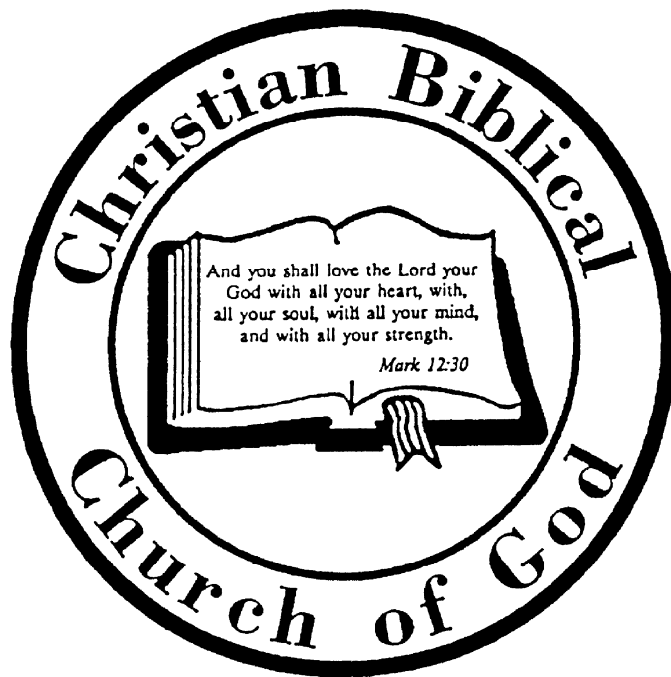


Grace Upon Grace



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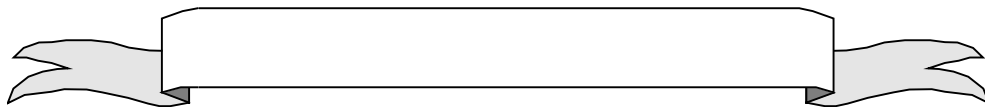
By Fred R. Coulter

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Fred R. Coulter
Christian Biblical Church of God
P. O. Box 1442
Hollister, California 95024-1442

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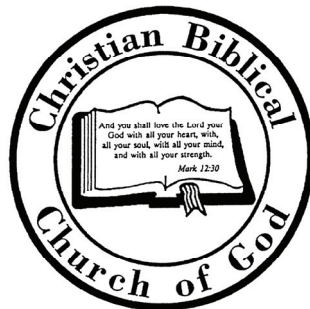
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Grace Upon Grace

Series of 9 sermons by Fred R. Coulter



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Grace Upon Grace

Foreword

To be under grace means that God has opened the way for each one that He calls and gives the Holy Spirit to, in order for us to have *fellowship* with, and a direct relationship with God the Father and Jesus Christ through prayer and study.

Christ, in the greatest act of grace divested Himself of His power and glory and became a human being born of the virgin Mary, so that He, by the grace of God, *would taste death for everyone*. Hebrews 2:9: “But we see Jesus, Who *was* made a little lower than *the* angels, crowned with glory and honor on account of suffering the death...” There can be no greater death than the death of Jesus Christ, God manifested in the flesh. He carried in His body ‘the law of sin and death’ and never sinned. That’s why ‘He condemned sin in the flesh’ (Rom. 8:3).

The *graciousness of God* leads you to repentance. When you have repented of your sins, then the blood of Jesus Christ covers those sins by the grace of God. Now you are justified to God. Justified means you are put *in right standing* with God.

What did Jesus say about the Church? ‘*Many are called but few are chosen.*’ When you answer the call, you become the part of the elect. *God selects* you to give you the Holy Spirit. This is the whole topic of the first part of Romans 8. Everything that God does: 1) to give us His Spirit 2) to put His laws in our heart and our mind 3) to seal us with the earnest of the Holy Spirit, to give us understanding of His Word 4) to grant us of His love and hope and mercy and grace 5) to personally apply the sacrifice of Christ to our sins 6) that we are joined in covenant in that baptismal death with Christ—all of that is grace—*grace upon grace*—all comes from God.

This transcript series is provided to help you grow in grace and mercy and truth, and to use as a tool to build your relationship with God the Father and Jesus Christ our Lord.

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

Grace Upon Grace I

Fred R. Coulter

When God created us He created us in His likeness and after His image, so we could do things greater than anything else that He had created on the earth. Don't you think God is most generous in telling Adam and Eve that 'you have dominion over the earth, over the animals, over the birds, over every living thing'?

It's real interesting when you read the book of Job because it carries some things relating clear back to Gen. 1. God formed Adam and Eve—first Adam out of the dust of the earth; then Eve from one of his ribs. He placed within them all the various kinds of human beings that we can observe today. Paul wrote that God has made us all of one blood. Let's carry this through from Adam and Eve. Remember how Elihu confronted Job. What was one of the first things he said? He said, 'There's a spirit in man and the Spirit of God has formed me.'

Then he also said a little later, 'The hand of the Almighty has fashioned me.' I want you to think about that for a minute. Do we all have genes and chromosomes that God made, to put in Adam and Eve? If you think of each conception without a full-lived life, the history of mankind would be very short indeed—correct?

But if God made the original genes and chromosomes—which He did—and if God created the means of procreation—which He did—and if God makes every individual different by the combination of the genes and chromosomes of mother and father—which He has—then the hand of God when He formed Adam and Eve *made us*. And made us for a great and tremendous purpose.

But because God also gave free moral agency and choice—and He never takes that away, that is something that we are responsible for exercising—therefore, they sinned. When that sin came, God had to bring judgment upon them, the environment was changed, the nature of animals was changed, and the nature of man and woman was changed with 'the law of sin and death,' which we all inherit.

If we were confronted with that just on a human level, we would think that we would have been defeated. But God had a plan to rescue human kind. He had that plan all thought out and ready to go from the foundation of the world so that He could redeem mankind.

What He had to do was quite fantastic. I want you to think about grace in a broader term. But let's first read some Scriptures here in the first chapter of the Gospel of John. We need to

understand how God and Christ and us and grace all come together. To be a Christian doesn't mean just a profession of a set of standards or principles, like I recently gave on Church at Home. I gave a short series, *What Kind of Christian Are You?* Since that time we can develop it even more.

God did something fantastic; God wants us to know that it's not just a thing of an ordinary man. It's just not something that one person could die for another person. He wants us to know what God Himself has personally done.

John 1:1: "In *the* beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in *the* beginning with God" (vs 1-2).

Who was He? *He was in the beginning with God and so we can just say here these two Scriptures are the beginning of what we know that there are two in the God Family:* one who became the Father, one who became the Son. What about the Word? He was no ordinary human being when He was made flesh, that we'll see in a minute. Here's what happened.

Verse 3: "All things came into being through Him, and not even one *thing* that was created came into being without Him.... [Every living thing. That's why it can be said of all of us that the Spirit of God made us, but His hand formed us.] ...In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shines in the darkness, but the darkness does not comprehend it" (vs 3-5). Let's see what God did, and this shows us

- how absolutely humble God is and Christ is;
- how much the Father is willing to give up in order to save mankind
- how much the One Who created all human beings was willing to do to save us.

Because after all, we're born into the world—correct? Isn't that true? The first day of our birth we didn't look up at mom and dad and say, 'Give me the law of sin and death.' *No, we had no choice in it!* One day when we grow up we find the wages of sin is death.

What did God do? How is He going to solve this problem? We're talking about how many billions of people from the creation of the world until the end of God's plan as pictured by the Last Great Day.

Verse 14: "And the Word became flesh." He became a human being. There is a philosophical doctrine of Docetism, which means this: Jesus was

the man, who was in the flesh and Christ was the Spirit that possessed the man, so therefore, the Spirit possessing the man was impossible to sin. But that's not what the Bible teaches. He came in the flesh.

"...and tabernacled among us (and we ourselves beheld His glory, *the* glory as of *the* only begotten with *the* Father), full of grace and Truth" (v 14). You can read back in Luke 2:40, it says that He grew in grace and wisdom as a child. John picks up the writing after he talks about John the Baptist (v 15).

Verse 16: "And of **His fullness** we have all received..." What is the fullness? I'm sure that this is part of what John amplified in finalizing the Gospel of John, because he could look back and see of His fullness, everything that Christ did.

Verse 17: "For the Law was given through Moses, and the grace and the Truth came through Jesus Christ." That's interesting because before Christ came, before the Holy Spirit came, only certain selected ones received the Holy Spirit, certain ones of the patriarchs. And He said of the Israelites after giving the Ten Commandments, when they said, 'Everything that God says we will do.' He said, 'Oh, I wish there were such a heart in them that they would do it and keep My commandments always.'

Verse 16: "And of His fullness we have all received, and **grace upon grace**." What does that mean? *Grace upon grace*! Most people feel that if you repent of your sins you're forgiven by grace, it's all done, locked up and sealed and everything's finished. But what is *grace upon grace*?

Why is it that we keep the commandments, yet we're not under Law? Most people would say because Paul wrote, 'What? shall we sin because we're not under the Law but under grace?' They totally confuse it because they do not know what grace really is.

So, let's see if we can understand it today in the way that we need to. They all rely on the first act of grace that is pronounced here in the Bible. Even here the way that it is presented and should be translated in the Greek is reflected in the English.

Here's what God did, John 3:16: "**For God so loved the world...** [even though it's sinful; even though it's wretched] **...that He gave His only begotten Son...** [When it talks about the only begotten Son, that means that there was no other human being begotten directly by God the Father in the womb of any other woman than the one Who became Christ in the womb of the virgin Mary.] ...so that everyone who believes in Him..." That's interesting because this then is reflected in the Greek as meaning to believe and keep on believing, *believing, believing*.

"...**may not perish...** [It does not mean *shall not* or *should not*. Most translations have it *should not*, but *should* is too close to *shall*. This is *may not* perish, which shows that we have our choices. That's why we have to endure to the end. That's why we have to be faithful to the end.] **...but may have everlasting life**" (v 16). That is the total expression of God's grace in the action of Christ coming and dying.

- How does grace begin in your life?
- How do you receive *grace upon grace*, through Jesus Christ, through His sacrifice, through His Spirit?
- Why are you here?

Let's think about that from this point of view:

- How did you get here?
- What happened in your life?

We know the parable of the sower—right? Sowed the seed, some went on the stony place, some went on shallow soil, some went on weeds and thistles, some fell on good ground. So ask yourself:

- Why me?
- What was it that God did?
- Did you read in the Bible that says, 'If you keep this law, you'll find God?' *No!*
- If you keep this law, you'll receive eternal life?
- What was the first grace that God gave to you and you perhaps didn't even know it?

That was the day in your life and in your trouble and in the things that you were living separated from God—you can all remember the day that it happened—something happened in your mind and you wanted to find out about God.

The first grace that came to you was that God recognized that you wanted that. God has seven Spirits, which are the seven eyes of God that go through the whole earth. It talks about the eyes of God gaze upon men. It talks about that God knows the hearts of all men and women. He doesn't have it in His mind all the time, but He can know them.

God responded to you. You may have even cried out. I remember when I first thought about God. I was out walking at night. I had quite a few problems and difficulties in my life and I was pretty miserable. I was living in Burlingame at the time, Northern California, and they get a lot of fog in San Francisco, foggy everyday.

It's about nine o'clock at night and I'm walking down the sidewalk and I guess it was my first prayer. I looked up between the parting fog and I saw a couple of stars up there and I said, 'God, if You're there, help me.' *And He did!* There are a couple of other things I could add to it, but that was

the moment. I don't know what moment it was with you, but what did God do?

Here's what He did. This is why it is grace. Everything about your life as a Christian is based upon grace and it's *grace upon grace!* Here is the first instance of grace and why is it called grace?

- Did God send a minister? *No!*
- Did God send a priest? *No!!*
- Did God send an angel? *No!!*
- What did God do?

This will help us understand the importance of our relationship with God, will help us understand what it means that God so loves us and Jesus loves us. All of that is an act of grace.

But here is the first thing that God did, John 6:44: **"No one can come to Me unless the Father, Who sent Me, draws him..."** God the Father personally intervened in your life. God the Father is the great Sovereign of the universe. Think on that!

What did He do? *He drew you!* How did He do that? *Probably one of the seven Spirits*—which I don't know how vast or active that their realm is, but they're certainly busy. The message came back to God: this person is seeking after You.

- How did God respond? ***God Himself began to draw you!***
- When was the day when you started hungering and thirsting after the Truth of God?
- When was the day that you became so excited about the Truth of God and God's plan that you just couldn't put it down?
- When was the day that you were moved to absolute tears and in some cases just abject bawling and begging for forgiveness?
- ***That's when God started drawing you!***

The reason that He did that was so that you could start coming to Him. As long as we keep seeking God and believing God and coming to Him, what does God do?

We're going to see there's another part of the equation that goes with this, because God the Father and Jesus Christ jointly do this. I want you now to understand something very important: This is why to join a church is worthless, because God wants to deal with you personally. This is hard to grasp. This is very overwhelming. This reflects the love of God to you.

Let's see what Jesus said to Thomas, John 14:6: "Jesus answered to him, **'I am the Way...** [You start hungering and thirsting for *the way of God.*] **...and the Truth...**" You came to the point that you didn't want to hear anything but the Truth.

All of these things are part of *grace upon grace upon grace*. Like Winston Churchill said, 'People come along and they trip over the truth, get up off the ground and dust themselves off and go on and forget it. God's Spirit is drawing you and bringing you to Him—the Father Himself. I want you to grasp it's the Father Himself.

"...and the Life; no one comes to the Father except through Me" (v 6). It is by joint agreement of God the Father and Jesus Christ that you now have access to God, which then is grace. Remember when Jesus told them to pray? What are the first words you pray? Our Father Who is in heaven. No saint, because they aren't there.

When that happens, something else begins to take place, because this is a spiritual thing in your life, in your mind. You may be so excited you run up and tell someone about it and they look at you with it. 'Really!' The Spirit of Truth will reveal it to you and then you find out Halloween is not of God! You find out that's a lie. You find out Sunday is a lie. You find out Christmas is a lie and you're taught to lie to your children, which is a 'good thing,' like my mother told me that's a 'white lie.' I said, 'Well, I get switched for that.'

You run up and tell someone something about it. I remember when just before I was baptized—I worked in a restaurant. Sometimes I would work two shifts, eighteen hours a day, seven days a week. How's that for resting! My boss could always depend on me. If someone didn't show up, I would show up.

So, one Thursday night or Wednesday night I came up to my boss and I said, 'I can't work anymore from Friday night sundown to Saturday night sundown.' He looked at me and said why? He's thinking in his mind here's this guy who would any shift at anytime—morning, swing, or graveyard. And I said, 'Because of my religion.'

His face dropped and his chin almost fell on the top of his shoes and he said, 'When did you become religious?' So, I said, 'Okay, if you can't give me the time off you have my two-week's notice. 'Wait a minute, let me go back and look at the schedule and see what I could do.' He came back and said he couldn't do it. I said, 'Would you mind if I looked at the schedule?' I went back and looked at the schedule and I knew the chef—the chef would work from eight in the morning to four in the afternoon.

On Friday I didn't have to go to school so I said, 'How about if I come in for the chef?' The chef was happy because he had to do all the prep in the restaurant for Saturday, so he could have Friday off, what a good deal. Then I looked over at the graveyard schedule that started at one o'clock

Sunday morning. That was a killer graveyard, 1-9 a.m. was really bad. So, I did that and my official day off was Tuesday, but I had the Sabbath. As you grow and study and pray, you begin to learn things and what happens?

Matthew 11:25: “At that time Jesus answered and said, ‘I praise You, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and intelligent, and have revealed them to babes. Yes, Father, for it was well pleasing in Your sight *to do this*. All things were delivered to Me by My Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father; neither does anyone know the Father except the Son, and the one to whom **the Son personally chooses** to reveal Him’” (vs 25-27).

- You have the Father drawing you, *that’s grace!*
- You having Christ approving of that, *that’s grace!*
- You have Christ now revealing the Father to you, *that’s grace!*
- You can pray to the Father in heaven above, *that’s grace!*

Grace upon grace!

Let’s go on because this gets better. Let’s understand that in order to be put into right standing with God you have to have your sins forgiven and this is accomplished through baptism. Baptism is also an act of grace—is it not? *Christ died!* He gave His life to end the covenant with Israel and begin the covenant with the Church, so He died.

In order to enter into a covenant you have something you need to bring as a sacrifice as well. *That sacrifice is you living and then being buried in the watery grave.* How do we have our sins forgiven? Remember, just like the principle: a little leavens the whole lump. If you have ‘the law of sin and death’ in you, it does not matter if you haven’t committed some heinous crime, you still have ‘the law of sin and death’ within you.

It’s like one man pointed out one time. William Tyndale said, ‘All baby rattlesnakes are born with the capacity of venom and killing. It’s their very nature.’ But yet, when they’re born they look like little innocent things; same way with pythons. A lot of people said, ‘Oh, look at these pythons. Aren’t these very interesting things.’ Until they grew till be 12 feet. ‘Now what am I going to do with it in my house. I’ll throw it out in the swamp.’ Now they’ve got a plague of pythons in Florida that won’t quit.

With all of us having *the law of sin and death*, if you’ve hated you’ve murdered. If you’ve thought evil things, you’ve been evil. God is dealing with the mind, He’s not dealing with just the

outward thing. The law only deals with the outward thing.

Young teenagers go out on a date all alone and mothers instruct their daughters, ‘Now, you be careful. You’ve got to guard yourself.’ Like one father told his daughter, he said, ‘Pants up, skirt down, legs crossed.’ Because you all know, and I’m not telling any secret to anyone, that the minute you got out of the sight of your parents alone with either your girlfriend or your boyfriend or your friends or the group together, you always did things that your parents never knew anything about. And furthermore, they told you not to do them—right? *Yes! The law of sin and death!*

So, dealing with fornication in the letter of the Law if you really don’t do it, you didn’t do it. But all the things leading up to do it, you could do it, and you still didn’t do it. Now in the spirit of law, Christ came and said, ‘The one who lusts after a woman has committed adultery already in his heart.’ Now God is dealing with the mind. Now God is dealing with the Spirit. He’s not dealing with just the Law. We look and see that sin to us becomes exceedingly sinful. What does God do? We begin to think about God. God sends His Spirit to draw us.

