; this will make you wise. You can make your own decisions of what's right and wrong and make you just like a God. Look, it's good food. Pick it smell it. Isn't that nice! Eat it!'

'Oh, that does taste good,' said Eve. So here is Adam, he's sitting there watching. Do you hear anything where it says, 'Eve, put down that fruit'? *No!* Could he have done that? *Yes!* He was probably wondering: Will she drop dead? *But nothing happened!*

So, she comes over and says look at this, God may have withheld something from us. But we can we can find out. This is really, really good, have a bite.' So, they ate of the fruit! Probably picked some more and said it was good. Whatever actions they took it doesn't tell us, ***but it was certainly against God!***

In 3-John, Demetrius was kicking people out of the Church and even for forbidding John to come. Can you imagine how brainwashed you he must of had that congregation for him to have the gall to say, 'We're not allowing the Apostle John to come!'

Jude 3: "Beloved, when personally exerting all my diligence to write to you concerning the common salvation, I was compelled to write to you, exhorting you to ***fervently fight for the faith***, which once for all *time* has been delivered to the saints. For certain men have ***stealthily crept in...***" (vs 3-4).

Remember that? Did you ever go down to Pasadena one day and look at what was going on and

ask yourself the question: How did so-and-so become whatever he became and rise up high above everybody else? ***Because someone else stealthily snuck in and hired him up!*** Pretty soon the whole upper echelon was composed of those who would be *change agents*, and make the change happen as smoothly as possible: ***stealthily!***

Verse 4: "For certain men have stealthily crept in, those who long ago have been written about, condemning *them* to this judgment. *They are* ungodly men who are perverting the grace of our God, *turning it* into licentiousness, and are personally denying the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ."

What does he do? Jude says, 'I want you to remember that God didn't spare the angels. I want you to remember what God did to Sodom and Gomorrah. I want you to remember what God did to the people who turned against God in the wilderness.'

Then we come to the book of Romans. There's not too much about false prophets in the book of Romans. But when we come to Rom. 16 Paul does bring up a problem.

Romans 16:17: "Now I exhort you, brethren, to take note of those who are causing divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which you have learned, and shun them; because these are the sort who are not serving our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own bellies, and are deceiving the hearts of the innocent by smooth talking and flattery. For *the report of your obedience* has reached to all...." (vs 17-19). *He was just admonishing them!*

We've covered 1-Cor. already, what was their problem? ***Following people, not being converted, false doctrines so bad that some of them were even saying that the resurrection already over with!***

Question comes up about *shunning*. I think the first thing you need to do is have some words with them before you start shunning. Just tell them, 'Look, you keep going down this path it's going to get difficult.' That means don't go out and be living it up with them, because once they start down that road of compromise everything they do is to try and snitch off someone else.

Galatians is dynamite! It all came to a head in Galatia. Gal. 1 is the strongest language in the New Testament concerning this. In Gal. 4 it said that they were observing times, months and years; that is all the pagan days. The commentaries say that those were referring to the Sabbath and Holy Days and things like that. But it doesn't say Sabbath and Holy



Days.

Note Appendix Z: Understanding Paul's Difficult Scriptures Concerning the Law and the Commandments of God (*The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*).

- Have you studied it?
- Have you read it?
- Have you gone through those difficult Scriptures?
- Did you know the Jews had paganism in their Judaism as well, yet still believing in circumcision?
- Doesn't that go back to the time with the Jews were worshipping Baal, Ashtoreth?

*Yes, same thing!*

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."** If you add to or take away from is that not a different gospel? *Yes, indeed!*

Verse 7: "Which *in reality* is not another Gospel; but there are some who are troubling you and are desiring to pervert the Gospel of Christ.

It's like the Catholics do and they tell you they do. At least they are honest about it! 'We take the pagan beliefs and we make them Christian.' I saw this special report of this priest. I don't know what he did he got exiled to the to the end of the earth. It was in Peru on the east side of the Andes Mountains clear down in the valley of the jungle in that part of Peru which then is about 4000 miles from the east coast of Brazil.

Here are these natives, they we're preaching the Gospel to them. 'How do we preach the Gospel to them? Well they were headhunters and they used to eat human flesh. What we did we took *their religious observances*, and **we put Christian names on them** and then taught them to take the Eucharist.'

Is that not *a different gospel*? *Yes, it is!* "...pervert the Gospel of Christ." Can you get any more perverted than that? Guess what the fellow who did the story found out. He went in among them and he found out secretly they were still killing people and shrinking heads, because that's how they made money. They would sell the shrunken head for 4,000 bucks. Hey, if you're a native in a loincloth in the backside of the Andes Mountains, and you get 4,000 bucks, where is the next enemy?

But notice what Paul says, and how important that it is. This is more severe than what we read in Deut. 13.

Galatians 1:8: "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!**"

- Are the demons accursed? *Yes!*
- Are they going to be tormented forever? *Yes!*
- Are those men who follow them accursed? *Yes!*
- Will they be cast into the Lake of Fire? *Yes!*

*That's how important it is!*

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? 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).

That's where the dividing line opens way up. Once you come to that point and everyone accepts that, you're going way the off the road.

Ephesians 4:12: "For the perfecting of the saints... [apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers] ...for *the* work of *the* ministry, for *the* edifying of the Body of Christ; until we all come into the unity... [that is the oneness] ...of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man..." (vs 12-13).

That goes back to Matthew 5:48: "Therefore, you shall be perfect, even as your Father Who *is* in heaven is perfect."

Ephesians 4:13: "...unto *the* measure of *the* stature of the fullness of Christ; 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; but **holding the Truth in love, may in all things...**" (vs 13-15). *That's how you keep away from it!*

But what Paul went through and what he wrote there to the Corinthians in 2-Cor. 11 is something! You also have the element of Judaism. Do we have that today? *Yes we do!*

Philippians 3:1: "Finally, my brethren, rejoice in *the* Lord. Indeed, for me to write the same things to you *is* not troublesome, but for you *it* is safe. Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the concision. For we are the circumcision, who serve God in *the* spirit... [and in Truth] ...and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and do not trust in *the* flesh" (vs 1-3).