- we begin *following*
- we begin *learning*
- we begin *knowing*

All of this is *grace upon grace upon grace!*

He brings us to the point of conviction of sin. Then He brings us to the point that we know we need to be baptized. Why do you repent? Why could you have done that same act in the past and think nothing of it and really think that was pretty good, but now because God has intervened in your life you know it’s exceedingly sinful. What happened? *Another grace!*

Romans 2:4: “Or do you despise the riches of His kindness and forbearance and longsuffering, not knowing that **the graciousness of God leads you to repentance?**” To where you cry out to God, ‘Forgive my sins.’ Where then you look and see where it says, ‘If you seek God, you have to forsake your way. You have to forsake your thoughts,’ Because God’s ‘thoughts are not our thoughts and His ways are not our ways.’ This is a complete turning upside down of your former life—is it not? *That’s what repentance is all about!*

God is responding to you in grace. It is the Father Who is doing it. God the Father and Jesus Christ are the Ones Who are doing it. There are no angels in between. This is what I want you to understand about grace. This is the only thing, brethren, that’s going to help straighten out the Churches of God, that they understand *God the*

Father and Jesus Christ are directly involved with the Spirit of God in the life of everyone that He calls. They belong to Him and we are only stewards of God's property to increase God's investment.

God leads you with His grace to repentance. How does He forgive your sins? He does it this way. He justifies you. Romans 3:23: "**For all have sinned...**"—because we all have *the law of sin and death!* How many times does a scandal erupt with someone who is thought to be a stalwart upright person in the community or in the Church or in business? *All have sinned!*

What happens when your little kid runs to the store and comes home with stolen candy in his pocket? Verse 23: "...all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (v 23). All human beings are condemned. That's a terrible state to be in—isn't it?

The Catholics say you can buy your way out, send more money to the pope. The Muslims say put out a suicide bomb and you'll be greeted with 72 virgins. *Christ paid for the sins of all mankind, as the Creator because He gave all human beings 'the law of sin and death'!* Only He can undo it because He did it! So as a righteous God, He took upon Himself, which is grace—right? Doesn't it say that by the grace of God Christ tastes death for every man? *Yes, it does!* (Heb. 2).

Isn't it grace to say, 'Father, I will die for them; I will become a human being; I will give up My glory; I will divest Myself; I will put Myself into Your hands and I will go as a human being, because that's why We made mankind in Our image and after Our likeness. I will take upon Myself 'the law of sin and death,' just like I gave to all My creation. With Your Spirit and with Your help I will not sin—by choice—and I will overcome Satan the devil. We will, with Our plan, save all mankind.'

When you come to Christ to have your sins forgiven think how great that was! I don't know what thing you could compare on earth with a human analogy to compare with that. You can't because this is *grace upon grace*.

His life was full of grace and Truth. He was filled with the Holy Spirit of God. He said, 'Of Myself'—and the Greek is 'ek'—*out from within Me I can do nothing*. The work He was to do was Divine, though in the flesh. The work He was to do was to save mankind. Since He divested Himself of His glory and committed Himself to God the Father, He taught what the Father taught Him, He said the things that He instructed Him to do, and He willingly laid down His life. Jesus said, 'I lay My life down for the sheep. No one takes it from Me. I have authority to receive it back.' That's something! All of that's grace.

Every time we go to God and we say, 'Our Father in heaven'—as I pointed out recently your prayers go right up to God the Father, directly. Have you been begotten by God the Father in the Spirit of your mind? *Yes!* You have the Spirit of God. *That's grace!* Does God hear and answer your prayers? *Yes, that's grace!*

Our whole relationship with God is with God, not with a 'religion' and because of that He demands that we keep His commandments at a spiritual level. That's why we have the series *God's Grace and Commandment-Keeping*. I want you to understand. God loves you. Christ loves you. They are dealing with you directly and that is the *grace of God*.

Verse 24: "But are being **justified** freely... [put in right standing with God] **...by His grace...** [*grace upon grace*] ...through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." That's why we're here, brethren. Once we grasp this; once we understand this; once we live our lives this way; once we—as we can say in the human vernacular—'wrap our minds around this'—this is something we continually grow in—then we begin to understand. Then it talks about how we have been freely forgiven through His blood.

This is a unilateral operation by God the Father through Jesus Christ *to everyone who repents; to everyone who is called of God and responds!* Let's talk about the calling of God, because it says that 'many are called and few are chosen.' Why are few chosen? *Because few repent!*

The majority do not repent. Look at what is called the Christian world out there today. God's judgment is upon it and it's just absolutely plunging headlong down into the abyss. Remember the sermon that I gave when God gave me the idea concerning Church at Home nine years ago and it was when I was flying to the conference here and we had the conference in November and I was reading the book by Lloyd Geering, *Christianity Without God!* Do we have it today in the world? *Yes, we do!*

Now I'm reading a book by this woman, *Christianity After Religion* by Diana Butler Bass. I'll say no more but I'm going to give a sermon on it. Just to give you a clue: The Protestants are now believing that as men and women are now, God is in every human being today, *which is not true!* That sows the seed of a one-world religion that will be sown in every religion in the world, and we're all one big happy family under the antichrist.

With repentance, with our sins forgiven, what has God done? Let's back up and add a little bit more to it. We finally find out in the course of studies that Satan the devil is 'the god of this world' and he's 'deceived the whole world'—correct? Were you in the grips of Satan the devil at one time?

Satan has people who do good works over here and most of them work in government. Then he has those over there who are dedicated to evil and murder, drugs, killing and slaughtering. Then he has those over here who are dedicated to lying, cheating, stealing, and all of that sort of thing: ripping off banks and ripping off the investors.

He's got all of them deceived because all of the money in the world really isn't money. It's only a number, only a figure, only a debt. Do you know what the people of Iceland have done? *They fired the whole government!* They got rid of all the bankers. They renounced all their debt and they are starting again. All of this debt is artificially created.

Then look at 'religion.' Look at education. Look at sports. Look at this world. Finally you come to the understanding, yes, *Satan is deceiving the whole world!* You were in the grips of Satan and most of those who will be coming into the Church of God now and repentance that God will lead them, have been involved in many difficult and heinous sins. They'll be crying out for forgiveness. Only God can do this and it is the Father Himself Who does it through the sacrifice of Christ.

Colossians 1:9: "For this cause we also, from the day that we heard of it, do not cease to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding." This shows the magnitude of the growth that we are to come to.

That's why what we are studying is from God the Father and Jesus Christ. They are eternal Spirit beings. He's offering us eternal life. We are actually in the school of eternal life. That's what it's all about. To learn eternal life is going to fantastic. *To live forever!*

It's kind of like this. A woman is pregnant and about the late eighth month, the beginning of the ninth month, if you put your ear down you can hear the baby swishing around. The baby can hear things. They can hear music, respond to it, so make sure you have good music if you're pregnant. They get all upset when they hear all of this jangled modern music.

What if the father put his hands right on the mother's belly and said, 'Hello, little daughter, I love you.' She could probably hear the sound, but would she understand anything? *Of course not!* That's kind of the way we are until the resurrection—right? What is it going to be like to be a spirit being? But we have to remember from whence we came.

Verse 10: "That you may walk worthily of the Lord, unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work and growing in the knowledge of God;

being strengthened with all power according to the might of His glory, unto all endurance and long-suffering with joy; giving thanks to the Father, Who has made us qualified for the share of the inheritance of the saints in the light" (vs 10-12). Brethren, I can tell you what that will be, but we don't have a clue as to the reality of it and it is this. *We are going to inherit the universe!* Think on that!

The next time you watch these beautiful pictures that the Hubbell telescope has done, and I'm sure that God gave that technology to glorify Himself and give a witness to this God-defying world that there is a Creator God Who has made all of this. We didn't come from slime and all you evolutionists out there *go get your own dirt* and your own big bang. Stop getting mad at me. The Father qualifies us.

- this is why you're here
- this is why the Father has to draw
- this is why it has to be through Jesus Christ
- this is why it is a spiritual operation through grace
- this is why it is from the Father because it is the benefit directly from the Father to you, everyone of us

Verse 13: "Who has personally rescued us from the power of darkness..." Who is the prince of darkness who has power over this world? *Satan the devil!* The only One Who can release you from that is God the Father through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

"...and has transferred us unto... [Not into because the Kingdom of God is not here and flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God, but we are now under the jurisdiction of the Kingdom of God through God the Father and Jesus Christ.] ...unto the kingdom of the Son of His love" (v 13).

I want to leave you with this: *That's why the Church is the **body of baptized believers!*** Any corporate thing only has to do with the necessity of conducting business in this world. A corporate church has no spiritual authority. The Holy Spirit of God has two aspects to it. You have the Holy Spirit of God *by receiving the begetting of the Holy Spirit from the Father at baptism!* It is the Father and Christ dwelling in you. *Yes, it is a down payment! Yes, it is a beginning!* But as we are going to see we have to 'grow in grace and knowledge.' It's directly from God the Father to each one of us individually.

*That's what it means **grace upon grace!***

Scriptural References:

- 1) John 1:1-4, 14, 16-17, 16
- 2) John 3:16
- 3) John 6:44
- 4) John 14:6

- 5) Matthew 11:25-27
- 6) Romans 2:4
- 7) Romans 3:23-24
- 8) Colossians 1:9-13

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Genesis 1
- Luke 2:40
- John 1:15
- Hebrews 2

Also referenced:

Sermon Series:

- *What Kind of Christian Are You?*
(ChurchatHome.org)
- *God's Grace and Commandment-Keeping*

Books:

- *Christianity Without God* by Lloyd Geering
- *Christianity After Religion* by Diana Butler Bass

Grace Upon Grace II

Fred R. Coulter

Greetings, everyone! Welcome to Sabbath services! Before we can go any further we need to find out *who is under grace* and what that means. The first thing we need to find out is: Who is *under law*?

I don't think that we have understood it as well as we ought to. I don't think we understand why it's necessary for it to be grace, under the New Covenant, and why *under law* is the opposite of being *under grace*. Let's let the Bible define what it is to be *under law*.

Romans 7:1: "Are you ignorant, brethren (for I am speaking to those who know law)..." Let's understand something: this right here is law in general. Everything that God does is by law. Everything on earth operates by laws subject to the earth and what God has created here. All the animals, all the birds, all the fish, the water—even the water He gave the decree. 'The ocean will go this far and no further.' All men are judged by law.

Let's see the first definition of what it is to be *under law*. "...that the Law... [This means all of God's Law in relationship to human beings.] ...rules over a man for as long a time as he may live?" (v 1). If the Law rules over you, that means you are *under law*—every human being.

Romans 6:14: "For sin shall not rule over you because **you are not under law, but under grace**.... [What does it mean to be *under law*?] ...What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law, but under grace? MAY IT NEVER BE!" (vs 14-15). That is one of the most confusing things for those who believe in grace only and no law-keeping. Because it's clearly understood that 'sin is *the transgression of the Law*.' It never dawned on them that God has two categories of law:

1. for His people in the spirit
2. for everyone else

Romans 7:6: "But now we have been released from the Law..." I've got a footnote explaining what this means. In Rom. 7 the word *law* from the Greek 'nomos' is used 23 times. It shows the various kinds of law:

- law in general
- the Law of God
- the law of marriage
- the law of sin and death

All of those are there.

But this 'being released from the Law' doesn't mean that you're no longer obligated to keep the commandments. This means because Christ died

the Jews who want to be converted and God through the body of Christ have been released from the Old Covenant marriage between God and Israel.

Another misnomer is that Protestants believe that the Jews—which is everything going clear back to Adam—which is also not true—is that they receive salvation through law. If they received salvation through law, why can't we today receive salvation through law? The answer is: *they never did receive salvation*, with the exception of the few patriarchs and some of the righteous kings and then all of the prophets of God. None of the rest were given the Holy Spirit.

They were only promised blessings of life if they would obey; curses if they disobeyed. God set before them life and death, blessing and cursing. He commanded them to choose life. *But nowhere does it ever say that they were to receive the Holy Spirit.*

Verse 6: "...because we have died *to that* in which we were held..." In other words, when you are baptized you die to your sins.

- you were held in sins
- you were under law
- you were under judgment

Likewise, Christ died and then that ended the Old Covenant. When He rose from the dead then He was free to begin the New Covenant—not until. God kept His own laws. Marriage is supposed to be between man and woman—husband and wife—till death do you part. So, Christ died! That freed all of the Israelites and the Jews, wherever they are, from the terms of the Old Covenant.

"...*to that* in which we were held so that we might serve in **newness of the spirit**... [a different standard, a higher level] ...and not in *the oldness of the letter*" (v 6).

What does it mean to be *under law*? We're going to see this: *every human being is under law to God* whether they know it or not because God created them.

Romans 3:9: "What then? Are we of ourselves better?.... [To this day the Jews haven't understood that, yet.] ...Not at all! For we have already charged both Jews and Gentiles—**ALL—with** being under sin." Why are all under sin? *Because all have 'the law of sin and death' within them!*

Let's see what human nature really, really is. There are varying degrees of evil. Here is what is in every man and woman from Adam and Eve. It's part of your inheritance. Years ago we were told that if

you would train up your children just right they would be next to perfect and all you had to do was beat the blankity-blank out of them. Did that change their nature? How many kids grew up perfect? *Not one!* Here's why. You see this even in little children. You see it in men and women, young and old.

Mark 7:21: "For from within, out of the hearts of men, go forth evil thoughts..." Remember the series I did on *Who Controls Your Mind?* Who comes along and augments those evil thoughts? *The prince of the power of the air!*

Notice the first two: "...adulteries, fornications..." What's the biggest problem of human beings all through history? *Sex problems!* You can read of it in the Old Testament; you can read of it in the New Testament. You can read it in the newspaper, you can see it on television with the reports.

"...murders..." (v 21). Of course, the more that there are adulteries and fornications and all of the crimes that go along with that, the more murders you have.

Verse 22: "Thefts, covetousness..." If you have cable TV and if you have CNBC you watch the programs that they have on *American Greed*. It is amazing what people do. Everybody remembers Bernie Madoff. I think that he pled guilty so no one would kill him, because he really took the money. And if you do it to your fellow Jew... Then there's another one that they have on there where they find out the pedophiles going online to find underage children to have sex with. That's also an eye opener.

"...wickednesses, guile, licentiousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness; all these evils go forth from within, and *these* defile a man" (vs 22-23). That means they are judging.

Because of sin Paul asked this question: Romans 3:5: "...Is God unrighteous to inflict His wrath? (I am speaking according to man's view.) MAY IT NEVER BE! Otherwise, how shall God judge the world?" (vs 5-6). God judges the world. 'All have sinned and come short of the glory of God.'

How is the world ruled today, spiritually speaking? First of all, Satan the devil is the 'god of this world.' He has his angels that fell with him and they are called demons. Then we have the righteous angels of God who administer the will of God on earth. That's why Paul wrote that the world to come has not been subjected to the angels, but given to the children of God.

Let's look at a couple Scriptures to see how God judges. First of all let's see what kind of men are placed into high positions. You might think about this if you think that elections are going to

change anything. God raises up a nation and puts a nation down; we'll see that. In putting down Judah and sending them into captivity, who did He raise up? *Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonian Kingdom*—correct? This becomes part of the judgment of God, because God is going to judge the world. They are all under sin and they are all under law so God does everything on earth according to His laws, except those who are under grace. Let's get this defined first.

When Nebuchadnezzar had this dream where he was going to lose his sanity for seven years, Daniel came and told him the vision: Daniel 4:17: "This matter is by the decree of the watchers... [the angels of God] ...and the demand by the word of the Holy ones... [The Holy ones are also angels. Remember what happened to the father of John the Baptist, Zacharias, when he didn't believe Gabriel? It says in Heb. 2 that those who disobeyed what the angels were commanded to enforce received stern punishment.] (Here's the reason for this): ...so that the living may know that **the Most High rules in the kingdom of men...**"

He does it through angels; He does it through demons. Notice who you are going to elect. He may be more righteous than the current one, but look at the world leaders. "**...and sets up over it the basest of men**" (v 17).

Let's see another thing concerning God and how He rules the nations. We find that God is continually judging the world, judging the nations, and He does it based upon His laws.

Jeremiah 18:7: "If at any time I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck it up and to pull it down, and to destroy it; if that nation, against whom I have spoken, will turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do to them" (vs 7-8). Where do we have an account that that happened? *In the book of Jonah!* Jonah was sent to go to the people of Nineveh and to tell them to repent. Jonah had an argument with God. He said, 'If I go there, they'll repent, so why send me?' And He sent him anyway.

What happened? *They repented!* Even the king on the throne said, 'I decree a fast, sackcloth and ashes, everyone humble themselves, don't even feed and water the animals. Turn from your wickedness and maybe God will turn from His judgment.' Sure enough, what happened? *God withheld His judgment!* Then Jonah complained. So, Jonah sat down under this plant that grew up and had some shade. God was going to teach Jonah a lesson; so here's judgment on Jonah. He woke up and behold a worm had eaten the plant, the leaves had fallen off and there he was in the heat. He virtually said, 'God, why did You do this?' God said, ***To teach you that I'm going to do what I'm***

going to do. So, if they repent, they'll turn. We know in Jer. 5 it talks about where God told Jeremiah, 'You run to and fro in the streets of Jerusalem and see if you can find a man, just one man who is just. If you can find one man, I'll call off the whole captivity.' But he couldn't do it. Sometimes it gets down to one man, as affecting many people.

Remember what happened with God and Abraham when God and the two angels told Abraham, 'We're going down to Sodom and Gomorrah to destroy those cities.' Abraham said, 'Oh, my nephew Lot is down there. Lord, will You destroy it for the sake of fifty who are righteous?' *No!* 'Forty-five?' *No!* He got clear down to ten. Remember when it came to ten, after asking Him all the way down he said, 'Lord, don't be angry. Will you destroy them for ten?' He said *no!* So, God is righteous and just in what He does. But nevertheless if they do evil, then He will judge them.

Verse 9: "And if at any time I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build it and to plant *it*.... [I think that's exactly what we're seeing with China today.] ...If it does evil in My sight... [which they will end up doing] ...that it not obey My voice, then I will repent of the good with which I said I would do them good.... [the warning comes]: ...Now therefore, speak to the men of Judah, and to the people of Jerusalem, saying, 'Thus says the LORD, "Behold, I am forming evil against you, and devising a plan against you. Return now, each one from his evil way, and make your ways and your doings good"' (vs 9-11). God gave them a chance. God judges nations; He judges individuals.

Let's come back to Romans 3 and we will get a clearer definition of what it means to be *under law*. Everyone is *under sin* because everyone has 'the law of sin and death' in them. That's why it says:

Romans 3:9: "What then? Are we of ourselves better? Not at all! For we have already charged both Jews and Gentiles—**ALL—with being under sin**, Exactly as it is written: 'For there is not a righteous one—not even one!.... [Righteous by what standard? *By the Laws of God!*] ...There is not one who understands... [That's why when you watch the news you get so furious.] ...there is not one who seeks after God. They have all gone out of the way; together they have *all* become depraved. There is not *even* one who is practicing kindness. No, there is not so much as one! Their throats *are* like an open grave; with their tongues they have used deceit; *the* venom of asps is under their lips, whose mouths are full of cursing and bitterness; their feet *are* swift to shed blood; destruction and misery *are* in their way; And *the* way of peace they have not known'" (vs 9-17).

Doesn't that describe most of the world? Look at what's happening in America. It's not as bad as other places in the world, but how do you think it's going to get any better? Comparatively saying, 'It's not as bad as,' that's really not the question. The question is: is anything being done to keep it from being worse? *No!*

Verse 18: "'There is no fear of God before their eyes.' Now then, we know that whatever the Law says... [because everyone is *under the Law*] ...it speaks to those who are under law..." (vs 18-19). This can also mean *within law*. Why do I say that? *Because there are people who in the society are considered upstanding, law-abiding citizens*, but do they know about the Sabbath? *No, they are blinded!* They fall into the category in Rom. 2 that they keep part of the Laws of God. They're basically honest; they don't steal. I don't say they won't lie, they may lie a great deal.

You can go into some neighborhoods that are like that and they are quite good neighborhoods. You go into other neighborhoods and if they see that you have anything worthwhile, you become a target. What about those who are *under law*, but are not dedicated sinners. All are *under sin*, but all are not dedicated sinners.

Romans 2:13: "Because the hearers of the Law *are* not just before God, but the doers of the Law shall be justified." That's why when God is calling someone they come to the conviction of what sin is and they understand what the Law is saying. They see they have been transgressing the Law and they begin to repent and begin to want to do what is right. That must happen before baptism because no one is justified until they are baptized.

Verse 14: "For when *the* Gentiles, which do not have *the Law*... [they were never given the Law] ...practice by nature the things contained in the Law, these who do not have *the Law* are a law unto themselves; who show the work of the Law written in their own hearts, their consciences bearing witness, and their reasonings also, as they accuse or defend one another" (vs 14-15). Is God going to take that into account? *Yes, indeed!* That's why with the Holy Day plans of God we understand about the Last Great Day and the second resurrection.

Paul speaks of it right here in v 16: "In a day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel."

That's what it says here, speaks to those who are *under law*. Romans 3:19: "...so that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God." This guiltiness is by judgment, because the root word is here 'krinos'—which is *to judge*.

So, the whole world is *under law*, **everyone!** This is where grace begins to enter in. What about those who are searching for God? As brought out here a couple of weeks ago, very interesting. When God slew the firstborn, man and beast in Egypt, He knew where everyone was—right? He didn't make a mistake. He didn't kill half firstborn and half second born. You could say that would be unfair. God doesn't make mistakes. How do we come out from under these things?

We're going to see something very important because God is involved in the world with the angels and with the demons and Satan the devil. We also know this concerning Satan the devil and the demons: ***Satan cannot do anything unless he has God's permission; neither can the demons!***

Remember when Jesus was going to cast out the legion of demons out of this man. It's recorded that He talked with the demons and He said, 'What is your name?' They said, 'Legions because we are many.' He was going to cast them out and they said, 'Can you cast out into the herd of swine?' He gave them permission and cast them out into the herd of swine. You might ask, 'Why were there swine in the area of the Holy Land?' Not supposed to eat pork. But who occupied the Holy Land? *The Romans!* They were raising them for the Roman soldiers. So, they lost 2,000 of their hogs and were short on pig meat for a while.

Let's see something else on how God keeps track of the world. What about someone out there who knows absolutely nothing about God, especially in today's world when we have so many Bibles, but knows absolutely nothing about God? One day something real terrible happens to them and they say, 'Oh, God, help me out here. I don't know what to do.'

- Does God know that individual?
- How's God going to find out where he is?
- Is God going to answer that prayer?

Let's see the vehicle that God has that He uses to also keep tabs on the earth and who is seeking Him. Remember, all are under sin and under the Law until a certain point. Let's see where God begins to intervene while they are still under law and still under sin, but wanting to get out from sin and wanting to change their lives.

Revelation 4:5, this is at the throne of God: "And proceeding from the throne were lightnings and thunders and voices, and seven lamps of fire, which are the seven Spirits of God, *were* burning before the throne." That means God has full control of them.

Revelation 5:6: "Then I saw, and behold, before the throne and the four living creatures, and before the elders, *was* standing a Lamb as having

been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes... [this shows Christ is in control of it] ...which are the seven Spirits of God... [seven eyes are the seven Spirits] ...that are sent into all the earth."

Let's see how this works in relationship to God dealing with the individual. All of us had a moment in our lives—didn't we? You can probably look back and remember the moment that you really got serious with God. Where you said, 'Oh, God.' I don't know what the problem was in your life or how it may have been, but you cried out to Him and God heard you.

Granted this was under the Old Covenant. God answered prayers under the Old Covenant. Can God answer prayers of anyone even though they are not in the Church of God, are not baptized? *Yes!* How would anybody ever get in contact with God if he didn't.

2-Chronicles 15:1: "And the Spirit of God came upon Azariah the son of Oded. And he went out to meet Asa, and said to him, 'Hear me, Asa, and all Judah and Benjamin. The LORD *is* with you while you are with Him. And if you seek Him, He will be found by you. But if you forsake Him, He will forsake you.... [that is an absolutely true statement to this day] ...And for a long time Israel *had been* without the true God, and without a teaching priest, and without law. And when they turned in their trouble to the LORD God of Israel, and sought Him, He was found by them. And in those times *there was* no peace to him who went out, nor to him who came in, but great tumult *was* upon all the inhabitants of the lands. And nation was destroyed by nation, and city by city, for God troubled them with every adversity. But you be strong and do not let your hands be weak, for your work shall be rewarded'" (vs 1-7).

The long and short of it is that they repented, they started keeping the commandments of God, the blessings of God came upon the king, came upon the people, but it didn't last very long. Soon Asa was out there trying to get an alliance with the king of Syria so he could go fight against Israel. Imagine that—Jews against Israelites. He didn't obey God. ***If you are going to trust in God, you've got to rely on God!*** That's the whole lesson here. It doesn't mean there aren't things you can't do to help yourself as well, but don't go out and sin. What was one of the first things that God told the children of Israel when they were coming into the land? *Don't make an alliance with them!* How can God bless you when you go to your enemy and seek an alliance with him so you can come against your blood brothers? *Won't work!*

2-Chronicles 16:7: "And at that time Hanani the seer came to Asa king of Judah and said to him, 'Because you have relied on the king of Syria and

have not relied on the LORD your God, therefore the army of the king of Syria has escaped out of your hand. Were not the Ethiopians and the Libyans a huge army with many chariots and horsemen?... [It doesn't matter what the enemy is, if God is with you He can take care of you.] ...Yet, because you relied on the LORD, He delivered them into your hand” (vs 7-8).

Here is the key: verse 9 shows what the eyes of God that come right from the throne of God directed by Jesus Christ. Remember, the way the world is run is with God and His angels, Christ also in charge of the angels and God knows what's going on in all the earth. There are also Satan and the demons.

Verse 9: “For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro in all the whole earth...” We can understand that today better than perhaps any other generation because we know the remote things that we have. We even have these pilot-less planes, drones, and they're going to and fro back across Pakistan and back and forth across Afghanistan looking for targets. We can liken this to God's *spiritual drones* that see what's going on, on the earth.

Verse 9: “For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro in all the whole earth to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart *is* perfect toward Him.... [Otherwise, when they see you're not doing right, then judgment comes.] ...In this you have done foolishly; therefore, from now on you shall have wars.... [Asa fell on his knees, tore his clothes, put on sackcloth and ashes and repented—*NO!*] ...And Asa was angry with the seer and put him in a prison house, for *he was* in a rage against him because of this. And Asa oppressed some of the people at that time” (vs 9-10). Mixed in all of this is free choice.

Let's see how God answers when people seek Him.

(go to the next track)

Let's see how God finds those who are seeking Him; He has the means to do so, Matthew 7:7: “**Ask**, and it shall be given to you. **Seek**, and you shall find. **Knock**, and it shall be opened to you.” Remember, these words are all promises. It tells us what to do.

- *Ask*—it shall be given to you
- *Seek*—you shall find
- *Knock*—it shall be opened to you

We will see how God does this. He does it with the seven eyes! Let's see what else He commands them to do.

But here's a promise, v 8: “For everyone who asks **receives**, and the one who seeks **finds**, and to the one who knocks **it shall be opened**.” Let's see how this also agrees with what we have in the book

of Isaiah. Here's another promise of God. Then we will see that not only do they have to seek, but they have to *keep on seeking*. Not only do you have to ask, but you have to *keep on asking*. Not only do you have to knock, you have to *keep on knocking*.

Isaiah 55:1. This talks about receiving the saving knowledge of the Gospel. “Ho, everyone who thirsts... [you have to hunger and thirst after righteousness] ...come to the waters... [waters are likened to the Holy Spirit; the righteous man is like a tree planted by rivers of water (Psa. 1)] ...and he who *has* no money... [you can't buy it] ...come, buy and eat... [How do you buy? *You give your life!*] ...Yes, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.” These are all things concerning the Word. Milk is the milk of the Word. The wine then represents the stronger doctrines.

Verse 2: “Why do you spend money for *what is* not bread? And your labor for *what* never satisfies? Harken diligently to Me, and eat *what* is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness. Bow down your ear, and come to Me; **hear**...” (vs 2-3).

- You have to come and listen to the Word of God
- You have to be willing to let the Word of God correct you
- You have to be willing to believe the Word of God

It says the one who comes to God must believe that He exists, meaning that He is. Whatever it says that He is you must believe that.

“...and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David” (v 3). This covenant then has to be a prophecy of the New Covenant. I'm sure the apostles read this section of Isaiah over and over again when they were preaching the Gospel.

Verse 4: “Behold, I have given Him... [Who is the son of David? *Jesus!*] ...for a witness to the people, a Prince and Commander of people.... [this is also a prophecy of Christ] ...Behold, you shall call a nation that you do not know; a nation that did not know you shall run to you because of the LORD your God, and for the Holy One of Israel; for He has glorified you.... [this is talking about calling the Gentiles] ...Seek the LORD while He may be found...” (vs 4-6)—our part. Remember, God told Jeremiah that when these people got so bad in sinning against God and wouldn't listen He said, ‘Don't even pray for them for I will not hear.’ So there are times God cannot be found.

“...call upon Him while He is near.... [God is not far away. There are conditions for the calling. Not many people really like the conditions.] ...Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts... [this is conversion interior, not just

exterior] ...and let him return to the LORD, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon. 'For My thoughts *are* not your thoughts, nor your ways My ways,' says the LORD. 'For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts'" (vs 6-9). That's how He is able to know who is seeking Him. God knows. What does He say about a sparrow when it falls? *He knows it!* What does He say about the hair on your head? *He knows every one!*

Let's see how the call goes out or the speaking or the preaching of the Gospel. The disciples were told, 'Go into all the earth and preach the Gospel.' This is when He spoke to them in parables. He told them that they would understand but most of the people wouldn't understand.

Matthew 13:14: "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 their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and should hear with their ears, and should understand with their hearts, and should be converted, and I should heal them'" (vs 14-15).

It's not a matter of numbers. It's a matter of the response to God. Unless you seek God the blinders remain. Unless you are willing to listen to the Word of God you will have no comprehension of it.

Verse 16: "But blessed *are* your eyes, because they see; and your ears, because they hear. For truly I say to you, many prophets and righteous *men* have desired to see what you see, and have not seen; and to hear what you hear, and have not heard. Therefore, hear the parable of the sower... [The parable of sower is about the preaching of the Gospel.] ...When anyone hears the Word of the kingdom and does not understand *it*, the wicked one comes and snatches away that which was sown in his heart. This is the one who was sown by the way" (vs 16-19). The Word of God goes out there and there are those that hear it and doesn't really mean anything. 'Oh, well, that's just another preacher.'

Verse 20: "Now the one who was sown upon the rocky places is the one who hears the Word and immediately receives it with joy; but *because* he has no root in himself, *he* does not endure; for when tribulation or persecution arises because of the Word, he is quickly offended" (vs 20-21).

That's the one who comes home and says, 'I learned this of the Word of God. I found out that our religion is wrong.' Really? Being whatever it is, Protestant, Catholic, Lutheran, Pentecostal, whatever

it is, and they all persecute him and say, 'If you do not keep Christmas with us, you are disowning us and we will disown you.' So, he caves in, forgets about what he hears. That's one example of it.

Verse 22: "And the one who was sown among the thorns is the one who hears the Word, but the cares of this life and the deceitfulness of riches choke the Word, and it becomes unfruitful.... [Can't get over needing to get all the money.] (Notice these are categories of people): ...But the one who was sown on good ground, this is the one who hears the Word and understands, who indeed brings forth fruit and produces—one a hundredfold, another sixtyfold *and* another thirtyfold" (vs 22-23).

Let's see again how this works. The call goes out and then God is looking to who answers the call. If they start seeking God, then something will begin to happen and we will see what that is in just a minute. This is the parable of the wedding feast. Those who were called didn't pay any attention to it.

Matthew 22:5: "But they paid no attention and went away, one to his farm, and another to his business. And the rest, after seizing his servants, insulted and killed *them*. Now, when the king heard *it*, he became angry; and he sent his armies *and* destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city.... [Notice the judgment of God. They're all under law.] ...Then he said to his servants, 'The wedding feast indeed is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy; therefore, go into the well-traveled highways, and invite all that you find to the wedding feast.'.... [the invitation goes out] ...And after going out into the highways, those servants brought together everyone that they found, both good and evil; and the wedding feast was filled with guests. And when the king came in to see the guests, *he* noticed a man there who was not dressed in *proper* attire for *the* wedding feast" (vs 5-11).

What are the wedding garments for the wedding feast and the garments of the saints? *The white, bright linen is the righteousness of the saints!* This shows we've got to change. This shows we've got to be prepared.

Verse 12: "And he said to him, 'Friend, how did you enter here without a garment *fit* for *the* wedding feast?' But he had no answer. Then the king said to the servants, 'Bind his hands and feet, *and* take him away, and cast *him* into the outer darkness,' There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.... [cut off from God] ...For many are called, but few *are* chosen" (vs 12-14). Why? *Because few repent*, that's why!

As you are seeking God, learning of His Word and you begin seeing where you need to change, then you really desire more. Something happens that God does because remember those

seven eyes going through the whole earth seeking who is trying to seek after God. What happens then? When a person really puts himself or herself to really want to know, then God begins to intervene in their life. This the beginning of the grace of God *with you*. You're not under the grace of God yet, but this is the beginning of the grace of God *with you*. Why is this by grace? *Because God is acting directly in your life!* Remember, this is the grace of God acting in your life, but you are not yet *under* grace.

This helps answer the question as to why God lets them all be blinded, because their day of salvation will come later. Here's another thing that's grace, too. *You can't do it on your own!* If you seek God and you really don't mean it, don't you think that the seven eyes of God will also know that? *Yes, indeed*, because God knows the thoughts of men—doesn't He? Knows your heart.

John 6:44: "No one can come to Me unless the Father, Who sent Me, draws him..." God must begin to draw you. How does He begin to draw you? Christ is also involved in this. You can't come to Christ unless the Father draws you and that is an act of grace to you. Does anyone deserve of their own merit, because they've been good, that God has to be involved in their lives? *No!* So, this is the beginning of grace.

Jesus backed it up and said, John 14:6: "I am the **Way**, and the **Truth**, and the **Life**; no one comes to the Father except through Me." The seven spirits make the first contact with someone. Let's put that back together with another verse—all three of them together. This is how you study line upon line, precept upon precept, and you add the Scriptures together.

Verse 15: "If you love Me, keep the commandments—namely, My commandments.... [I still don't know how the Protestants get around that.] ...And I will ask the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that it may be with you throughout the age: *Even* the Spirit of the Truth, which the world cannot receive because it perceives it not, nor knows it; but you know it because it **dwells with you**..." (vs 15-17).

Notice the progression of what we have. You seek God. God responds because the seven eyes are finding out who is seeking Him. Then you're sincere in it and you want to know more and you really start seeing what you need to do, changing your life. You want the Truth.