Every once in a while I get the question: 'If I join your church do I have to be circumcised?' So, they had that. Do we have trouble with those coming around trying to bring Judaism to us? *Yes!*

Colossians 2:4: "Now, this I say so that no one may deceive you by persuasive speech.... [v 8]: Be on guard so that no one takes you captive through philosophy and vain deceit, according to the traditions of men, according to the elements of the world, and not according to Christ."

*There we go, all the way through the Bible!*  
Remember the 'man of sin/the son of perdition'?

2-Thessalonians 2:8: "And then the lawless one will be revealed... [that's the coming Beast Power at the end] ...(whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth, and will destroy with the brightness of His coming)... [that tells you exactly when is going to happen] ...*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 8-10).

Notice what happens. Tie this in with Rom. 1. Where it says when they rejected God went after idols said that they were the smart ones. What happened? *God abandoned them to their own lust under passions!* He abandoned them in three stages in Rom. 1. "**...they did not receive the love of the Truth...**"

Verse 11: "And for this cause God will send upon them a powerful deception that will cause them to believe *the* lie."

What was the lie? *That the beast is god!* And don't forget Eph. 2, 'the prince of the power of the air.' We've already covered that. Then we have warnings in 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy. Then we have all the way through the seven churches (Rev. 2 & 3) and all the doctrinal problems.

Then we have the situation with *the beast* and *the false prophet* who deceives the whole world! How many are going to really, really stay true God? *We'll find out!*

That takes care of 2-Corinthians and *false prophets in the Bible!* Next time I'm going to bring all the different Scriptures showing what Paul had to go through as an apostle. When I get done with that you might say to yourself: I don't want ever to be an apostle, because he really had to go through some things.

#### Scriptural References:

- 1) 2-Corinthians 11:1-5, 8-15
- 2) 1 John 4:1-3
- 3) Isaiah 8:19-20
- 4) Jeremiah 23:1-2, 11, 14-22, 25-33
- 5) Deuteronomy 12:28-32
- 6) Deuteronomy 13:1-11
- 7) Matthew 7:13-23
- 8) Luke 9:49-50
- 9) Matthew 12:30
- 10) 2 Peter 2:1-3
- 11) Jude 3-4
- 12) Romans 16:17
- 13) Galatians 1:6-10
- 14) Ephesians 4:12-13
- 15) Matthew 5:48
- 16) Ephesians 4:13-15
- 17) Philippians 3:1-3
- 18) Colossians 2:4, 8
- 19) 2 Thessalonians 2:8-11

#### Scriptures quoted, not referenced:

- Ephesians 5
- Revelation 19
- Matthew 24
- 1 Corinthians 9
- 1 John 2
- Jeremiah 7
- Revelation 13
- Genesis 9:24
- 1 Timothy 6:3
- Acts 8; 13; 20
- 3 John
- Galatians 4
- Romans 1
- Ephesians 2
- Revelation 2; 3

#### Also referenced:

- Series: *The Shroud of Turin* ([churchathome.org](http://churchathome.org))
- Book: *When God was a Woman* by Merlin Stone
- Appendix Z: Understanding Paul's Difficult Scriptures Concerning the Law and the Commandments of God (*The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*)

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## Second Corinthians XII The Trials and Difficulties of the Apostle Paul

(Chapters 11-13)

*Compared to Paul, God's people today have gone through nothing!*

Fred R. Coulter

Greetings, brethren! Welcome to Sabbath services! Just yesterday we finished two Church at Home {[churchathome.org](http://churchathome.org)} messages: *Sex Scandals of the Catholic Priests in Pennsylvania*.

At [truthofGod.org](http://truthofGod.org) we will have a link to this video, which is the Attorney General of Pennsylvania bringing charges against hundreds and hundreds of priests that affects thousands and thousands of children. You may have seen some of it on the television news. I don't know if they put it on the 'fake news' or not. It's really quite shocking!

Then we have two articles that we're putting on, and all the text of the Attorney General's statement concerning it. They spent years investigating, and all the information they have is what came about because of those who came forward. How many did not come forward? *We don't know!* But probably 50-70% didn't come forward. Maybe even a higher number.

Then we have here a summary of some of the churches of the Catholic Church where they have had pedophilia problems with the priests, bishops, and it runs all the way up to the pope.

The thing that people don't understand is that the Roman Catholic Church, *every bit of it is a lie!* Catholic hospitals and Catholic charities are money-making organizations and they get most of their money—or a great deal, a good percentage—from taking care of the immigrants that they want to be church members in their cathedrals, because their attendance is diminishing down to near nothing. They get that money from the government.

One of the last articles is that right in Rome the priests had homosexual orgies with cocaine delivered in a Vatican limousine that have Vatican plates on it, that the police never stop. It was blocks away from the Vatican.

It shows that *once evil starts*—that's why we have the Feast of Unleavened Bread—*a little leaven leavens the whole lump!* Look what happened: This came from ancient Babylon and came on down through, then came into the Churches of God after the death of the apostles, and was forced upon the people who claimed to be Christians, by Constantine, a pagan Roman emperor. Ever since then, there have been fights and wars, then the Inquisitions.

That's why we are having the series done up in Blanchard, Idaho, to cover the history of the Church 100<sub>A.D.</sub> to 1600<sub>A.D.</sub> There was a lot blood shed!

It's called *the mystery of lawlessness* (2-Thess.). How does lawlessness come? What are the two forms of lawlessness?

- breaking the commandments
- changing the commandments and adding traditions

*And this is what has happened!*

We covered in part eleven how *false prophets* get all of this started. Rev. 17 shows the harlot—the woman—riding the scarlet colored beast:

Revelation 17:5: "And across her forehead a name *was* written: MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF THE HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. And I saw the woman drunk with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. And after seeing her, **I wondered with great amazement**" (vs 5-6).

In other words, how could something like this come to pass? *Satan is the 'god of this world'!* This is *his* system! ***We are called out of it! We're called to live God's way*** in a system that is contrary to the world's system:

- living by every Word of God
- keeping the commandments of God
- obeying the voice of God
- loving God
- loving our neighbor

The seeds of it were found in the later writings of the apostles in the New Testament. The rest of it is a matter of history.

2-Corinthians 11:13: "For such *are* false apostles... [we're going to talk about apostles] ...deceitful workers who are **transforming themselves into apostles of Christ.**"

How many Catholics really believe that the Catholic Church came from Christ to Peter to what it is today? In spite of all the gross sins, how many remain faithful? In most countries of the world,

which you can see in the reports, it will never be known. But Delores has said many times, the Catholics in America are different. They are different than the Catholics in the rest of the world.

America is the only place where it began to take the pedophile priests and bring them to the civil court of law for judgment and payment. That doesn't make them better, but it makes them less evil, if we could put it that way.

So, when you come out of a false religion, especially one that is setup as tightly controlled as the Catholics, you've got a lot of work to do.

Verse 14: "And *it is* no marvel, for Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light." Stop and think about this for just a minute. Remember the temptation of Satan against Christ. What is the first line of defense against all false doctrine? *Jesus said it by quoting Scripture*, 'It is written that man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.'

From that comes ***obey My voice***, from which comes the ***written Word of God!*** No one has to say, 'If God spoke it thousands of years ago, how do I know what He said?' The court reporters called *scribes* wrote it down!

Sidebar: I've give another sermon on Jesus' scribes {note sermon: *Jesus' Stenographers*} It's amazing! Read Matt. 5-7 and what do you find? *Word for word quotes of what Jesus actually taught!* How did they get it word for word if it was only orally transmitted for 200-plus years? ***NO! They wrote it down!*** They weren't dumb, stupid people like the History Channel likes to picture Christians: dirty, stuffy, miserable people dressed in gunnysacks. That's the way they show them.

What happened to Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist when he didn't believe the angel? *Couldn't say a word!* He came home to Elizabeth and mumbled; he couldn't talk. What did he do after John was born and they wanted to name John *Zacharias*. Elizabeth insisted it would be John, so they said, 'What does Zacharias (the father) have to say? He asked for a tablet and a writing instrument.

What do you know! ***They wrote!*** If you wanted to present a legal document, wouldn't you want to have secretaries and scribes make accurate copies if it, especially if it was going to go to the whole world, and especially if it was to be in many different languages.

So, that's exactly what God has done! However, as you know, there is a major key: *When you read something in the Bible and you know it's something you should do, **you need to obey it***, if you want to continue understanding any other parts of the Bible. That is the key. ***If you do not obey, you do not understand!***

That's how the lawlessness of fake religion comes about! They take part of the Scriptures, or the name of God, and they put their traditions to it. As we find in the book: *My Catholic Faith: A Manual of Religion* by Louis LaRavoire Morrow. The monsignor who wrote that 'the Catholic Church could preach the Gospel without the Bible.'

That's like saying that you can take a shower and never get wet and be clean. It will never work! Or they give you a hose to put out fire and it's hooked up to a gasoline tank. You're never going to put it out.

Satan comes along, and the first line of defense from Christ is 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every Word of God!' What is the second line of defense? *Mark 4:5!*

It's amazing! Study the first Psalm! Guess what you find in the first Psalm? *A major part of the plan of God!*

Matthew 4:5: "Then the devil took Him to the Holy city and set Him upon the edge of the temple, and said to Him, 'If You are the Son of God, cast Yourself down; for it is written...'" (vs 5-6). *Don't trust them just because they quote Scripture! Check it; is it true? That's fine!*

The Word of God is true, even if Satan the devil quotes it true. What does Paul tell us to do with all things? *Prove all things! Why? Because of this:*

"... 'He shall give His angels charge concerning You, and they shall bear You up in their hands, lest You strike Your foot against a stone.'.... [Jesus answered with Scripture]: ...Jesus said to him, 'Again, it is written, "You shall not tempt the Lord your God."'" (vs 6-7).

In other words, you cannot take the Word of God and twist the meaning of it, so you can cause something to happen that is not true. *So, you prove it!*

The next line of defense: Don't take any of the doctrines of the religions of this world and use them. It comes about this way:

Verse 8: "After that, the devil took Him to an exceedingly high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory"—Luke

adds: *in a moment of time*. What do people see?  
*Wealth, fame, power, control the whole thing!*

Sidebar on this thing with the pedophile priests in Pennsylvania: They found that many of the politicians did not want to press charges, because the Catholic Church came around and said, ‘We’ll help you retain your office.’

Verse 9: “And [Satan] said to Him, ‘All these things will I give You, if You will fall down and worship me.’”

- If people worship Satan the devil, can they be rewarded? *Yes!*
- Can he give a blessing back to them? *Yes, he can!*
- Can he make them feel good? *Yes! Satan is great at humor! Great at making people feel good!*
- Why? *Because they’re deceived!*

The world doesn’t understand how Satan works; that he’s subtle and clever in powerful ways as ‘the god of this world.’ It all gets back to those two verses in 2-Cor. 11.

Verse 10: “Then Jesus said to him, ‘Be gone, Satan! For it is written...’” You come back with the truth of the Scriptures that answers the false interpretation. That’s how!

“...‘You... [talking to men, so Jesus is saying to Himself] ...shall worship the Lord your God, and Him alone shall you serve’” (v 10).

Look how much are in those verses, if you really look at them and study them carefully.

How many people want power and control? Let’s just look at the Churches of God today. Two men—and there was a third one previous that—claim they are apostles. One, since he has the stone that minister used up in Oregon, now gives him ‘the right even over the Queen of England.’