Maybe in today's world you have the Bible and you check out every preacher you can find and begin eliminating those who are telling lies. All of that is part of the process. But the key is here after you seek God and one of the seven spirits come and deal with you. Then you reach a point that God says,

'All right, I'm am going to have the Holy Spirit be *with* them.' That's quite a bit of an increase in God's involvement—right? The Holy Spirit, being the power of God, is with you.

Here's what He told the disciples: "...and shall be **within you**" (v 17). That only comes with repentance and baptism. It is the Holy Spirit that comes, and what does it do now? *It continues working!* The Holy Spirit, when it comes to be with you, will be with you and continue to lead you as long as you keep seeking God and as long as you obey what you learn! Here it talks about the calling, because the calling then is you answer the call. God is selecting those that the world thinks are the least. When we become spirit beings we are not going to be like we are now.

1-Corinthians 1:26: "For you see your calling, brethren, that *there are* not many who are wise according to the flesh, not many who are powerful, not many who are high-born *among you*. Rather, God has chosen the foolish things of the world..." (vs 26-27).

When God chooses you, because you have answered the call, then by the grace of God you have been selected. Now what do you do? We find in Acts 2—now there's one verse back there where we talk about repent and be baptized. Let's go back and read the verse after that. Let's see what He said.

Acts 2:38, Peter said: "Repent and be baptized each one of you... [That's a key important thing. That's when you receive the Holy Spirit *within* you instead of just being with you.] ...For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all those who are afar off **as many as the Lord our God may call**" (vs 38-39). You see your calling; you have to answer the call.

When you are baptized and receive the Holy Spirit then this is *the* act that puts you under grace. Let's come to Romans 6 because this is the covenant between you and God. Once that happens, once you are baptized and once you receive the Spirit of God then God deals with you as His son or daughter and you are under grace.

Under grace has many, many different meanings and facets to it. Let's see the process here. You are led to repentance because the Spirit of God is with you. There are people who reject it and the Spirit of God is withdrawn. But if you do repent and are baptized you have answered the call and this is the whole demarcation in Rom. 6. That's why it talks about *under law* or *under grace*. **You are now in a different category before God!** Doesn't mean you don't have to keep the commandments of God. It means that now you are in a personal relationship with God.

Romans 6:1: "What then shall we say? Shall we continue in sin, so that grace may abound? **MAY**

IT NEVER BE! We who died to sin... [That's what happened. You died to sin, a sinful way of life. You died to living in sin.] ...how shall we live any longer therein? Or are you ignorant that we... [he includes himself] ...as many as were baptized into Christ Jesus, were baptized into His death?" (vs 1-3).

You have pledged your life by a symbolic death. That death is joined to the death of Christ. That is the covenant relationship beginning between you and God the Father and Jesus Christ. At that point now, when you receive the Holy Spirit, God is now going to give you the strength and the power through His Spirit to begin to overcome that you could not do while you were in the world. *That's under grace!* There's much more to it.

Verse 4: "Therefore, we were buried with Him through the baptism into the death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, in the same way, we also should walk in newness of life." Your life is going to be changed. Instead of wondering what you are going to do, you are going to be wondering:

- How do I live my life the way God wants me to live?
- How then am I going to maintain the relationship that God has put me in?
 - ✓ I was seeking God—*He responded to me*
 - ✓ I answered the call—*He granted me repentance*
 - ✓ I was baptized—I *have received the Holy Spirit*
 - ✓ I am under grace
 - ✓ I am a begotten son or daughter of God

Now your whole category of life is entirely different. Here's the first thing that the Spirit of God does for you:

Verse 4: "Therefore, we were buried with Him through the baptism into the death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, in the same way, we also should walk in newness of life. For is we have been conjoined together in the likeness of His death, so also shall we be *in the likeness of His resurrection*" (vs 4-5). The promise of eternal life is the greatest grace that God can give. He gives it. It is the gift of God—***eternal life, the greatest grace of God!***

Verse 6: "Knowing this, that our old man was co-crucified with *Him* in order that the body of sin might be destroyed, so that we might no longer be enslaved to sin." For the first time in your life:

- through the power of the Holy Spirit of God within you *which is by God's grace*
- repentance is *by God's grace*
- receiving the blessing of God because He has called you and you answered the call, *is by grace*

Now He gives you the power to do something you did not have before: ***the body of sin, 'the law of sin and death' within you, now can be overcome through the power of the Spirit of God!*** The sin that dwells within is not going to enslave you that you obey it in the lust anymore. You can overcome it; you can put it away. You can quit lying; you can quit stealing; you can quit committing idolatry; you can quit committing adultery; you can quit all the sins and live a righteous way with the Holy Spirit of God, which you could not do before. Christ died to sin; you died with Him.

Verse 11: "In the same way also, you should indeed reckon yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God through Christ Jesus our Lord. Therefore... [We have choices to make. God doesn't remove the law of sin and death, He gives the power through His Holy Spirit to overcome it.] ...do not let sin rule in your mortal body by obeying it in the lusts thereof" (vs 11-12). Which is what you did. Things change by the grace of God. We're going to see how tremendous that this really is. What it really represents.

Verse 13: "Likewise, do not yield your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin; rather, **yield...**" All of this is by choice.

- you choose the right
- you choose the good
- you choose to put away sin

"...**yield yourselves** to God as those who are alive from *the dead*, and your members *as* instruments of righteousness to God. **For sin shall not rule over you...** [as it was in the past] ...because you are not **under law...**" (vs 13-14). When you were baptized you were placed *under grace*. Everything that God requires you to do now is on a higher level, a spiritual level, not doing away with the Laws of God.

"...you are not under law, but under grace.... [then the question comes up]: ...What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law, but under grace? **MAY IT NEVER BE!**" (vs 14-15). Now he begins to explain the lifelong battle of overcoming sin. That's why we have the sermon series:

- *The Washing of the Water by the Word*
- *God's Grace and Commandment-Keeping*
- *Grace of God*

We're going to update the booklets that we have on grace so that it's going to reflect the greatest grace of all: ***God's personal involvement in your life, directly!*** Directly from God the Father and Jesus Christ. That's something!

You can never buy it; you can never earn it. It's by God's mercy and grace which is God's kindness and goodness to you. That's why he says, v

16: “Don’t you realize that to whom you yield yourselves *as* servants to obey, you are servants of the one you obey, whether *it is* of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness.” You can’t have righteousness without obedience.

Verse 17: “But thanks *be* to God, that you were *the* servants of sin, but you have obeyed from *the* heart that form of doctrine which was delivered to you.” What does this do? This changes your whole perspective. This changes your whole way of thinking, your whole way of living.

Verse 18: “And having been delivered from sin, you became *the* servants of righteousness.” That means you are seeking:

- the *will* of God
- the *Truth* of God
- the *commandments* of God
- the *love* of God
- the *character* of God

—all of these things!

Romans 5:1: “Therefore, having been justified by faith... [because you believe God, were baptized, received the Holy Spirit] ...we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through Whom we also have access by faith in this grace...” (vs 1-2). What is this access that you did not have before?

“...this grace in which we stand, and we ourselves boast in the hope of *the* glory of God. And not only *this*, but we also boast in tribulations, realizing that tribulation brings forth endurance. 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 2-5). ***That is the grace of God!***

What does this mean? We know it’s only the earnest, only the down payment. This gives us direct access to God the Father and Jesus Christ in heaven above. Here is what has been given and then we will see our relationship with God the Father and Jesus Christ. We are now the begotten sons and daughters of God the Father. He called us and gave us His Spirit because He loves us. We return that love to God in fellowship. We stand in the grace and then God gives the greater grace to us as we go along. We have our part, but God has His part.

Here is God’s desire, 2-Peter 1:3: “According as His Divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and Godliness...” Think about that a minute!

- understanding about life: where we are going, what we’re doing
- understanding about God

- understanding about His Holy Spirit
- understanding His Word

—all of this is *grace*.

“...through the knowledge of Him Who called us by *His own* glory and virtue; through which He has given to us the greatest and *most* precious promises, that through these you may become partakers of *the* Divine nature... [become as God is] ...having escaped the corruption *that is in the* world through lust” (vs 3-4).

This the goal; this is where we’re going. 1-Peter 1 gives us more of what we need to do, but let’s see what it is with the Spirit being within us. Think of that! God has sent the earnest of the promise of eternal life through the Holy Spirit ***to be in our minds!*** That is what helps us overcome human nature. Let’s see what it is. This shows part of the work we are to do, but I want to focus on what comes after that.

1-Corinthians 3:11 “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). You have good works, consistent works, spiritual works, or you are lackadaisical.

Here is the thing that’s important where he says here, v 16: “Don’t you understand that you are God’s temple... [What a fantastic grace and blessing that is, directly from God. ***You are God’s temple!***] ...and *that* the Spirit of God is dwelling ***in you!***” What does that give us?

This gives us something that the world cannot have. You cannot have this without the Spirit of God and you cannot have this without grace. Unfortunately too many of even the Churches of God believe that grace is only the forgiveness of sin. That is a part of grace, but that’s like saying, ‘Look at this house,’ and you’re holding in your hand a brick, and the person says, ‘That’s a brick.’ *This is a house.* He says, ‘It’s a brick!’

To understand the grace of God puts us in a fantastic relationship, just as the brick is not the house. Having the Spirit of God and access to God the Father through prayer, through study, through crying out to God, notice what it does.

1-John 1:3: “That which we have seen and have heard we are reporting to you in order that you also may have fellowship with us; for the fellowship...” Everything changes. Christ is *in* you; the Father is *in* you through the power of the Holy Spirit. ***‘We will come and dwell in you’*** (John 14). The Father through the begetting and the Son through the mind of Christ.

“...indeed, our fellowship—*is* with the Father and with His own Son, Jesus Christ” (v 3). That is tremendous grace—fellowship with God. You can pray to God at any time. Your prayers go right up to the throne room of God. You can study the Word of God. This tells you how to live. This tells you how to think. This tells you how you can have that relationship with God. This is the fellowship and it’s all based on the love of God.

This is all a part of grace. There are many facets of it and in the booklets that we have concerning grace it explains all of it and gets into more detail. But what I want to bring to you is that *every aspect of your relationship with God is grace upon grace upon grace*:

- love
- mercy
- forgiveness
- fellowship
- prayer
- understanding the Word of God
- protection of God
- the ability to develop the mind of Christ
- the ability to escape the carnal nature and to be imbued with the Divine nature

All of that is the greatest grace of God in this life. And the greatest one is going to be at the resurrection. Can you imagine what a glorious thing that is going to be!

1-John 3:1: “Behold! What *glorious* love the Father has given to us, that we should be called the children of God! For this very reason, the world does not know us because it did not know Him. Beloved, now we are the children of God, and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be’ but we know that when He is manifested, we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him exactly as He is” (vs 1-2).

This is not the full meaning of the grace of God. There are many other aspects to it:

- We’re *called* by grace
- We’re *sanctified* by grace
- We’re *forgiven* by grace
- We *stand* in the grace of God

All of these are because God is directly intervening in our lives and has given us His Holy Spirit that He and Christ are dwelling *in* us. We are *the temple of God*!

Couple that with the love of God and put that all together and that shows you what God is doing in your life. *This helps us understand more about grace upon grace!*

Scriptural References:

- 1) Romans 7:1
- 2) Romans 6:14-15
- 3) Romans 7:6
- 4) Romans 3:9
- 5) Mark 7:21-23
- 6) Romans 3:5-6
- 7) Daniel 4:17
- 8) Jeremiah 18:7-11
- 9) Romans 3:9-19
- 10) Romans 2:13-16
- 11) Romans 3:19
- 12) Revelation 4:5
- 13) Revelation 5:6
- 14) 2-Chronicles 15:1-7
- 15) 2-Chronicles 16:7-10
- 16) Matthew 7:7-8
- 17) Isaiah 55:1-9
- 18) Matthew 13:14-23
- 19) Matthew 22:5-14
- 20) John 6:44
- 21) John 14:6, 15-17
- 22) 1-Corinthians 1:26-27
- 23) Acts 2:38-39
- 24) Romans 6:1-6, 11-18
- 25) Romans 5:1-5
- 26) 2-Peter 1:3-4
- 27) 1-Corinthians 3:11-12, 16
- 28) 1-John 1:3
- 29) 1-John 3:1-2

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Hebrews 2
- Jeremiah 5
- Psalm 1

Also referenced: Sermon Series:

- *Who Controls Your Mind?*
- *The Washing of the Water by the Word*
- *God’s Grace and Commandment-Keeping*
- *Grace of God*

Grace Upon Grace III

Fred R. Coulter

We're passing around a proposed cover for a new book called *The Grace of God in the Bible*. Since many of you have never read it—and I'm very surprised you haven't—you are missing out on a great deal that will help you with your relationship with God. I tried to get a picture that conveyed peace, grace and God's Spirit, because what does it say about God's Spirit in Rev. 22? 'Out from underneath His throne flows rivers of living water clear as crystal.'

Let me just read a couple of verses here to show you what we have been missing in the Church. How many know the truth concerning the TRP (Theological Research Project) vs the STP (Systematic Theology Project)? How many know the difference? You are in for an education today. I spent four years here at Pasadena, 1972-1975 inclusive. I'm going to reference quite a bit at the first concerning our past church affiliations, I use plural. But also all of us go back to one church affiliation, way back when, either Radio Church of God and then when the name was changed it became Worldwide Church of God.

There was a time when the Church was seeking recognition from the world. *Great mistake #1!* They were also seeking to have the college accredited. *Great mistake #2!* They did not learn the lessons of Pergamos and Thyatira, you don't invite the world in. You preach to the world and warn the world. Remember Jesus said, 'Woe to you when all men speak well of you.' Maybe that will ring some bells in the past.

There came a time when they wanted to clarify the doctrines of the Church, so they set up the TRP—Theological Research Project. Michael Heiss was part of that along with Carl Franklin and a couple of others. Dr. Dorothy was given charge of it and given a direct line, a budget, from HWA (Herbert W. Armstrong) so no one could cut it off, theoretically.

What they were doing, they were doing a systematic study of all of the booklets. How many here have all the booklets and articles from WCG, Radio Church of God, and so forth? How many have all the *Good News* magazines going way, way back? Then you can help us out a little bit a little later on. They had never examined all the Scriptures that were used and all the material that we had, so Dr. Dorothy set it up this way: We will take every booklet, every article, every publication, we will know who it was written by and what Scriptures they used—sound logical?—so that we can understand what we were missing.

As Mike knows, they had a special little office and we would go out to lunch with Dr. Dorothy and we'd go down to the place on Lake Street where you could go in and you could get lamb kabob and things like that. Dr. Dorothy liked that. He was one of the nicest, sweetest men, very sensitive, very loving. Unfortunately, in doing what he was doing, guess what he did, unintentionally of course? *He pricked some people's egos!* That was the correct thing to do. The reaction to it was not!

The truth is, brethren, which some of the things we'll cover today is this: ***if you have something to discuss with someone, please, as Jesus said, go to your brother or sister and discuss it face-to-face.*** That solves all problems. If you want to say something to me, you can come and talk to me. If I'm wrong, I'll change, because unless we're all dedicated to Truth and love and grace, all of the church-playing, all of the politics, all of the inner things going on and the jockeying for positions that we have seen, ad infinitum, are worthless and destructive.

Robert Kuhn was a big-time infiltrator to take down the Church, as part of the punishment of Worldwide Church of God, as well as Stanley Rader and others. They examined all the different categories: salvation, love, grace, law, Holy Days, Passover, etc. They would write down Scriptures used. Then they would put in the Hebrew or the Greek. Mike's job was to put in the Hebrew. Dr. Dorothy's job was to put in the Greek. Carl's job was to go ahead and formulate it in an organized way. That ruffled the infiltrators' plans because part of it was, as initially stated, that the Scriptures we haven't used we need to examine them and find out why we haven't used them.

- Wasn't that a fair enough deal? *Yes!*
- Should you not do that?
- If you're going to study things should you not study it thoroughly? *Yes, you should!*
- Should you not get all the evidence? *Yes, you should!*
- Should you not prove the evidence? *Yes, you should!*

All of the booklets were found very deficient and very wanting in preaching New Testament doctrine. That was a great problem for the Church. So, Robert Kuhn pulled a coup de gras, went to Herbert Armstrong and told him that Dr. Dorothy was trying to undermine him and correct him and come against him. So, Dr. Dorothy was cut off and the project was given to Robert Kuhn. Wasn't that lovely! Pasadena had to come down!

- all the intrigue
- all the politics
- all the carnality
- all the in-fighting

I'll just come a little further ahead to 1979 when I resigned on the Day of Atonement. Only my wife and two other men knew that I was going to resign. I fasted and prayed about it. All I had to speak on were some articles from magazines, from the *Quest Magazine* to show how awful it really was, and how that Church money was being used to tell tales of those involved in witchcraft as a good thing, and a couple articles on the pope.

I just prayed that God would help me say what needed to be said. I had some Scriptures listed. In the audience was Leroy Neff and Ron Reedy. I prayed all through the sermon, 'Please don't have them come up and take me down.' God inspired me to say one thing that made a lot of people angry.

I'm bringing this up from this point of view: *sometimes when some things are said we need to give it a space of time to see if it's true or not.* I said, God inspired me to do it, I didn't have one note written down, not a single note. When I got to Rev. 3 about the Laodiceans where He says repent, I said, 'If there is not someone in the pulpit in Pasadena saying amend your ways, the forces will be unleashed which shall tear the Church asunder.'

How many have listened to that resignation sermon? *Good!* Did it happen? *Yes, it did!* At the time it was spoken, was it a thinkable thought? *Most people would say no!* But if you really read and study the Bible what do you find out? *God even destroyed Jerusalem and left it completely because of sin!*

Why did I get into that? Let's back up to the TRP. When it was announced everything was going to be closed down and Dr Dorothy was going to be 'oblique arabesque.' You know what that is? *A promotion to a pasture where you do nothing!* That's used in corporate structures when they want to get rid of someone, but they need to save face, they just don't fire them out of hand, they give them an oblique promotion. The way that he was treated; the way that he was verbally abused; the way that he was oppressively crushed with hateful words, plus other aspects of things happening in his life, he never recovered from it. He finally died of cancer, which I believe was directly caused by what happened in the Church and in his private life.

However, between the time I resigned and he died in 1990s I'd communicate with him almost every week going over the Greek. He'd say, 'Fred, translate! Fred, translate!'

One day I came down to the office where the TRP was going and they were beginning to pack up

all their books and to store them or ship them off or something. Carl had all the notebooks on the booklets that they had completed: Scriptures used, when were they used, how were they used, Scriptures that weren't used. I got the notebook on grace. I started going through it and they never, *never, never* preached the grace of God except as forgiveness of sin. That's like saying: take a thousand mile journey and you take your first three steps. Comes up to you and say, 'It's all over with.' *That's why the Church failed!*

I promised Carl, I promised Dr. Dorothy the things that were missing, that was not preached, that I would do. One day I would do it. So, they gave me those notebooks and I have them. When I went through the grace of God in the Bible, Old Testament and New Testament, and we have that booklet we're updating a little bit. Then we have another booklet written by Duncan McLeod and Phil Neal called, *So You Have Been Saved By Grace—Now What?*—which is good.

The sorriest thing about the whole episode was that *they didn't preach the greatest thing of God.* They understood law, that is true. But you're not perfected by law. They were so afraid of love and grace that they thought they would sound too much like Protestants and they would lose people. That sound familiar?

Remember, the true number of converted is only known by God. Wouldn't you say that's true? *Yes, indeed!* And because of not preaching the Truth the way that they should and the mountainous sins—all of them—Pasadena is a monument on how not to run a church.

These things have still affected us. A lot of you have been through church wars—1-2-3-4 church wars. A lot of you have been through a lot of politics and things. That's turned a lot of people off. A lot have gone through things that they don't want to repeat again—right? *I don't; you don't!* Look at the carnage—emotionally, spiritually and physically—among the brethren of God that was caused because of that. Yet, there are those ministers who have left and all they want to do is repeat it. They still do not understand about grace. I'm going to cover just a couple of things here. This will give you a little preview of my coming letter.

I put together clear back in 1995 the first booklet on the *Grace of God in the Bible.* We're going to make sure that everyone gets all those sermons in addition to the ones that I have done recently, *God's Grace and Commandment-Keeping.*

This becomes very interesting here, Romans 6:14: "For sin shall not rule over you because you are not under law, but under grace." Guess how many Scriptures were used for grace in the whole

research file, which researched out every Scripture in the New Testament covering grace? *Less than a dozen!* Because they were so afraid that if they would preach grace that people would stop keeping the Law that they spent more time on the unpardonable sin in explaining grace than they did grace. Complete opposite!

What does it mean to be *under grace*? I want to ask you another question before I answer that. I want to ask you a first question, because you have to answer this before you can understand grace. You are not *under law*. What does that mean? What does *under law* mean? They didn't even know what *under the law* meant or *under law*. The answer was given: *penalty of the law!* We'll examine that. The letter of the law? We'll examine that.

But if there's a comparison here, v 15: "What then? Shall we sin... [That is break the laws of God.] ...because we are not under law, but under grace?..." It is said that means under the penalty of the Law. Since that is not in the Greek, then you would also have to include that with the next phrase—under grace. If you're not under the penalty of the law then you must be under the penalty of grace. That doesn't make any sense—does it? *No!* It does not mean what you said, except in a very narrow sense.

1. being *under law* is one category before God
2. being *under grace* is another category under God

This is why we're going to put the *Grace of God* in a book because in the coming letter you have the first explanation that I have written as to what it means to be *under law*. The answer is there all the time.

Unfortunately, the professor who taught New Testament Survey was deathly afraid of grace, deathly afraid of love. That's why he was always hard and bombastic, emphasizing law, putting fear into brethren. Even told, since he was the Superintendent of Ministers, he also told also the ministers to give an attack speech every year on the sins in the congregation. I did that once and it took me two years to win them back. This was something for me to learn, too. What I'm covering now—what it means to be *under law*—I had not previously covered.

Let's see what the Bible says, Romans 7:1 "Are you ignorant, brethren (for I am speaking to those who know law)..." No definite article in the Greek, but you know law, all kinds of law. That includes every kind of law in addition to God's Law.

The next phrase defines *under law*. "...that the Law rules over a man for as long a time as he may live?" (v 1). Think about what that says. It doesn't say that those who are Christ's are *under law* as long as they may live. If you are in grace you

have a higher standard. If you're *under grace* God is dealing directly with you, directly with His Spirit. That's what grace is all about and we'll expound that a little bit later. What does this tell us then? *Every human being in the world is under law!*

- Can you run away from God's Law even if you're an atheist?
- Can you get rid of 'the law of sin' and death?
- Can you save yourself?

Let's come to Romans 3 and see something very interesting here. You'll probably hear this in a couple of other sermons, too, that will be coming out in our mailing, but this is something we need to understand. This is very important in understanding. The two phrases: *under law* and *under grace*:

1. *under law* means everyone in the world; no escape.
2. *under grace* means all of those who have God's Spirit.

Those are the two categories in the world. There are no 'tweeners.' You either have God's Spirit or you don't. Just to clarify: *those that God is working with and calling because they are seeking God, they begin to be drawn by God, which is the first step of grace, but they are not under grace until they have been baptized and received the Holy Spirit. That changes your standing before God!*

Romans 3:5: "But if our unrighteousness brings to reality God's righteousness, what shall we say? Is God unrighteous to inflict His wrath?... [Because God does. They are all *under law*.] ... (I am speaking according to man's view.) MAY IT NEVER BE! Otherwise, how shall God judge the world?" (vs 5-6). I want you to remember the word *world*, because it's going to come up here again in just a bit.

Verse 7: "For if, by my falsehood, the Truth of God has shown itself *to be* supremely great, to His glory, why am I still being judged as a sinner?" That's what they were doing to him. The Jews were saying, 'You're a sinner.'

Verse 8: "But not, according as we are being blasphemously charged, and according as some are affirming that we say, 'Let us practice evil things in order that good things may come.'" Never happen!

- because God forgives sin
- because we are able to come to God
- because God has given us His Spirit

Did Paul say sin? He said, 'God forbid; may it never be.'

Verse 9: "What then? Are we of ourselves better?... [The Jews? *No!* But to this day they still think that they are, except a few which say, 'If we're

the chosen people, why are we suffering so much?'] ...Not at all! For we have already charged both Jews and Gentiles—**ALL**—*with* being under sin." Everyone who is *under law* is also under sin. 'All have come short of the glory of God and sinned.' All have the law of sin and death.

Verse 10: "Exactly as it is written: 'For there is not a righteous one—not even one!' I thought of that last night when I was watching the news. War here, killing here, shelling there, drugs here, pornography, adultery, homosexuality; our infamous amateur president making grotesque remarks to a so-called gay and lesbian meeting out here in Hollywood. **All are under sin!** Nobody is exempt.

Verse 11: "There is not one who understands; there is not one who seeks after God. They have all gone out of the way; together they have *all* become depraved. There is not *even* one who is practicing kindness. No, there is not so much as one! Their throats *are* like an open grave; with their tongues they have used deceit; *the* venom of asps *is* under their lips, Whose mouths are full of cursing and bitterness; their feet are swift to shed blood; Destruction and misery are in their ways; And the way of peace they have not known. There is no fear of God before their eyes'" (vs 11-18). Someone is going to say, 'What about the good Protestants?'

Verse 19: "Now then, we know that whatever the law says, it speaks to those who are under the law..." Who is *under law*? Law rules over a man as long as he may live, which means *if it's over you, you are under it*—is that not correct? You can't go under a bridge and announce, 'I'm standing on the bridge.' Can you? *Under law!*

"...so that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God" (v 19). It says back here that God is going to judge the world—right? '*All the world may become guilty before God.*'

"...for through *the law is the knowledge of sin*" (v 20). What if you don't have the law? What if it was never given to you? What do you do by trial and error, mistake and correction? *You soon figure out some basic things!* What happens? *People begin keeping some of the laws of God!* But have they had their sins forgiven unto salvation? *No, they haven't!*

Romans 2:14: "For when *the Gentiles*, which do not have *the law*, practice by nature the things contained in the Law, these who do not have *the law* are a law unto themselves." So, included in the phrase in Rom. 3:19 *under law*, it can also mean in *law*—'ein homos.'

- Can people even with 'the law of sin and death' in them still keep some of the laws of God in the letter? *Yes!*
- Does that mean they're converted? *No!*
- Can they be good upstanding people and decent people? *Yes!*

But before God they're still under law.

Let's take all the good and well-intentioned Protestants. As Mike and I were talking last night, 1890 was a turning point for Protestantism and the start of its slide. Can you be saved by your own works? *No!* It says 'by grace you have been saved' and the Protestants say that all the time because they don't know what grace means and they don't know what *under law* means. They say the Law is done away.

This week I was talking to Phil Neal and he brought up something that I didn't know. He said the young people coming into the so-called Christian churches today are all involved in works of helping, outreaching people, and doing good, *but they have no morality*. They sleep with their girlfriends and boyfriends and think that's perfectly fine.

We've run into it a couple of times. The answer to the question for that is: if you want God's blessing you better hurry up and get married or you better separate. We had a problem like that back in the northeast. That's how we presented it to them. You don't want to be under sin to God. Yet, they think they're doing just fine.

What does it say here in v 15 concerning those? All the good, upstanding law-abiding people in the world who follow the principles of God and some of the laws of God for a decent and a better society, and, of course, that will vary from country to country and people to people, God says He's going to remember that.

Verse 15: "Who show the work of the law written in their own hearts, their consciences bearing witness and their reasonings also, as they accuse or defend one another;) In a day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel" (vs 15-16). That includes everybody in the world *except those who have answered the call of God.*

Let's see the dividing point: *true covenant baptism*. That's what it is. You don't receive the Spirit of God *within* you until you have repented and are baptized.

How many have gone through the sermon I gave, *Spirit of God, Spirit of Man: Seven Spirit of God?* You need to go through those, brethren. We are teaching very important things coming out on these CDs and videos. We are covering things that you need to know. If you've come from another

Church of God, you are stunted in your knowledge of the Word of God. I don't say that to put you down. I just say, that we have been over 38 years since 1979 preaching more and more and more of the Truth of the Bible, more and more of the understanding of the Word of God.

Jesus told the disciples why He spoke to them in parables, because 'in hearing they hear not and seeing they see not and they don't understand.' He says, but you understand. Then He said another thing, which is very important, 'That which they have shall be taken from them.' I want you to think about that in two thoughts:

1. The Protestants. Has it been taken from them? Is it being taken from them? *Yes, indeed*

So much that I just finished reading a book entitled, *Christianity After Religion*. That's the next step after the book by Lloyd Geering, *Christianity Without God*.

2. Is it being taken from the Churches of God?

Are God's words always working all the time because He has spoken them? *Yes, indeed!* If you don't believe it, go down take a look at the ocean. Remember, 12,000 miles across to the other side and God said to the waves, 'You stop right here.' Does that always work? When there's a storm it washes some more soil down, but when the storm is over, the water can't go any further—correct?

What about the Churches of God that don't teach? Just like the Protestants that don't teach, they have to involve themselves in works because they're deficient in the Spirit and they don't understand the Truth.

(go to the next track)

Here's something we need to understand. If you haven't listen to the sermon, *Spirit of God, Spirit of Man: Seven Spirit of God*, you go back and you study it. It says there in Rev. 4 and 5 that the seven lamps before the throne of God—those are not the churches. ***Those are the seven eyes of God 'sent forth into all the earth to seek those who are seeking Him!'***

Was there not a day in your life when because of the way your life was and the troubles you were going through and everything crashing in upon you because you are under law and under sin that you cried out:

- God, where are You?
- God, are You real?
- Jesus, are You really my Savior?
- *Let me know!*

God answers those. One of the seven Spirits notifies God that someone is seeking Him. One of the seven

Spirits of God then begins dealing with that individual. How many individuals can the seven Spirits of God work with? *As many as are in that attitude as necessary!* God is great! Let's not limit God!

When that happens, like I said, because you go back and you read Isa. 55. I imagine that Paul preached that many, many times where it says, 'Seek the Lord while He may be found. Let the wicked forsake his thoughts and forsake his ways and I will have mercy upon him.'

So you had that one day. The key turning point in your life? *Yes, indeed!* God answered. Now here starts a process of a little bit of grace. You're not under grace yet.

John 6:44: "No one can come to Me unless the Father, Who sent Me, draws him... [He does this through one of the seven Spirits. You want to know about God? Lo and behold, things start happening. God starts answering the prayer.] ...and I will raise him up at the last day."

John 14:6: "Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father except through Me.'" If you're all *under law*, where do you have to come? What did Jesus say? *He was the Door of the sheep!*

- there's only one Savior
- there's only one Father
- there's only one Door
- there's only one Spirit
- there is only one Way

Now before you come to the point of having the Spirit within you, let's read that here in John 14:15: "If you love Me, keep the commandments—namely My commandments." God told Israel to keep the commandments.

- Can people keep the commandments in the letter of the Law? *Yes!*
- Does it need a little enforcement once in awhile? *Yes!*
- Through experience and difficulties? *Yes!*
- Can you change?
- Can you turn from that?

What does God say of the wicked in the Old Testament? He says, 'I don't delight in the death of the wicked, but turn you, turn from your ways.' If you do and one of the seven Spirits comes and begins dealing with you, now you have to come to God even more. You have to come to God with full repentance. Then there comes a point when the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Truth, will be with you. This is the next critical stage.

- The Father begins to draw, that's the beginning of grace

- You continue seeking, asking, knocking, searching, and when you find the Truth you begin keeping it, you begin obeying it
- The Spirit of God will then take over and be *with* you. That will lead you to repentance

That becomes important.

Now v 16: “And I will ask the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that it may be with you throughout the age: *even* the Spirit of the Truth...” (vs 16-17). Now you begin to see things differently—don’t you? See Truth and error, right and wrong. You can begin to understand these things.

“...which the world cannot receive because it perceives it not... [nor is it repenting; they are *under law*.] ...nor knows it; but you know it because it dwells **with** you...” (v 17). There may be a lot of people in the world who God’s Spirit is dwelling *with* them, but it will only continue as long as they keep seeking God. Otherwise it will withdraw. Individual basis.

Also I believe that that’s what has happened to Protestantism. A hundred years ago, maybe 125, there were more of the Protestants who wrote and taught things that were in line with the Old and the New Testament. How many have read anything by Charles Spurgeon? He lamented when Wescott and Hort came out with their new Greek text. Cardinal Gibbons wrote *Rome’s Challenge to the Protestants* and they refused.

So, those who may have had God’s Spirit with them, if they would have gone in the direction that Cardinal Gibbons said, ‘If you believe in the Bible, then you better start keeping the Sabbath.’ But since they rejected it and chose Rome’s day which he said is ‘an invention of Rome.’ By the way we have it in the Bible, *Rome’s Challenge to the Protestants*, Appendix N. You look at the dates. It was published four weeks in a row on the Sabbath Day.

He says it will be *within* you. That’s a separating point. How many people have come up to this point, but turned back, like the parable of the sowers—in the rocks, not deep soil, thorns and thistles, persecution? God’s Spirit is going to leave them. May be *with* them. **You** have to answer the call. That’s what’s important. God does the calling, but **you** have to answer. The only way you can answer the call is God’s way.

Let’s come back here to Romans 6. Let’s understand this. This also tells us why. This is very important to realize. **Only God manifested in the flesh could ever be a perfect sacrifice to cover the sins of the whole world!** Nothing else could ever do it, because He created mankind—did He not? *Yes, indeed!* He put in them ‘the law of sin and death’—

did He not? *Yes, He did!* That’s why He came and took ‘the law of sin and death’ within Him and never sinned. That’s important to realize. When God the Father and Jesus Christ directly intervene in your life, here’s what happens.

Romans 6:1: “What then shall we say? Shall we continue in sin, so that grace may abound? **MAY IT NEVER BE!** We who died to sin... [You were under law, you were under sin, you died to sin. You had to die the baptismal death.] ...how shall we live any longer therein? Or are you ignorant that we, as many as were baptized into Christ Jesus, were baptized into His death?” (vs 1-3).

Now God is going to deal with you directly and this is when grace really begins to enter into your life and standing with God when God’s Spirit is **in** you.

Verse 4: “Therefore, we were buried with Him through the baptism into **the death**... [His death] ...so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, in the same way, we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been conjoined together in the likeness of His death, so also shall we be *in the likeness* of His resurrection. Knowing this, that our old man was co-crucified with *Him* in order that the body of sin might be destroyed...” (vs 4-6).

The Holy Spirit gives you the power to overcome sin within, but it is a process. God’s Spirit is sent as a begettal and God’s Spirit is an earnest of His Spirit to lead you to understand the sin within so you can continually repent and change and grow. Do we still sin and make mistakes today? *Yes, we do!* I do; you do.

Verse 7: “...Because the one who has died *to sin* has been justified from sin. Now, if we died together with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, knowing that Christ, having been raised from *the* dead, dies no more; death no longer has any dominion over Him. For when He died, He died unto sin once for all; but in that He lives, He lives unto God” (vs 7-10).

To do what? *As a High Priest, as Head of the Church, to do the work of God within all that are called!* Never forget this: the greatest work of God is not an organization evangelizing the world. That is a *work of the ministry*. The greatest work of God is within you, with His Spirit. *That is grace!*

Let’s see how Jesus explained it, John 14:23: “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.... [I just explained how that happens.] ...The one who does not love Me does not keep My

words; and the word that you hear is not Mine, but the Father's, Who sent Me'" (vs 23-24).