The other one says that he is the apostle for the 21<sup>st</sup> century and he will appoint the two witnesses. *This is within the Churches of God!* A recently released inmate, who claimed to be one of the two witnesses—and his wife was the other one—is back in business again. Even in the Churches of God people don’t prove things, and they follow them. It’s an amazing thing! That’s why we have what we have:

- Church at Home
- the Truth of God
- prove all things
- we don’t have a hierarchy
- we teach the Truth

- we want all the brethren to develop the Godly responsibility of their spiritual lives

***to grow, change and overcome so that they can qualify for the greatest amount of reward!***

Living in this world with Satan the devil, we have a harder task than what all the others who come after Christ’s return will have. Satan won’t be around!

So, we’ll read on and ask: **Does anyone want to be an apostle?** Think about it! Remember the calling of Paul by Christ? *His name was Saul at that time and he was on way lickity split to Damascus with a crew with him to put into chains the Christians!* To torment them and even agree to their being killed. God knocked him flat on the ground!

Saul/Paul said, ‘Who are You, Lord?’ *Jesus whom you persecute! Is it hard to kick against the pricks!* Think of it this way:

- You know the big spikes that they show on the crown of thorns?
- What if you had all of those and you were kicking against it with your bear feet?
- Where are you going to go?

*That’s a real losing proposition!* You’d rather hit your thumb with a hammer than that.

Paul was blind for three days, and He said to Saul, ‘You go into this place in Damascus and Ananias is going to come and tell you what you need to do. Jesus told Ananias, ‘I’ve called Saul.’ Ananias said, ‘We’ve heard about this guy.’ Jesus said, ‘I have called him as a chosen vessel for the things that he is going to do to preach the Gospel to the children of Israel and to the Gentiles, ***and to suffer!***

Paul wrote in Col. 1 that his life was ‘the completing of the sufferings of Jesus.’ That’s how it was! Let’s see what Paul went through with these arrogant Greeks in Corinth, thinking that they are so profoundly good and their mental abilities above anybody else. ***And that makes them subject to false prophets!***

2-Corinthians 11:15: “Therefore, *it is* no great thing if his servants...” *Satan has servants:* ministers, apostles, priests, mediums, séances, politicians; he’s got a lot of them!

One of them out there today, who is preaching socialism—Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez—I read to you how good socialism is in the sermon: *Sexual immorality: A National Disgrace.*

“...also **transform themselves as ministers of righteousness...** [by telling you how good they

are] ...whose end shall be according to their works” (v 15).

- How does God judge everyone? *By their works!*
- Isn't that what He said to the churches in Rev. 2 & 3? *Yes!*

Verse 16: “Again I say, no one should consider me a fool; but if otherwise, receive me even as a fool, that I also may boast a little. What I am *now* saying, I do not speak according to *the* Lord, but as in foolishness, in this confidence of boasting. Since many boast... [a little cynicism here] ...according to *the* flesh, I also will boast. For since you are *so* intelligent, you gladly bear with **fools**” (vs 16-19)—the Greek word means *morons*!

Look at the political and religious landscape today; is that not true? *Yes!*

Verse 20: “For you bear *it* if anyone brings you into bondage, if anyone devours *you*, if anyone takes *from you*...” *That's why Paul said that he wasn't taking anything from them!* ‘You’re so stinking carnal I don’t want a penny from you.’ But later we’ll see at the end that he says, ‘Forgive me for it, because that was wrong.’ But they were willing to give to all these false apostles. We’ll find out about who they are.

“...if anyone exalts himself, if anyone beats you on the face” (v 20). Have you ever felt that way going to church? You come to church and expect everything to be real good and what does the minister do? *He gets up there and he lambastes and almost beats up everybody in the Church!*

I tried that once and never did it again. That was because the Director of the Ministry (WCG) said that ‘you have to give an attack sermon against all the sins in the congregation once a year.’ So, I did once! Took me two years to win the members back, and never did it again!

Verse 21: “I speak as though we were under reproach for being weak; but in whatever way anyone else is bold (I speak in foolishness), I also am bold. Are they Hebrews? **So am I**...” (vs 21-22).

What did Jesus say in John 8 to those who said, ‘We are Abraham’s seed’? *I know you’re Abraham’s seed, but IF you are Abraham’s children you would do like Abraham!*

It doesn’t make any difference if they’re Hebrews, those are just the ones you want to get to be false preachers, because then they can say, ‘Look at me, I’m a Hebrew.’

There are very few Jews that I know—I only no of one man and one woman—who have forsaken all of the traditions of the Jews and things like this. But I’ve experienced I don’t know how many times, that a Jew comes into the congregation for the first time and says, ‘I’m a Jew’ as if he’s there to takeover!

“...Are they Israelites? **So am I**. Are they the seed of Abraham? **So am I**. Are they servants of Christ?...” (vs 22-23).

It doesn’t matter what you are in the flesh. What did Paul write to the Galatians? *If you are Christ’s, you’re Abraham’s seed and heirs according to the promise! Where there is neither male or female before God, neither bond nor free, neither Greek nor Jew, you’re all one in Christ!* So, it doesn’t make any difference!

“...(I am speaking as if I were out of my mind.) So am I, above and beyond measure—in labors more abundant...” (v 23).

Now look at what he had to go through, so the next time you stub your toe, or hit your thumb with a hammer, whatever, remember what Paul went through. Think of this, Christ said that Paul was going to suffer. Think of all the suffer involved in what we’re going to read here:

“...in labors more abundant, in stripes above measure...” (v 23). Why? Where was the first place that Paul had to go? *To the Jewish synagogue!* Remember Acts 13 and when he came to Corinth.

“...in imprisonments more frequent... [in Philippi and beaten] ...in deaths often.... [Death watches. Am I going to live or die?] ...Five times from the Jews I received forty stripes less one” (vs 23-24).

- How is your back?
- Don’t you think he had a pretty horrible looking back?
- Don’t you think it was painful for him?

Verse 25: “Three times I was beaten with rods... [that’s on top of the whipping with stripes] ...once I was stoned...” [left for dead (Acts 14). Is that why he had Luke, the physician, with him all the time? *Could very well be!*

“...three times I was shipwrecked...” (v 25). There’s no pleasant thing in being shipwrecked. You read about what happened when they put him on the ship to go to Rome. That was a terrible voyage.

“...a night and a day I spent in the deep” (v 25). Probably clinging to a piece of wood, praying: ‘God, here I am down here in the ocean, all alone,

please keep the sharks away. Help someone to find me.'

Next time you go out and look at the ocean, seeing the expanse on the horizon, how far out could you look to see the head of person bobbing in the waves? You talk about lost!

Verse 26: "*I have been in journeyings often, in perils of rivers...*" Maybe the bridge is out, how do you get across?

"...in perils of robbers, in perils from *my own race...*" (v 26). Remember, he was going to go straight across over to Asia Minor, but the Jews were waiting for him, so he came around came upon over the top across to Troas.

Look what happened when Paul went to Jerusalem; that's quite a thing! Look what happened when he came to James, and their view of what was going to happen was not as fully understood by them in Jerusalem, as Paul. They were thinking that Christ was going to return pretty quick, and 'we're here, in charge in Jerusalem.' That's why when Peter went along with the circumcision party in Gal. 2, that's why he was afraid. *But Paul knew better and rebuked him!*

So, what happened? Paul told him everything that was happening, all the miracles, all the healings, all he conversions, all the things that he was doing, and they said, 'Oh, we're so happy, look at the thousands here who believe in Jerusalem.'

Remember what we said about thousands believing. How did they believe? *Well, in Jerusalem, as long as the temple stood, it was all right to continue with the rituals and the offerings!*

So, James and the elders said to Paul, 'Look, everybody up here hears that you out there are telling the Jews not to circumcise their children. So, why don't do this, you take charges, because there are men who have been under and oath, and they're ready to finish it and you pay for it and go to the temple to show that you're not against it.'

A political move! Did it backfire? *Yes!* What happened? *Different ones there saw them and said, 'Oh look! There he is!'* So, they grabbed Paul and seized him. They were going to kill him!

{Note the DVD: *The Temple Mount*. You will see the colonnades coming down around the edge of the temple.}

The soldiers immediately—because they were guarding up there—came down and rescued Paul. They were going to kill him. Look at how desperate that was! What did Paul do? *He said, 'I'm glad you rescued me, take me upstairs and get me*

*out of here.'* Then he said, 'Let me say something to the crowd.' So, here they are all of them ready to kill him! Paul started speaking in Hebrew and there was a great hush. He started talking about going way back and coming up to the time of Christ, and then he told them that he was sent by Jesus to go to the Gentiles.

They came to take him out of the hands of the soldiers. So, the captain took him out. Look at what he went through. The perils of his own countrymen. Then there were 40 men under a vast charge to kill Paul and not let him out of the city. That came to the Centurion and he got the troops ready and took them down to Caesarea by night to save Paul. God intervened to help him.

Look at all that he went through. Paul never really had any rest until he got to Caesarea and was there two years before he went off to Rome to appeal his case.

"...in perils from *the Gentiles...*" (v 26)—everybody! You think everybody is against you? *Look at Paul!*

"...in perils in *the city*, in perils in *the desert*, in perils on *the sea*, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Besides *all* these things from the *world* outside pressing on me daily is the care of all the churches" (vs 26-28).

Anyone want to volunteer to be an apostle like Paul? *No way!* We'll see the qualifications for an apostle in just a little bit.

Verse 29: "Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is offended, and I do not burn? If it is necessary for me to boast, I will boast *in* the things concerning my weakness. The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who is blessed into the ages of *eternity*, knows that I do not lie" (vs 29-31).

*Think about that! What a time! Look at all that Paul wrote!* And he obviously supervised Luke, and when they were Caesarea that Luke went up to Jerusalem and got all the information that he needed to write the Gospel of Luke. He was the one who wrote Acts.

Look at what we have today. The next time we have trouble—and I will put myself in there—and it's difficult, *don't complain!* Take it to God, because *He knows!* Isn't that true? *Yes, indeed!* Trust in God, He'll see us through. *He will help us!*

I imagine that the day that I resigned (from WCG) Delores and our four children were all there, and I imagine Delores was thinking: What are we



going to do? But you either stand for Truth and trust God to provide, or you go along with the group and get devoured in the lawlessness that infiltrates the Churches of God! Next year on Atonement will be 40 years from resigning.

My part compared to what others have gone through is nothing! **Nothing!**

I was talking to John Gunether about some of the things he sent to finish up and send to Ken, and he said that there accounts of those who are being led off to be killed, tortured, burned at the stake and martyred who on their way were singing praises to God and *thanking Him for the calling that God had given them, and they knew that they were going to be slaughtered very shortly!*

The next time you have a tough day, you get your mind on Christ. Thank God for what He's given, and what we need to do is all really get into God's way diligently! Because the way the world is going, all those tough times are coming back again!

(go to the next track)

A question was asked: Do you think this exposé against the Catholic Church in Pennsylvania will really do anything. It may do some good, but you can't reform it. How are you going to reform it? ***It's founder is not Christ!***

The head of it is Satan the devil! Any changes will be temporary. If anything would be a step toward something permanent, it would have to be something like this:

1. the pope would have to declare a total fast worldwide in all churches. All priests, bishops, cardinals archbishops—everybody—sackcloth and ashes!
2. first order of business, all priests ***must be married—period!***
3. destroy all your crosses, crucifixes and idols and move out of St. Peter's Basilica and destroy it to the ground
4. reject Sunday, all the pagan holidays
5. keep the Sabbath and all the Holy Days

***IF*** they did that, there may be a chance of reform! But since they won't do that, the chance of reform is just a small percentage of those who still have conscience left.

***Those five steps I laid out are impossible for them, because they're so steeped in it!*** Maybe one or two or a few individuals could do it, ***but everything I said is going to happen when Christ returns!***

There will no longer be any priests! ***We will be!*** Satan will be bound! Remember that the whole

purpose of the Day of Atonement with the two goats is very simple: human beings can have all their sins forgiven over and over again, *but unless the author of sin has all of those sins that he has committed to perpetrate on human beings is put on his head and he is judged and sent away, you're never going to change the system!* Never will!