What happens when you receive the Spirit of God *within* you? *Now you are under grace*, not until! We are told to what? *Grow in grace and knowledge*—is that not true? *Yes, indeed!* Now we are ready to begin one of the greatest and most fantastic things that God is able to do in our lives.

Let's understand how God works, what it means partially to be under grace. I'm going to explain a whole lot more when we combine the booklets and add to it, *What Does It Mean to be Under Law?*

Isaiah 66:1: "Thus says the LORD, 'The heaven *is* My throne... [When you have God's Spirit where do your prayers go? *To the throne of God!* That's grace.] ...and the earth *is* My footstool. Where, then, *is* the house that you build for Me? And where *is* the place of My rest? For all these things My hand has made, and these things came to be,' says the LORD. 'But to this one I will look, to him who is of a poor and contrite spirit and who trembles at My Word'" (vs 1-2).

When there's the repentance that way, a blessing comes. Part of repentance is one of the great blessings is that *God lifts the load of sin from you*. Think of that! You don't have to bear all that any more.

Let's see something really, really important. Not only really important, the most supreme thing in your life. Remember Jesus said, 'The Father will love you and I love you and We—through the power of God's Spirit—will come *within* you, **make Our abode, Our dwelling place,**' through the Spirit of God. Because God wants us to be His immortal sons and daughters. *That's what under grace is!*

They were having all kinds of troubles and difficulties, 1-Corinthians 3:16 "Don't you understand that you are God's temple..." I want you to think about that! You, with God's Spirit *within* you, is greater than the greatest building dedicated to God, even greater than the one that He gave the plans to David to build. You understand that? *That's by grace!*

What is it that you have done? What law did you keep to make that happen? *None!* It is God's unilateral action in your life to give you His Spirit. Those are the ones who are *under grace!*

- How then do we keep the commandments of God? *They are written in our hearts and in our minds!*
- How then do we love God? *From the innermost part of our being!*

That's what's so important, brethren. Because if we really understand this:

Verse 16: "Don't you understand that you are God's temple, and *that* the Spirit of God is dwelling in you?... [Here's a warning]: ...If anyone defiles the temple of God, God shall destroy him because the temple of God is Holy, **which temple you are**" (vs 16-17).

Now then, he also talks about this in a collective sense—the Church, the body of Christ—but he begins with each individual. Each individual has to respond to God and God responds. Then when you're baptized and receive the Holy Spirit, then you are *under grace*.

Let's see what Peter said here, 2-Peter 1:1: "Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who have obtained *the* same precious faith as ours by *the* righteousness of our God and Savior, Jesus Christ.... [Peter didn't exalt himself. He said the same thing.] ...Grace and peace be multiplied to you in *the* knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord" (vs 1-2). That's what God wants. We're going to read some things from the Apostle Paul, some verses that are very rarely read, but are the key verses in each one of his epistles.

Verse 3: "According as His divine power..." I want you to think about this in relationship to what we have covered. Jesus said, 'If you love Me, the Spirit will be *within* you and We—the Father and Christ—will make Our abode with you.' Are you special to God? *Yes, indeed!* Think of the whole world. Are you special to God? This is not to exalt. This is so that we can be thankful and humble and not exalt ourselves above other people.

"...Divine power has given to us all things that *pertain* to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him Who called us by His *own* glory and virtue... [Did you answer God's call? *Yes, you are called by grace!* We'll cover that in the book.] ...Through which He has given to us the greatest and *most* precious promises, that through these you may become partakers of *the* Divine nature, having escaped the corruption *that is* in *the* world through lust" (vs 3-4).

What we're going to do is we're going to read several of the introductions of Paul's epistles. Everything else that he writes after that falls under it. He takes a little time to get to it:

Romans 1:7: "To all those who are in Rome, **beloved by God...**" You need to stop and think of that. All ministers, teachers and elders need to think of that, too. All the brethren of God are beloved by Him.

- How dare you use them for your own tools.
- How dare you use them to merchandize.

- How dare that you threaten them because they don't heel to your ungodly hierarchy.

They are loved of God!

"...the called saints... [you are called saints] ...Grace and peace *be* to you from God our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ" (v 7). ***Grace***—the working of God in your life. Yes, Jesus is the propitiation of our sins and yes, when we confess our sins we're forgiven our sins. We have God dealing directly in our life which is grace.

The rest of the world does not. *They are under law*. *They are under sin*, even if they keep some of the laws of God. Someone made a comment some time, I don't know who made it, 'There are a lot of Protestants. I think we're going to be surprised when we arrive on the Sea of Glass there are going to be a lot of Protestants there.' *No, they're not!*

- Do they keep the covenant sign of having the Spirit of God? *No!*
- What is that covenant sign? *The Passover!*
- Do they keep the Sabbath of God? *No!*
- Do they keep the Holy Days of God? *No!*

Even the best of the Protestants observe all the occult holidays of Satan the devil, renamed with Christian-sounding names. They are *under law*; they are not *under grace*. How dare they say they are under grace when they claim the laws of God have been done away! God requires us with a higher standard.

- we're to love God with all our heart, mind, soul and being
- we're to love our neighbors as ourselves
- we are to love the brethren as Jesus loved us

Jesus says, 'Dwell in My love.' God says, 'I'm working in your life through grace—My grace to you.'

Let's come to the end of Romans, chapter sixteen. You can tell from this that Paul edited the book of Romans, cleaned it up, whatever he needed to do. Notice how he ends it. How did he start it? 'Grace and peace from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ.'

Romans 16:24: "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with all of you. Amen.... [Then here's added when he finalized the book of Romans and sent it on by Mark to Peter]: ...Now, to Him who has the power to establish you..." (vs 24-25). You feel weak, you feel neglected?

- Go to God!
- He'll help you!
- He'll strengthen you!

"...according to my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ according to *the* revelation of *the*

mystery that in past ages has been kept secret; but now is made manifest, and by the prophetic scriptures... [Does that agree with 2-Peter 1, the confirmed prophetic word? *Yes!*] ...according to the commandment of the eternal God..." (vs 25-26).

That's what these epistles are, not something to argue over, but something to ask God to help you understand. Not something to misinterpret because the Protestants believe one way. So what if they do? If the Protestants are so good, then why don't they repent and keep the Sabbath and the Holy Days of God? Why don't they forsake Christmas and Easter and New Years? Why don't they forsake the trinity? Why don't they forsake the doctrines of Satan the devil? To say nothing of the Catholic Church which is the epitome of glory of Satan's way.

Verse 27: "To the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, *be* glory into the ages of *eternity*. Amen." This is what God wants through the epistles with everything that Paul wrote:

1-Corinthians 1:3: "Grace and peace *be* to you from God our Father and *the* Lord Jesus Christ." That's what God wants, *grace and peace*. Not intrigue, not politics, not fighting, not strife, not quarreling, not—even as Paul said here a little later—puffing up one minister against another minister. He doesn't want that. One minister says, 'I was closer to so-and-so than anybody else.' Was Lucifer close to God? Did he fall?

1-Corinthians 16:23: "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you. My love *be* with you all in Christ Jesus. Amen" (vs 23-24). Does God want grace and peace in His Church? *Yes!* But remember this: *grace and peace within His Church does not make us stupid dolts to be bamboozled by false doctrine*. I'll talk about that a little later. We are to be strong. I know all of you have had to fight off false doctrine.

2-Corinthians 1:2: "Grace and peace *be* to you from God our Father and *the* Lord Jesus Christ. Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and *the* God of all comfort; Who comforts us in all our tribulation in order that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trial, through the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God" (vs 2-4). Amazing, isn't it? *Yes!* The one place we don't want trials is among ourselves and false doctrine coming through the Church.

2-Corinthians 13:13: "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit *be* with you all. Amen." Isn't that interesting how he starts every one of his epistles that way?

Galatians 1:3: "Grace and peace *be* to you from God *the* Father and our Lord Jesus Christ."

From Them! Grace is to be continually coming to us through the Holy Spirit of God and we are under grace and no one else in the world is under grace except those who have the Spirit of God *within* them.

- They may be nice people
- They may be understanding people
- They may be what you would call honest politicians, if you could find some of them
- They may be dedicated to helping people
- They may be dedicated to many different causes

That's fine, God will recognize all of that at the second resurrection. That doesn't mean they are converted.

If you have a counterfeit Jesus and if you have counterfeit doctrines, do you suppose you may have a counterfeit spirit? Does it not say 'the prince of the power of the air, that spirit that dwells in the children of disobedience'?

The book of Galatians is a hard book, but let's look and see how he ended it, Galatians 6:18: "Brethren, *may* the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with your spirit. Amen."

The whole book of Ephesians has to do with showing the great grace of God which is that which was not even revealed to the apostles until later.

I tell you, it's sad to think how long we've gone, even us who have understood about grace, without really putting that in the forefront, because we have been so busy putting down false doctrine, false teachers, those creeping in with subversive ideas by subterfuge, by flattery, by deceit. We've seen it, that's why Pasadena is gone, brethren. That's why it's gone—Pasadena, Big Sandy, Bricket Wood.

- all because of not understanding grace
- all because of not understanding the love of God
- all because a false hierarchy was put within the Church
- all because these things happened that cut brethren off from God

They thought they had to look through to the ministry to find God. *No!* You are directly connected to God with the Holy Spirit. You find God and grow in grace and knowledge:

- first—on your knees
- second—in studying His Word
- third—in living God's way everyday

You're going to stumble; you're going to fall. You're going to realize that God's Spirit within you is going to reveal some deep wickedness in your heart and mind that you need to have removed by the

washing of the water by the Word. *Even now!* I experience that myself. That's why Paul said, 'Don't think that we have arrived. Don't look upon me as anything great.' He said that he was 'less than the least of all the saints.'

We'll see how then we can apply this in our lives in such a way that we can handle and cope with the difficulties that come along between ourselves and how to handle false doctrine.

Scriptural References:

- 1) Romans 6:14-15
- 2) Romans 7:1
- 3) Romans 3:5-20
- 4) Romans 2:14-16
- 5) John 6:44
- 6) John 14:6, 15-17
- 7) Romans 6:1-10
- 8) John 14:23-24
- 9) Isaiah 66:1-2
- 10) 1-Corinthians 3:16-17
- 11) 2-Peter 1:1-4
- 12) Romans 1:7
- 13) Romans 16:24-27
- 14) 1-Corinthians 1:3
- 15) 1-Corinthians 16:23-24
- 16) 2-Corinthians 1:2-4
- 17) 2-Corinthians 13:13
- 18) Galatians 1:3
- 19) Galatians 6:18

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Revelation 22; 3-5
- Isaiah 55

Also referenced:

Sermon Series:

- *God's Grace and Commandment-Keeping*
- *Spirit of God, Spirit of Man: Seven Spirit of God*

Article: *Rome's Challenge to the Protestants*

(Appendix N, *The Holy Bible in its Original Order*)

Booklets:

- *Grace of God in the Bible*
- *So You Have Been Saved by Grace—Now What?* by Duncan McLeod and Phil Neal

Books:

- *The Grace of God in the Bible* (coming soon)
- *Christianity After Religion* by Diana Butler Bass
- *Christianity Without God* by Lloyd Geering

Grace Upon Grace IV

Fred R. Coulter

We are going to talk a little bit more about *grace upon grace* and what does it mean to be *under grace*. Exodus 34 says of God that Moses wanted to see God's glory. Moses made two more stones, came back up to have God re-write the ones that he broke. Then God came down in power.

Exodus 34:5: "And the LORD came down in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the LORD. And the LORD passed by before him and proclaimed, 'The LORD, the LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and Truth. Keeping mercy to the thousandth *generation*, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but Who will by no means clear *the guilty*, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, to the third and to the fourth generation.'" (vs 5-7). Showing:

- the love of God
- the power of God
- the mercy of God

Now we have added something very special to that because God the Father was not revealed in the Old Testament. He is referred to as the Most High. However, when Jesus came, and we know that He divested Himself of His power and glory as God to become a pinpoint of life to be begotten in the womb of the virgin Mary. Now something new was going to happen.

In the Old Testament the One Who became Jesus Christ revealed Himself to Adam and Eve, to all the patriarchs, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and all of those that He dealt with He dealt with directly. But none of the people were given the Holy Spirit. Even in the covenant with Israel the people were not given the Holy Spirit. So, now Jesus Who was the Lord God of the Old Covenant came and He was going to do something for those that He would call, not for the world. Still not yet time for the world.

Let's see what Jesus said, Matthew 11:25: "At that time Jesus answered and said, 'I praise You, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and intelligent, and have revealed them to babes.'" This is the beginning of what will become the rule of the Kingdom of God through the saints of God. Not the wise, not the mighty, not the noble.

What happens when people get all caught up in their own intelligence and their own goodness and their own vanity and all of this? They reject God and they automatically become fools. But there are those

who want to know about God, who are seeking for God. God has said, 'If you will seek, you will find.'

So Jesus said, v 26: "Yes, Father, for it was well pleasing in Your sight *to do this*.... [Notice what has been opened to those of us through Christ, through God's grace, which then is more than forgiveness of sin.] ...All things were delivered to Me by My Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father; neither does anyone know the Father except the Son, and the one to whom the Son personally chooses to reveal *Him*" (vs 26-27). That's something.

The Gospel goes out, the calling goes out, the Word of God, Christ likened unto seed. When it falls in the stony places or in the thorns and thistles or alongside the road it doesn't produce. When it falls into the good ground then it produces thirtyfold, sixtyfold, a hundredfold. We have available to us that which was not available to all mankind from creation up to the beginning of the Church, the beginning of Christ's ministry. That is to be put into a relationship with God the Father.

Let's review this a little bit; let's see how that everything that is done by God has to be through His grace, that is everything done to those that He is dealing with. In the world, as we've already noted, they are *under law*. Those who have the Spirit of God are *under grace*. Notice what John writes about this:

John 1:16: "And of His fullness we have all received, and **grace upon grace**." What does that mean? God does the calling. The Word goes out. I've explained about the seven Spirits of God, how that will work, how they will help people who are seeking God to find Him. As long as they are seeking God then they will lead them. Then something else happens. There comes a point then, and that has to be a point of a real desire of seeking Truth and a real desire to overcome your sins and a repentance, an initial repentance. Then what happens? *By the grace of God*:

- He begins to draw
 - ✓ You have to keep coming
 - ✓ You have to keep answering
 - ✓ You have to keep seeking
- God will continue to draw you

He made provision for you through Christ. So we come to John 3 and let's read it there. This is a verse we all know, but let's look at it a little more carefully.

John 3:16: "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, so that everyone

who believes in Him **may not** perish...” That’s a very interesting meaning in the Greek. That’s exactly what it means. Doesn’t mean *shall not*. Does not mean *should not*. It means *may not*. Why? *Because it’s also based upon our choices*—correct? God is true, God is Holy, God is righteous; there are no conditions that we place upon God. All conditions are placed upon us.

“...so we may not perish, but may have everlasting life. For God sent not His Son into the world that He might judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him” (vs 16-17). He provided Christ: His coming, His ministry and His death are all part of the *grace upon grace*.

Hebrews also ties in with the great grace of God. To be under grace is that God has opened the way for each one that He calls and gives the Holy Spirit to, ‘for me to have a direct relationship through prayer and study.’ That is called *fellowship* with God the Father and Jesus Christ in heaven above. In order for that to happen:

- God has to have grace to send Christ—full of grace and Truth.
- He has to call; that’s part of His grace.
- You have to respond; that’s part of grace.
- You have to desire God’s way; that’s part of grace.
- You have to repent; that’s grace.

The *graciousness of God* leads you to repentance. When you have repented of your sins, then the blood of Jesus Christ covers those sins by the grace of God. Now you are justified to God. Justified means you are put in *right standing* with God. That comes through Christ.

Let’s see the operation of this, Hebrews 1:1: “God, Who spoke to the fathers at different times in the past and in many ways by the prophets, has spoken to us in these last days by *His Son*, Whom He has appointed **heir of all things**, by Whom also He made the worlds” (vs 1-2). We are co-heirs with Christ. (Rom. 8:14-16).

Can you earn that by any work? *No! It’s by grace!* So there’s another grace—the *inheritance*. But notice how God’s grace carried through to make it possible and what God did to become a human being and a perfect sacrifice for our sins and the sins of the whole world. He’s not applying it to the whole world at this time because He is calling the firstfruits. That is a special grace.

Let’s see what He did; this also gives a glimpse of the glory that we’re going to receive, which is also grace, v 3: “Who being the brightness of *His* glory and *the* exact image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His own power,

when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at *the* right hand of the Majesty on high.”

Isn’t that something? You think about that and you get on your knees and you start praying. You have the grace and the blessing and favor of praying directly to the Father. How did Jesus say to pray? ‘Our Father,’ direct to God. Put in your notes there or in your margin, Rev. 4 and 5. That’s where your prayers go, to the throne of God in heaven above. His throne sits on a sea of glass. There are the 24 elders there and there’s the rainbow, the four living creatures, the seven eyes of God, the seven Spirits of God. Christ is there.

Your prayers go up to the golden altar. Our prayers come up to God as incense. God hears our prayers. He answers our prayers. It is His delight that we pray to Him. It is His delight that we confess our sins and repent. All of this is grace upon grace upon grace upon grace. It is in fact your standing before God that is not given to those who are not baptized and who have not received the Holy Spirit of God.

There may be a lot of good Sunday-keeping Protestants out there leading good lives. But do they keep the commandments by the grace of God in the spirit? Do they have that personal one-to-one relationship by grace that God has given? I’m sure there are many Protestants who have one of the seven Spirits of God leading them. But unless they continue to study and come along with the Word of God, sooner or later it will go. God’s dealing with them will be deferred until another time that they begin seeking God in earnest.

But notice how God has provided it. He talks about what man is going to do in chapter two. Jesus had to be the forerunner. He had to come first.