What did Jesus say of the priests who ran the temple of God? How far do these things come in? *He told them, 'You are of your father the devil!' The priests at the temple of God! Why? Because they put in their traditions and their ways! And who inspired those? Satan!*

- Did they receive Christ? *No!*
- Did they love God? *No!*

That's why it takes deep repentance, receiving the Holy Spirit, and growing in grace and knowledge the rest of your life! However long that is! The only way there's ever going to be total sin-free world is when there's a new heaven and new earth.

Think about what great things God has for us, and His whole plan. All these difficult problems and things that we go through, and I get frustrated and upset just like you do. You have your sins and problems to overcome, and so do I. Read Rom. 7 and see the difficult time that Paul had. Think about how he really had to control his attitude going through everything that he did.

This had to be one after another, ***after another, after another!*** Think about what we need to do. On the other hand, think about everything that God has provided for this age to really get the Gospel out and teach the brethren; how fantastic and marvelous that that is! We need to take full advantage of everything that God has provided and really keep at it.

In some Churches of God they don't want to come against the 'queer' society that we're in. I've got a report here:

Colleges Offer Courses on "Queering" Children & the Bible by Tyler Durden, Aug. 26, 2018 {<https://www.zerohedge.com/news/2018-08-16/colleges-offer-courses-queering-children-bible>}

We're going to be up against it whether you like it or not! You can't avoid it! There's a nice little ad put out by Service Pros, and it starts out with the young couple in their house and there's water coming under the door. The wife says, 'I didn't know that water could do that much damage.'

It's the same way with this society. God is not going to change it at this time! We may have

troubles, we may not; maybe we ought to be more thankful that we can meet here in Hollister, CA, where there is not all this pressure of the big city queers coming against us.

Like I said on Church at Home, some of you are going to say that we're 'homophobes.' Well, I say to you, 'You're hetrophobes!' That's the way it is! ***What Satan wants us to do is to compromise!***

Sidebar: A little truth—When the auditorium in Pasadena was built, it was supposed to be built with money that the brethren gave; we all gave. However, the right hand *unconverted* man of HWA—Stanley R—got a loan at Bank America. Who owns Bank America? *Catholics!* So, he got the loan with the proviso that they tone down the attacks on the Catholics! *Look at what happened!*

2-Corinthians 12:1—Paul writes: “Indeed, it is not expedient for me to boast. But I will come to visions and revelations of *the* Lord. I know a man in Christ *who*, fourteen years ago, was caught up to *the* third heaven.... [he's talking about himself] ... (Whether *this man* was in *the* body, I do not know; or out of the body, I do not know—God knows.) Now, I know such a man (whether *taken up* in *the* body, or out of the body, I do not know—God knows), *and* that he was caught up to Paradise, and heard unutterable sayings, which a man is not permitted to speak” (vs 1-4).

When you come to Rev. 4 & 5, that changed with John. Why do you suppose it changed with John?

1. John was a descendant of the line of Aaron  
*So, John was actually priest-blood!*
2. God wanted this vision of what's going on in heaven to be known to the churches and to whomever would read the Bible, that the things that are going to happen from 2-Cor. 6-on are all coming at the command of God! Every bit of it!

*Not just the thoughts of men; not just what people suppose!* It wasn't time for that with Paul, and Paul was not of the priest-line. Paul was of the tribe of Benjamin. So, Paul being able to have this vision was far different from what it was with John.

Verse 5: “I will boast of such a one as this; but of myself I personally will not boast, except concerning my weaknesses. But even if I choose to boast, I shall not be a fool; for I will speak the Truth.... [that's what it has to be] ... However, I will forbear, lest anyone think of me above what he sees me *to be*, or what he hears from me. But in order that I might not be exalted by the abundance of the revelations...” (vs 5-7).

Remember that Paul spent three years in the Arabian desert where he was taught by Christ personally and in vision.

“...*there* was given to me a thorn in the flesh, an angel of Satan to buffet me, so that I might not be exalted” (v 7).

So, every time Paul started getting exalted, this angel of Satan would come and give in trouble to keep him humble. That's very important, because he wrote more of the Bible than any other man in the world.

Verse 8: “I besought the Lord three times for this, that it might depart from me; but He said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you; for My power is made perfect in weakness.’ ....” (vs 8-9).

Why? *Because when you're weak then you trust God! You cry out to God and say, 'Help me, O Lord God!'* Isn't that true? *Yes, indeed!* And you realize in your weakened condition that even your best efforts are going to be miniscule!

This is probably not Paul's eyes, and this would be from time to time. Remember that Paul had to have a giant ego to do the things that he was doing and to be excelling in Judaism more than the other of his own contemporaries. He was looking to be one of the top ones in Judaism. He couldn't be a priest, but he certainly could be one of the top ones in the Sanhedrin, couldn't he? *Yes, indeed!*

So, all that's involved there, we don't know. We just have to take it with what we have here. This is a spiritual battle. It may have some physical ramifications, because of all that he went through, But certainly all the things that he went through over in 2-Cor. 11, how many demons were around to do that? It's like this:

- How are you going to change the Catholic Church? *You've got to get rid of all the demons!*
- Where are you going to put them?

What it always did when all those things took place, what happens? ***That drives you to God!*** If it drives you away, *then that's a choice you make!* But let it drive you to God.

“...Therefore, most gladly will I boast in my weaknesses that the power of Christ may dwell in me. For this reason, I take pleasure in weaknesses...” (vs 9-10).

Notice Paul's attitude that he had to have. Talk about a converted attitude! None of us can even come to three percent of what he went through. *Think of that!* Test: Get a flat tire on the way home and see how you react!

“...**I take pleasure in** weaknesses... [and we worry about them] ...in insults, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ...” (v 10). I tell you, what he went through was really something! Imagine that!

“...for when I am weak, then I am strong. I have become a fool *in this* boasting. You have forced me *to do so*, when I ought to have been commended by you. For in no way was I inferior to those highly exalted *so-called* apostles—even if I am nothing” (vs 10-11).

When you come down to it, we all have to realize that when you really examine it and get it clear down to everything, that’s why we have the title of the book: *From a Speck of Dust to a Son of God: Why Were You Born?* You could not even be seen with the naked eye when you first became *you*. That’s how small you were. That’s why we need to realize that ***in God we live, move and have our being! Everything comes from God!*** So, Paul wrote this in the way that he did!

Verse 12: “Indeed, the signs of an apostle were demonstrated *by me* in all patience, in signs and wonders and miracles among you.” Not only that, Paul had to have a lot of God’s Spirit *in* him. In order to do that, to have that kind of strength and that kind of resolve, read Rom. 8 where he said, ‘It doesn’t matter what happens, ***all things work together for those who love God and are called according to His purpose.***’ Then he lists everything, every problem and trial that can come on you face-to-face. He says in that ‘you’re more than conquerors.’

That has to tell us ***how great the calling of God is!*** How fantastic is it going to be to be spirit beings? Think about it! So awesome that we can’t handle it as human beings! But we must, through the Spirit of God and God the Father, qualify for it by being faithful in serving Him in truth and in love.

### Signs of an Apostle

What were they? *Miracles, healings, going through troubles and difficulties, like Paul did here!*

#### 1. Signs and wonders:

- Didn’t that happen? *Yes, they did!*
- Did it happen with all the apostles?

Look what happened when you read Acts 5. Peter and the apostles: even the passing of the shadow of Peter healed those who were sick lying alongside the street when he came. Jesus said that ‘these works that I’ve done, you’re going to do greater works.’ Was that not a greater work? *But it was Christ doing it through Peter!* When you think

of those who claim to be apostles, do they measure up to these requirements?

#### 2. Called by God to be an apostle

I don’t think there were truly any apostles after the time that John died. Evangelists? *Yes!* Hard workers? *Yes!* Pastor, preachers, teachers? *Yes!* But no apostles, because they were sent with the authority of Christ sent by Him *personally*. That’s what He said in the last part of the Gospel of Matthew, ‘You go into all the world and you make disciples in all nations! You teach them everything whatsoever I have commanded you.’ ***Sent by Christ!***

I don’t think that the one who was thought to be an apostle for a very long time was ever an apostle! And that there are no apostles today!

They saw Christ and were sent by Christ. Barnabas saw Christ and was sent by Christ. You can go through all of the other Scriptures.

Concerning the two witnesses: ***They are chosen by God Himself!*** We’ve got a sermon where I have shown that Zechariah 3 & 4 show very clearly that one of them will be the coming high priest at the temple that they will build, and the other will be a governor of Judea. The third person to come will be the third Elijah. What will Elijah do? *He will take care of the baptizing of those Jews in the Holy Land who repent because of the two witnesses!* They’re not going to have time to do anything like that. So, you read very carefully about Elijah:

- there’s the original
- there’s John the Baptist
- there’s the Elijah to come before the great and terrible Day of the Lord (Mal. 4)

{note: there are several sermons on the two witnesses, including *The Two Witnesses and Elijah* found at **truthofGod.org**}

Revelation 11:1: “Then *the angel* gave me a measuring rod like a staff, saying, ‘Arise and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and those who worship in it.’”

This is why you find in Matt. 24 and Mark 13, whosoever reads concerning the *abomination of desolation*, let him understand.

Do the two witnesses have to be converted? *Yes, they’ll be converted with the power of God!* Their conversion will be different than ours. We don’t know how it will come out, but God is going to choose them!

Verse 2: “But leave out the court that *is* within the temple *area*, and do not measure it

because it has been given *up* to the Gentiles; and they shall trample upon the Holy city *for* forty-two months. And **I will give power to My two witnesses...**” (vs 2-3).

Giving power, receiving the Holy Spirit the way that they will, does that not have to be conversion? *Yes, indeed!*

“...and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred *and* sixty days, clothed in sackcloth” (v 3). He tells who they are, and the only place that you find this is in Zech. 4.

It will not unequivocally, ***cannot be*** any minister from the Church of God. Why? *Very simple! The Jews will never listen to a Gentile—period!* Case over and done!

Verse 4: “These are the two olive trees, and the two lampstands that stand before the God of the earth.” ***No minister between them and God!***

Are there people in the Church of God who don’t know their Bibles well enough to understand that? And they believe the vain sayings of a man proclaiming himself to be the 21<sup>st</sup> century apostle of God who will have authority to appoint the two witnesses? *May God be merciful to him!*

2-Corinthians 12:13: “For in what way was it that you were inferior to the other churches, except that I myself did not burden you?...” What does that mean? *I didn’t take tithes and offerings from you!*

We read that Paul took wages from other churches so he wouldn’t take it from them. But he told them in 1-Cor. 9 that Christ commanded that those who preach the Gospel will live of the Gospel. I look at it the same way today. I don’t take tithes and offerings that people send. I take a wage; that’s it! The rest of it goes to serve the brethren, to preach the Gospel, to give you the things that you need and we don’t charge for it. *Jesus said that it’s more blessed to give than receive!* That the cycle that it needs to be.

***Those who receive give back automatically because they love God!*** That’s the way it is. You can beat people over the head and say that they have to tithe and send in all of this. I remember some of the deacons at the Feast of Tabernacles when a minister would say, ‘We’re in competition with this other Feast site over here, they gave so many thousands of dollars, so we want everyone of you here at this Feast site to give a little extra. Everyone of you reach into your pocket or purse and put in all the change that you have.’

That’s not the way that God does it! If you are convinced in the mind and heart and converted in

the mind and heart to do the will of God, then all the extraction of money from you will do no good! It’s that simple!

It’s like Galileo: The church made him say that the earth was flat, but he walked out the door and said to himself, ‘Nevertheless, it is still round!’ It’s the same way with tithing! If you don’t freely give because you have freely received, then.... God has to do the judging! If you get on the extraction of funds, it’s at best going to be temporary. Why? *You have to operate this way, and this is the way we operate:*

Someone will ask, ‘What is your budget?’ *Whatever God sends! That’s the budget!* We’ve been able to take care of everything that we need to do, because God sends it. People are faithful to do it. Do they have to be ‘beaten over the head’ to extract money from them? *No!*

Paul was saying, ‘I’m not taking a penny from you. You’re so carnal that you pick on me all the time, and you talk against me all the time, and you entertain all of these false prophets as something good, and you give them money! I’m not going to take a penny from you.’