Hebrews 2:9: “But we see Jesus, Who *was* made a little lower than *the* angels, crowned with glory and honor on account of suffering the death...” There can be no greater death than the death of Jesus Christ, God manifested in the flesh. He carried in His body ‘the law of sin and death’ and never sinned. That’s why ‘He condemned sin in the flesh’ (Rom. 8:3). That’s something!

- God did that because He loves us.
- God did that because He loves the world.
- God did that because He is going to show and prove and demonstrate—through His grace and His power and through Jesus Christ—that He *is* God.

And we know the judgment of Satan is coming soon.

“...on account of **suffering the death**, in order that by *the* grace of God... [another *grace upon grace*] ...He Himself might taste death for everyone” (v 9). The sacrifice of Christ is individually applied

to every repentant sinner. Christ truly died for you and me, and all of those who will truly repent. God has the power to apply that sacrifice individually to forgive your sins, to open the relationship now that you can have directly with God the Father and Jesus Christ.

Verse 10: “Because it was fitting for Him... [notice who He was]: ...for Whom all things *were created*, and by Whom all things *exist*, in bringing many sons unto glory...” What a fantastic thing that is going to be! Remember what Paul wrote that He is going to transform our vile bodies to be conformed to His spiritual body in glory. What a fantastic thing that is! That’s by

- the grace of God
- the love of God
- the Word of God
- the Truth of God

That’s why you are here. That’s why God has called you. You have the greatest destiny ahead of you in the first resurrection that will not be repeated in the second resurrection.

- yes, we have many obstacles to overcome
- yes, we have Satan the devil to overcome
- yes, we have personal sin within to overcome

But the grace of God is greater than all of that. As long as we maintain that relationship with God and are close to Him in prayer and in study, then God will continue to:

- deal with us
- bless us
- work with us
- guide us
- help us
- forgive us
- strengthen us
- inspire us
- uplift us

I want you to compare that with the first message.

Now you understand why such condemnation and judgment by God is given. They have taken this great, fantastic plan of God and His grace upon grace, and mercy and love, and kindness and goodness, and have taken it to themselves and have usurped the power right out of Christ’s hands and rule with cruelty over the brethren. *May they repent!*

“...in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Author of their salvation perfect through sufferings” (v 10). At any time God is always perfect, but can He be made more perfect? *Yes!* Was He perfected by having the human experience? *Yes, He was!* So, in order for Him to be the Judge of all,

He became a human being and lived through every aspect of human life. Tempted in every way that we are, yet without sin. *Amazing! Absolutely amazing!*

This is why when you are baptized and you enter in to the covenant of eternal life through Jesus Christ, you are then *under grace*. This is God’s doing. Think about that for a minute. Every once in a while go look in the mirror and think of the people on earth that God is dealing with, what a tremendous blessing, what a wonderful thing that in spite of what you are, because of repentance and yielding to God, God has chosen you. You have answered the call of God. He has given you His Spirit. You are under His grace. That’s an amazing thing.

Let’s read a little bit of this here. 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...” (vs 1-2). Remember he opens every epistle with *grace and peace* and closes every epistle with *grace*. So, the whole epistle is encased in grace. That’s part of the meaning of *grace upon grace*.

Verse 3: “Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ... [Whom Jesus has revealed to you and to us.] ...Who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly *things* with Christ.” Are all of the graces that I have mentioned here so far heavenly things or are they earthly things? *They are heavenly things*—aren’t they? They come from God. It’s the love of God, the action of God, directed to us. As I read there in Heb. 2, *to everyone*.

Verse 4: “According as He has personally chosen us for Himself... [I want you to think about that. Is that not a personal relationship? *Yes, it is!*] ...before *the* foundation of *the* world... [that was His plan; those that He would call] ...in order that we might be Holy and blameless before Him in love; Having predestinated us for sonship to Himself...” (vs 4-5).

What I want you to do, I want you to take some of these Scriptures we’re covering today, especially right here—for Himself—and I want you to set aside a special time of prayer and you read these verses as you pray and thank God—the *Father Himself!* I want you to grasp as best we can, because this is so fantastic, we are still looking through a glass darkly with it—correct?

That the Father Himself, “...through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of His own will, to *the* praise of *the* glory of His grace, wherein He has made us objects of *His* grace in the Beloved Son; In Whom we have redemption through His blood, *even* the remission of sins, according to the riches of His grace.... [*grace upon grace*] ...Which

He has made to abound toward us in all wisdom and intelligence” (vs 5-8).

How many people understand the Bible? Do you understand it? *That’s all part of the grace of God.* Let’s see what God is doing with His Spirit, which is also the action of His grace. Then we will see our standing.

1-Corinthians 2:9: “But according as it is written, ‘*The eye has not seen, nor the ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God has prepared for those who love Him.*’” We are to love God with all our heart, mind, soul and being—correct? We are to love our neighbor as ourselves. We are to love the brethren as Christ loved us—right?

We’re even to love our enemies. We love them by praying that they will be led to repentance, if possible, that they will cease doing things against us, that if they don’t repent God’s judgment may be upon them; or that God may move them far away from us. But who knows, God may convert an enemy and he may become more converted than we are. Look at the Apostle Paul.

Verse 10: “But God has revealed *them* to us by His Spirit...” Having God’s Spirit—

- the Spirit of grace
- the Spirit of love
- the Spirit of Truth

—reveals these things to us that you can read the Bible and understand it. Someone else reads it and says, ‘That doesn’t make any sense. By the way we have to make it Muslim-friendly.

“...for the Spirit searches all things—even the deep things of God” (v 10). How many times in the history of the world have we had it where we could all have the whole Bible and sit down and study together? We can go through and turn from epistle to epistle, from book to book; we can read the Words of God together, God’s Spirit being among us and in us. His Words are Spirit and life and we read these and we’re inspired when we do. That’s all the grace of God working together, all of us together. That’s a fantastic thing that God is doing.

Let’s see how Paul expresses it in another way, Romans 5:1: “Therefore, having been justified by faith...”

- You believe in God!
- You believe in Christ!
- You believe in His shed blood!
 - God has granted you repentance!
 - God has granted you forgiveness!
 - He’s applied the death of Christ to you personally!

That is available as a continuous propitiation for you!

“...we have **peace with God** through our Lord Jesus Christ.... [Isn’t that amazing? *Peace with God the Father!*] ...Through Whom we also have access by faith into this grace... [grace upon grace upon grace] ...in which we stand, and we ourselves boast in the hope of *the* glory of God.... [Now then we come to the reality of the truth of the battle that’s in the world between the forces of evil and the forces of God]: ...And not only *this*, but we also boast in tribulations...” (vs 1-3).

Some tribulations come along that are really hard to take, but never forget there is no temptation come upon you that is not common to men. There is no temptation or trial that God will not deliver you from. **‘Everything** works together for good to those who love God and are called according to His purpose.’

Some trials are hard to understand, but by faith grow and overcome through the difficulties in them. Some trials may be very hard to bear, but Christ is there to help you. Yea, we will see He *is* in you. The Father is likewise *in* you. They will see you through the trouble. They will see you through the difficulties. Then when you come out at the other end of the tunnel—so to speak—you will see, yes, work together for good.

“...realizing that tribulation brings forth endurance... [We have to endure to the end—correct? *Yes!*] ...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 3-5).

Let’s see how close that relationship is. This can only be by grace because no man is going to command to God. This is really a key here, after saying you have to build on the foundation of Christ: gold/silver; wood, hay or stubble, 1-Corinthians 3:16: “Don’t you understand that **you are God’s temple...**” Think of that! Think of all the great cathedrals, all the great things that were done, even the temple that Solomon built. Those were all made by what God created. But now *He dwells in you.*

“...you are God’s temple, and *that* the Spirit of God is **dwelling in you**” (v 16). That’s by grace. The Spirit of Christ, the begetting of the Father: the two parts of the Holy Spirit. Jesus said, ‘If you love Me, keep My commandments and keep My Word and My Father will love you and **We** will make our abode with you.’ Dwelling in you. Isn’t that a fantastic grace?

- So that we can have a relationship with God.
- So that God can do His spiritual work in our lives.

Yes, brethren, living in this world today we need to stay close to God.

He gives a little 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.” Amazing—isn’t it?

Let’s see how John describes this. He’s the one who wrote about *grace upon grace*. I know when I read that verse recently I thought—DING! That ever happen to you? You read along, study along, all of a sudden a light goes on. I said to myself, ‘What does it mean about grace upon grace?’ Then I began to understand what it means to be *under law* and that the whole world and everybody is. So, grace upon grace and to be under grace is a fantastic relationship with God.

- This helps us in our prayers
- This helps us in our thinking
- This helps us in our understanding
- This helps us to grow in grace and knowledge when we understand this relationship with God

Notice how John wrote of it, 1-John 1:1: “That which was from *the* beginning, that which we have heard, that which we have seen with our own eyes, that which we observed for ourselves and our own hands handled, concerning the Word of life; (And the life was manifested, and we have seen, and are bearing witness, and are reporting to you the eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested to us); that which we have seen and have heard...” (vs 1-3). All the words of God and then all that they wrote under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

“...we are reporting to you in order that you also may have fellowship with us; for **the fellowship...**” (v 3). That’s what it is in the Greek—***the fellowship***. That’s what God wants to have with each one of us. You have fellowship when you come together? *Yes, you do!* Fellowship with God the Father and Jesus Christ must come first.

“...indeed, our fellowship—is with the Father and with His own Son, Jesus Christ” (v 3). That’s a tremendous thing, brethren. When you go pray and you get on your knees and you say, ‘Our Father in heaven,’ then you can add

- praise
- thanksgiving
- honor
- blessing
- praise for glory
- praise for God’s intervention

All of those things then will flow from that because you have the fellowship with God the Father and Jesus Christ.

Notice what else He has done. When you are under grace there is an absolute dividing line between you and the world. All the world is under law and under sin to God. Yes, there are those who keep some of the laws of God. There are some of those who believe in a form of Jesus.

They were the ones that Jesus said when James and John saw someone casting out demons in Jesus’ name, they said, ‘We forbid them. Do you want us to call fire down from heaven?’ He said, ‘No, you don’t know what spirit you are of. If they are not against us, they are on our part.’ ***But they didn’t receive salvation!*** That’s not to denigrate the Protestants. That’s to put them in the proper perspective before God. They have a different perspective of what they think, which is not what the Bible teaches. It’s very, very hard for all of the ‘goody-two shoes’ to handle that, but they need to know.

Notice what God has done. That’s why you’re standing in grace; you are under grace. You receive grace upon grace through the love of God, through Christ. Think about how God has given us the understanding in this time that is greater grace beyond that.

Ephesians 1:9: “Having made known to us the mystery of His own will...” You could run to and fro through this city of Tulsa and you could go up and down the street, like you know they do for news survey. You can stick the microphone up in someone’s face and say, ‘What do you know about the will of God?’ *Blah, blah, blah!* Someone else, ‘What do you know about the will of God?’ *Blither, blather, blither!* ‘What do you know about the will of God?’ *Well, I think.* Really? What does God say? Notice what you know God has made known.

“...to us the mystery of His own will, according to His good pleasure, which He purposed in Himself... [notice how close that fellowship with the Father and Jesus Christ is] ...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” (vs 9-10).

You are part of the greatest plan, the greatest scheme, the greatest thing that men cannot conceive of, that governments know nothing about, that religions under Satan the devil have twisted and turned and tried to create their own righteousness and their own eternal life. *God has made known to you the Truth.*

Now you understand if we hold that in contempt and we become lukewarm and we become

lackadaisical, now you know why God threatens to spew you out of His mouth, but He gives counsel to repent because He loves you and wants you. Yes, isn't that right? *Yes!* He wants you to know.

Verse 12: "That we might be to *the* praise of His glory, who first trusted in the Christ; In Whom you also trusted after hearing the Word of the Truth, the Gospel of your salvation; in Whom also, after believing, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise" (vs 12-13). Think about the promises of God. Think about this. All the Word of God is promises, every word. If He said it, it's true. If it is for a blessing and you are in right standing with God, you can receive it. If you are not in right standing with God, you can repent, which is grace.

Like one rabbi told the Jews in the Christian Jew magazine that I have a copy of that's now about two decades old, he said, 'Brother Jews, you all want to trust in the promises of God. Remember half of them are curses.' He said, 'That's why we are where we are today and why we need Christ.' Isn't that something? 'That we might be the praise of His glory.'

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... [God dwelling in you, not near you, not with you, but *in you*.] ...which is *the* earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, **to the praise of His glory**" (vs 13-14).

Here is what God wants for us. I want you to read all the rest of the book of Ephesians, especially chapter three where it says that 'God wants us to be filled with all the fullness of God and to know the love of God which surpasses all human knowledge. And to know and understand the height and depth and breadth and to be filled with the fullness of God.' That's what it means *grace upon grace*.

Let's read Paul's prayer for the brethren in Ephesus recorded for us, v 15: "For this cause, I also, after hearing of the faith in the Lord Jesus that is among you, and the love toward all the saints, Do not cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers; That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you *the* spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him. *And* may the eyes of your mind be enlightened in order that you may comprehend what is the hope of **His calling**... [which is grace] ...and what *is* the riches of the glory of **His inheritance** in the saints... [which is grace] ...and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the inner working of **His mighty power**... [which is the grace] ...which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His right hand in the heavenly places."

(vs 15-20). The special relationship that you are in with God the Father and Jesus Christ, there is nothing greater that can happen to you in this life, on this earth. Do you grasp that? This is something.

Verse 21: "Far above every principality and authority and power and lordship, and every name that is named—not only in this age, but also in the *age* to come.... [Christ is sitting at the right hand of God] ...For He [the Father] has subordinated all things under His feet, and has given Him *to be* head over all things to the church, Which is His body—the fullness of Him Who fills all things in all" (vs 21-23). That brings us right back to where we started. 'And of His fullness we have all received and *grace upon grace*'. Brethren, this is a tremendous thing that God has done. I hope that this helps bring us

- closer to God
- closer to each other
- closer to the Truth

to be able to see and understand the things that are coming on in this world, and to have the strength, the fortitude, the patience, the endurance—to know that God is not only with us He is in us.

God not only knows what we are going through, He loves us and will help us that we will receive *grace upon grace* in everything in our lives because ***God has called us to be His sons and daughters!***

Scriptural References:

- 1) Exodus 34:5-7
- 2) Matthew 11:25-27
- 3) John 1:16
- 4) John 3:16-17
- 5) Hebrews 1:1-3
- 6) Hebrews 2:9-10
- 7) Ephesians 1:1-8
- 8) 1-Corinthians 2:9-10
- 9) Romans 5:1-5
- 10) 1-Corinthians 3:16
- 11) 1-John 1:1-3
- 12) Ephesians 1:9-23

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Romans 8:14-16
- Revelation 4; 5
- Romans 8:3

Grace Upon Grace V

Fred R. Coulter

Let's come to Romans 6. We have thoroughly covered—and I hope you understand—what it means to be *under law*. Everyone in the world is *under law* and *under sin*, even those who keep some of the commandments of God, because they have 'the law of sin and death' within them.

Jesus said that those who will not hear and will not listen to the Word of God (Matt. 13) that 'in hearing they don't hear and seeing they don't see and neither do they understand.' Then He went on to make another statement: 'But your eyes see and your ears hear and you understand. To the one who understands, more will be given. To the ones who do not understand, it shall be taken away even what they understand.'

In my trip to Oklahoma hearing the reports of what's going on in the Protestant world that is exactly what is happening. What little understanding they have had is being taken away from them.

Today we're going to further get rid of the mystery of Paul's difficult to understand Scriptures and a lot of it is based upon the misunderstanding and error of Protestantism. When you come to read the Bible, especially the first time, you bring with it *your* thoughts. I know the inclination is when you start reading the Bible the first time, you want to read it so that the Bible will prove that you're right or find something in there that tells that you are right.

Romans 6:14: "For sin shall not rule over you because you are not under law, but under grace. What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law, but under grace? MAY IT NEVER BE!" (vs 14-15).

Romans 7:1: "Are you ignorant, brethren (for I am speaking to those who know law), that the law rules over a man for as long a time as he may live?" Everyone is *under law*! Everything functions according to law. However, that's not the interpretation that is given in Christendom today.

To be *under law* they interpret it that as keeping the commandments of God. *Not so!* Only to a very small degree does it mean that. But *under grace* means—and they have never stated it this way, but this is exactly what they mean—if you are under grace you are *above* the law. Think on that for a minute.

Why does it work out that way? Because they said Jesus came to abolish the Law. Jesus said, 'Don't even think I've come to do that.' So when they are stuck with that they say, 'Jesus came to

fulfill and when He fulfilled He did away with it.' *No, He improved it and made it complete!*

If someone delivers to you a brand new car and it has everything in it but the engine and you get in there and you're going to start to drive this, go to turn it on, nothing happens. After trying everything you can while sitting in the driver's seat you are going to check under the hood. You raise up the hood and there's no engine. That's an analogy to understand something. To fulfill also means to complete. So the way your car becomes complete is that they didn't tell you there was a second truck delivering the engine. So, they install it, now the car is complete. When you put the engine in it, the car now is fully functional—*fulfilled*. Did the car magically disappear? *No!*

'Fulfill' does not mean *to do away*. ***It means to complete!*** When you complete it, you have everything necessary to understand. This is what Jesus did. He came to complete the Law and the Prophets and then He declared that our righteousness has to be greater than the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees—right? *Yes!*

Exactly the same way, 'under law' means that *your life* and *your purpose* and *everything that you are* in the world as a person regardless of where you are in the world, you are under law but you do not have connection with God. You are subject to all the laws of God.

In the Old Testament God said He would *dwell among* His people. Moses in giving the instructions in Deuteronomy—the second giving of the Law—told them that the nations of the world would see the laws and commandments 'that God has given you and if you obey them they would say, 'My, what a nation that is near to God.'