But he said, “...**Forgive me this wrong.** Behold, a third time I am ready to come to you, and I will not burden you... [he isn’t going to come for money; don’t do it because I said you should] ...for I do not seek what is yours, but you; for the children are not obligated to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children. Now, I will most happily spend, and am willing to be totally spent, for your souls; although the more abundantly I love you, the less I am loved” (vs 13-15).

Look at the life he had to live! What a thankless life!

Verse 16: “Yet, even so, I did not burden you; but being crafty, I caught you with guile.” *I got you in your own carnal trap! That you didn’t want to do what God says!*

Verse 17: “Did I make a gain of you by any of those whom I sent to you? I urged Titus to go to you and sent with him our brother. Did Titus make a gain of you? Did we not walk in the same spirit and in the same steps? Again, do you think that we are making an excuse to you? We speak before God in Christ; and everything we do, beloved, is for your edification” (vs 17-19). *That’s what it has to be!*

Verse 20: “But I fear that when I come, perhaps I may find you in a state such as I do not wish, and I may be found by you such as you do not wish; that there may be strifes, jealousies, indignations, contentions, evil speakings,

whisperings, puffings up, commotions... [What a church! What a handful that is!] ...and that when I come again, my God will humble me among you, and I shall grieve over many of those who have already sinned, and have not repented of the uncleanness and sexual immorality and licentiousness that they have practiced" (vs 20-21). **What a church!**

2-Corinthians 13:1: "This *is the* third time that I am coming to you.... [Paul is giving them warning] ...In *the* mouth of two or three witnesses every matter shall be established." *He's coming there to have court!*

Verse 2: "I have previously told *you*, and I am telling you in advance the second time, as though I were present; but since I am absent now, I am writing to those who have continued to sin until now—and to all the rest—that **if I come again, I will not spare.** Since you seek a proof of Christ speaking through me (Who is not weak toward you, but is powerful in you... [you're so converted that you can live in sin and God still loves you] ...for although He was crucified in weakness, yet, He lives by God's power; and we are indeed weak in Him, but we shall live with Him by God's power toward you), **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" (vs 2-5).

It sounds like, to me, that they're a lot of tares in amongst them! *Yes, indeed!*

Verse 6: "But I hope that you will recognize that we are not reprobates. Now, I am praying to God *that* you do no evil; not that we may appear *to be* approved, but that you may do what *is* right, even if we are *regarded* as reprobates" (vs 6-7). ***In other words, repent!***

Verse 8: For we do not have any power against the Truth, but *only* for the Truth"—because if you sin, the Truth is going to convict you as a sinner.

- **IF** you repent, then God will forgive the sins and take them away!
- **IF** you live according to the Truth of God, that's for God!

There's nothing anyone can do against the Truth of God, because it's a living law: the love of God, the Truth of God, and it all functions automatically!

I'm glad none of you are like that. But I tell you this: down in Pasadena with thousands there, think of it! They had 1200 in the auditorium, 1200 in the assembly place. They had another 1200—**3500**

**in Pasadena, and how many are there now? I couldn't tell you!**

Verse 9: "And we rejoice when we are weak and you are strong; for we are also praying for this—even your perfection." That's what Christ wants. That's what He said right there in:

Matthew 4:48: "Therefore, you shall be perfect, even as your Father Who *is* in heaven is perfect."

2-Corinthians 13:10: "For this cause, I am writing these things to you while I am absent, in order that when I am present I may not treat *you* with severity, according to the authority which the Lord has given me for edification and not for destruction." ***I don't want to have to do it, but if you want to be the way you are, I'm going to have to do it!***

Whew! We're finally at the end! The Corinthians are a burden! Really!

Verse 11: "In conclusion, brethren, rejoice!..." After all of that! Yea! Paul is coming!

**"...Be perfected; be encouraged; be of the same mind; be at peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you.** Greet one another with a Holy kiss. All the saints send salutations to you. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit *be* with you all. Amen" (vs 11-13).

Then Paul sent this off to them! I wonder how it was received when it was read in the congregation?

What is "...a Holy kiss...."? I think it's the way you see a lot of the people in the Mediterranean area do with each other: kind of kiss each other on each cheek. But when you see the pope and different ones do it, that's an unholy kiss! When Judas betrayed Jesus, the Greek there is that he 'ardently kissed Him.' And Jesus said, 'Friend...' In this age, we are of such that a sincere handshake that is equivalent, or better.

Scriptural References:

- 1) Revelation 17:5-6
- 2) 2 Corinthians 11:13-14
- 3) Matthew 4:5-10
- 4) 2 Corinthians 11:15-31
- 5) 2 Corinthians 12:1-12
- 6) Revelation 11:1-4
- 7) 2 Corinthians 12:13-21
- 8) 2 Corinthians 13:1-9
- 9) Matthew 5:48

10) 2 Corinthians 13:10-13

Scriptures quoted, not referenced:

- Matthew 5-7
- Colossians 1
- Revelation 2-3
- John 8
- Acts 13-14
- Galatians 2
- Romans 1
- Revelation 4-5
- Romans 8
- Acts 5
- Zechariah 3-4
- Malachi 4
- Matthew 24
- Mark 13
- 1 Corinthians 9

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- *Jesus' Stenographers*
- *Sexual immorality: A National Disgrace*
- *The Two Witnesses and Elijah*

Books:

- *My Catholic Faith: A Manual of Religion* by Louis LaRavoire Morrow
- *From a Speck of Dust to a Son of God: Why Were You Born?* by Fred R. Coulter

DVD: *The Temple Mount*

Article: Colleges Offer Courses on "Queering" Children & the Bible by Tyler Durden, Aug. 26, 2018  
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