New Testament is like putting the engine in the car. That gives you the understanding so that you can live your life before God the way He wants you to do it. We can liken the gasoline in this case to the energy of the Holy Spirit to do so. Now that you have the car you are ready to go where you need to go. If you just continue to have the car with the engine in it and the gas in it and the key in your pocket or in your purse and you never use it, what good is the car? *Isn't any good!*

In exactly the same manner, when they claim in the Protestant doctrine that if you keep the commandments of God you are under law ***is not true***. Only to a small degree of those people who keep some of the commandments of God.

Then they say if you're under grace you don't have to keep any of the laws of God. You don't have to understand the Old Testament. If you have Christ, you have everything and *you determine* what is good for yourself. That's a basic summary of it that then puts them *above* the Law. They don't express it that way.

But this dawned on me in listening to our attorney general try to explain something about his actions, which were completely devious. In trying to tell people what he was doing, he says, 'Truth is evolving.' *No, truth is truth*, and truth is to be discovered, just like in the Bible:

- God is true
- God is righteous
- God's law is perfect
- It is Holy
- The commandments are good and righteous and true

We have to discover how these things are. Then when we understand we need to change because God says, '*Repent!*' Yes, you recognize you've sinned enough that you know you need to repent.

When you do that it's just like you admit, 'I've got this car but I can't use it. I don't know how to do it and it's missing something. There's something missing in my life.' ***That something missing in your life is God!*** Just like in the car—the engine. The car doesn't do you any good without the engine. The engine without the car can do very little of itself.

To be under grace is an entirely different thing. To be under grace means that ***you have been brought by God Himself into a personal relationship with Him!*** God has done this. God is in charge, *no man!*

Let's look at the idea here about being above the Law. That's not what grace means. Grace means that you are

- under the direct fellowship of God the Father
- His free gift
- receiving of His Holy Spirit
- now you can begin to *fulfill* your life
- make your life *complete* so that you can receive eternal life at the resurrection

Let's talk about the Lawgiver; God is the Lawgiver—is He not? *Yes, He is!* Isaiah 33:22: "For **the LORD** is our Judge..." The One Who became Jesus Christ. What did Jesus say concerning judgment? John 5, Jesus said, 'The Father has given all judgment into His hands because He is the Son of man.' The Lord is our Lawgiver! Who gave the laws to Israel? Jesus Christ did as the Lord God of the

Old Testament. What did He do in the New Testament? *He gave us the spiritual application of those laws—correct? Yes!*

"...the LORD is our King; He will save us" (v 22). This applies to Old and New Testament in every way. What happens when you begin to judge the Lawgiver? Does every single person in the world have an opinion about God? *Yes!*

Romans 3:3: "For what if some did not believe?...?" That can apply to anybody. In this particular case he's talking about the Jews. But what if people out in the world don't believe and they have strong opinions? There are a lot of them. That's why we have the new booklet, *God or No God*.

"...Shall their unbelief nullify the faithfulness of God?" (v 3). Does their opinion affect God? *No!* Yet, their sacred opinion today, because everyone has an opinion, everything is based on opinion. 'I believe this.' *Oh, that's nice.* 'I don't believe this.' *Oh, that's true. What do you believe?* 'I believe a little different here.' Sounds like the Supreme Court recently.

Verse 4: "MAY IT NEVER BE!.... [No, it doesn't affect God.] ...Rather, let God be true but every man a liar..." What does it say about the human heart, every human heart? '*Deceitful above all things and desperately wicked.*' From your youth! Women know this a little bit more than men because they are more subject to jealousy and judging than men. When women walk into a room every woman knows exactly the hairstyle, the type of dress, what it's worth, the jewelry, the decorations, the busts, the waist, and the hips and the shoes. If they think they are doing well, then they have a nice smile, but inside they look down on that other woman.

Men have their problems in other ways. This is not to pick on women. Women like to be mysterious and secretive, but God knows the heart. Men are just like a lot of women think. They are blunt, course, direct, insensitive and domineering. All men have their own judgments of people in a different way. But I bring it out this way. *None of that affects God!* None of that makes you a better person.

"...exactly as it is written: 'That You [God] might be justified in Your words...' (v 4).

- every word of God is *true*
- every word of God is *perfect*
- every word of God is *God-breathed*

When it says 'all Scripture,' that means *each and every one God-breathed*. If you don't agree with it and you walk away from it, then it's like keeping your car without the engine in it and think you have a great treasure.

“...and might overcome when **You [God] are being judged by men.**”.... [the Greek is present tense passive] ...But if our unrighteousness brings to reality God’s righteousness, what shall we say?... [And it does. This is where repentance is the first step of repentance. You begin to see that you aren’t what you think you are.] ...*Is* God unrighteous to inflict His wrath? (I am speaking according to man’s view.) MAY IT NEVER BE! Otherwise, how shall God judge the world?” (vs 5-6).

Then he says all are under sin. He gives the denunciation of human nature. Isn’t that the way it is? Look at the futility of human beings trying to solve spiritual problems. Look at the nation of Syria today and how it has been for one year. Now we have all of these wonderful United Nations blue helmeted, goody-two shoes, and peacekeepers. And even Kofi Annan, former head of the United Nations went there on a ‘peace’ mission. Did the guns stop? Did the bombs cease? Did the rockets? *No! Never! Got worse!* You are looking at spiritual problems. You can’t solve it any other way.

Verse 19: “Now then, we know that **whatever** the law says... [All Scripture, each and every one, is God-breathed.] ...it speaks to those who are under the law...” What did we read in Rom 7:1? *‘The law rules over a man for as long a time as he may live.’* Every human being is under law. We need that to understand what it’s going to be under grace because that is not *above* law. That is spiritually *within* law through Christ. The reason this is so:

“...so that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.” (v 19). The whole world is under law. Those who come along and say you don’t need to keep the law, let’s see something here in the book of James. Let’s see what they are actually doing. We already covered that every human being has opinions about God, or a god, or a religion, or a movement, or a political party, whatever. Let’s see where it puts you when you hold opinions against God.

James 4:1: “*What is the cause of quarrels and fighting among you?.... [Remember this the next time you have an argument with your husband or wife.] ...Is it not mainly from your own lusts that are warring within your members?*” You lose your temper. Yes, you think you’re right. Yes, all the things go along with it and after you’re done with the argument you’ve got to do a lot of repair—right? *Yes!*

Verse 2: “You lust, and have not; you kill, and are jealous, and are not able to obtain; you fight and quarrel, but still you do not have, because you do not ask.” ‘Oh, I’ve got to go to God and ask’, but notice without repentance what happens.

Verse 3: “*Then* you ask, and you do not receive because you ask with evil motives... [To serve yourself, rather than give up yourself.] ...that you may consume *it* on your own lusts.... [‘Oh, God, help me win the lotto.’] ...*You* adulterers and adulteresses, don’t you know that the friendship of the world is **enmity with God?**....” (vs 3-4)—which is the root word for enemy. People who have opinions about God, one way or the other, they don’t consider themselves enemies—do they? *No!* Does an atheist think he’s an enemy of God? *No*, he doesn’t care whether God exists or not, but he makes himself an enemy of God. Is he hostile to the Word of God? Does he have enmity toward the laws of God? *Yes, indeed!*

“...Therefore, whoever desires to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God” (v 4). Every church needs to understand that verse. If you’re not seeking to please God and teach His Word and if you’re seeking to please the world and increase your numbers, you cannot please God, but you are an enemy of God. When people get to thinking ‘do-gooderism’ they don’t understand that.

Verse 5: “Or do you think that the scripture says in vain, ‘The spirit that dwells in us lusts with envy’? But He gives greater grace. This is the reason it says, ‘God sets Himself against the proud, but He gives grace to the humble’” (vs 5-6). Why? *Because they know they need God!* Not, ‘God, here I am, you’ve got to accept me because I’ve done this great and marvelous work.’

Verse 7: “Therefore, submit yourselves to God.... [because He’s God] ...**Resist the devil**... [because he is there to pump up your lusts] ...and he will flee from you. **Draw near to God**... [How do you do that? *With prayer, with repentance!*] ...and He will draw near to you....” Haven’t we covered that many times about seeking God? How do you do it? You forsake your thoughts, you forsake your ways and you begin to ask for God’s ways.

“...Cleanse *your* hands, you sinners, and purify *your* hearts, you double-minded!.... [That’s the way human nature is.] (v 10): Humble yourselves before the Lord, and He will exalt you” (vs 8, 10). How do you do that? If you’ve got a lot of serious problems, then it’s

- repentance
- prayer
- fasting
- studying the Word of God
- recognizing your sins
- repenting of them

Also, as you go down in time in growing and overcoming, then God’s Spirit reveals to you the really deep inner nastiness of human nature so you can repent of it. When He first calls you, you’re not

capable of handling how evil your mind really is of itself. It takes God's Spirit to expose it.

Verse 11: "Brethren, do not talk against one another. The one who talks against a brother, and judges his brother, **is speaking against the law, and is judging the law. But if you judge the law...**" Is that not what is done when they say, 'If you are under grace, you don't have to keep the Law. God did away with the Law. Jesus did away with the Law.' *No, He didn't!* 'We don't have to do that law, because that's in the Old Testament.' Heard that before?

"...you are not a doer of *the* law... [That's what he said in the first chapter, be a doer of the law not a hearer.] ...rather, *you are* a judge" (v 11). What does this do? They don't even comprehend it when they say 'we're under grace and we are free from the law.' What does that do?

Verse 12: "*But* there is *only* one Lawgiver, Who has power to save and to destroy. Who are you that you presume to judge another?" Or judge God? Or judge His law? Isn't that amazing what happens? *Yes, indeed!*

With that in mind, we're going to look at a few Scriptures in the book of Galatians. I'm going to mention here again, one of the most important books you need to read to understand the New Testament is *Judaism: A Revelation of Moses or a Religion of Men?*

When Paul was writing he was writing in the time when there was Judaism abounding. The commission was to go to the Jew first. So, unless you understand what Judaism is—please realize this: Pharisaism mentioned in the Bible is the same as Judaism today and they admit so. The Jews say in their own words that Pharisaism and Judaism are one in the same.

Here's the key you're going to learn concerning Judaism that most people have no clue. Very similar to what I learned recently concerning the big book, it looks like a gigantic Bible that they have in Catholic ceremonies when they do the high mass. They have someone carry it and then have the incense going. Then they bring it to the cardinal or to the bishop or to the pope and he kisses it. I always thought that was the Bible. I learned from a Catholic those are actually Catholic prayers written by men having nothing to do with the Bible.

So, it's not just the Jews who are at fault in this. The Jews call Judaism 'the law of Moses.' They let you know in no uncertain terms that Gentiles don't have to keep the law. That's not what it says in the Old Testament either. It's very important to understand that.

Let's look at a couple of other Scriptures in the Gospel of John to back up what I just said. Jesus

is referring to John the Baptist, John 5:35: "He was a burning and shining light, and you were willing for a time to rejoice in his light.... [they thought it would benefit their goals, politically and religiously] ...But I have a greater witness than John's; for the works that the Father gave Me to complete, the *very* works that I am doing, themselves bear witness of Me, that the Father has sent Me. And the Father Himself, Who sent Me, has borne witness of Me. You have neither heard His voice nor seen His form at any time" (vs 35-37).

Another verification that the One that Moses saw was not the Father. This exposes another error of Protestantism that the God of the Old Testament was the Father. *No!* The God of the Old Testament was the One Who became Jesus Christ. We do have some mention of the Father in the Old Testament, the Most High God, but Jesus came to reveal Him.

He's speaking to the Jews who practice Judaism and mixed that in with temple worship, too, v 38: "And you do not have His word dwelling in you..." Think of that for a minute. Here they were the ones who had the Word of God and were responsible for preserving and taking care of it and they ignored it. Did exactly the same thing, they judged the Law and *replaced it with their tradition* and thought they were doing right.

"...for you do not believe Him Whom He has sent. You search the Scriptures... [How many times did He say 'Have you never read'?] ...for in them you think that you have eternal life; and they are the ones that testify of Me. But you are unwilling to come to Me, that you may have life. I do not receive glory from men; But I have known you, that you do not have the love of God in yourselves'" (vs 38-42).

Let's carry this thought forward. If you are under law and you judge God, do you have the love of God in you? What is the love of God?

- We are to love God with all our heart, mind, soul and being—right?
- Love our neighbor as ourself—correct?
- We are to love each other as Jesus loved us—right?
- We're even to love our enemies—correct?
- *Yes!*

John said, 'This is the love of God that we keep His commandments and His commandments are not grievous.' What does this statement tell you? They have none of the above.

Verse 42: "But I have known you, that you do not have the love of God in yourselves. I have come in My Father's name, and you do not receive Me; *but* if another comes in his own name, you will receive him. How are you able to believe, you who receive glory from one another, and do not seek the glory that *comes* from the only God?" (vs 42-44).

Then He makes a profound statement to summarize it. Because the Jews in keeping their own laws placed themselves as judge of the laws of God and placed themselves *above* the law. So, Jesus said:

Verse 45: “Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father. There is *one* who accuses you, *even* Moses, in whom you have hope. But if you believed Moses, you would have believed Me; for he wrote about Me. And if you do not believe his writings... [rather than *your* traditions] ...how shall you believe My words?” (vs 45-47).

That’s something—isn’t it? Let’s see another thing that He said, John 7:16: “Jesus answered them and said, ‘My doctrine is not Mine, but His Who sent Me.’” Doctrine is teaching. Let’s understand something. This is why we are to preach the Word. This is why ministers are not to have their own standard of doing things.

In the latest *The Journal* there is an article that says, *Church Leaders Beware of These Seven Habits* (thejournal.org/issues/issue149/). This is what Mr. Jackson and Mr. Finkelstein listed, the seven habits, and described them in an article in 2004:

Habit #1—They see themselves and their companies as dominating their environment.

Think of it in religious terms.

Habit #2—They identify so completely with the company that there is no boundary between their personal interests and their corporation’s interest.

Habit #3—They think they have all the answers.

God alone has all the answers. That’s why we are to search the Scriptures—prove what is good and hold fast to what is true.

Habit #4—They ruthlessly eliminate anyone who isn’t completely behind them.

Habit #5—They are consummate spokesmen obsessed with the company image and their image.

Habit #6—They underestimate obstacles.

Habit #7—They stubbornly rely on what worked for them in the past and ignore what is true.

That also describes Judaism. If you don’t believe me, talk to a Jew. That describes Protestantism. If you don’t believe me, talk to a Protestant minister. That describes Catholicism. If you don’t believe me, talk to a priest. Same thing.

It’s not His, but the teachings of the Father. So, what do we have in the New Testament here? *From God the Father!* Except for the Gospels, all

the rest of the New Testament is written in epistles. Epistles are *personal letters!* Isn’t that fitting, because God’s plan is to *increase His Family!* We’re to be the sons and daughters of God—correct? So, these are personal messages from God to us. If you’re really seeking God, when you read the Word of God, it’s going to connect with you because God is working with you as long as you are seeking Him. This is why I have my cowbell; so that when I give you my opinion you know it’s my opinion and that may change.

Verse 17: “My doctrine is not Mine, but His Who sent Me. If anyone desires to do His will... [There is the key. The way you understand the Bible is to *obey* what you learn, as you learn it.] ...he shall know of the doctrine... [you’ll understand it] ...*whether* it is from God, or whether I speak from My own self. The one who speaks of himself... [as these seven habits we just read] ...is seeking his own glory; but He Who seeks the glory of Him Who sent Him is true... [He’s speaking of Himself.] ...and there is no unrighteousness in Him. Did not Moses give you the Law, and **not one of you is practicing the Law?**” (vs 17-19).

Think of that! A lot of people think that the Jews keep the law; that they earn salvation by the law.’ If they earn salvation by the law, why can we not earn salvation by the law today? They never ask that question—right? *Because salvation comes by grace!* The Holy Spirit was not granted to the people in the Old Testament, except the patriarchs, the prophets, and some of the kings.

“...not one of you is practicing the law...” (v 19). What were they practicing? *Their traditions!* ‘Full well you reject the commandment of God that you may keep ***your own tradition***’ (Mark 7).

- Do Catholics have traditions? *Yes!*
- Do Protestants have traditions? *Yes!*
- Do Jews have traditions? *Yes!*
- Muslims?
- Buddhists?
- Hindus?
- *All of them!*

(go to the next track)

I think with the background that I have given you and if you will read the book, *Judaism: A Revelation of Moses or Religion of Men?* I’m going to attempt something here based upon what I’ve given you that if you listen carefully the difficulties of Gal. 2 and 3 will be unlocked. Let’s see if we can do it.

Let’s see how prevalent this problem was. It is claimed that Paul brought a different gospel than Peter, James, and John. They had a conference and it was identical. However, the affects of Judaism of

later converts coming into positions of authority in Jerusalem led to the bringing in the encroaching of *traditions* from Judaism. We're going to see one of the worst ones that was a stumbling block for the Jews in the Gospel, and still is to this day.

If you talk to those who are Messianic Jews or Jews for Jesus, they still want to keep everyone who is not a Jew—the Gentiles—in a lower position than they are. They presume to be teachers when the prophecy for Judah was that Judah would have a Lawgiver 'until Shiloh came.' Most people misunderstand that. The Law came down through Moses and the Aaronic priesthood, not through Judah.

What came down as Lawgiver through Judah was the kingship laws or the civil governments, which were also under the priests. When Christ came, no more was there any civil rule with the Jews with the destruction of the temple. Actually the throne went back to the other line of Judah and now resides in England.

If you don't have the book, *Judah's Sceptre and Joseph's Birthright*, you need to read that and that will bring you up to date on things. For new people, yes, there's a lot of learning, but if you are really hungering and thirsting for the Truth, you're going to be absolutely amazed the number of things that are out there and how it all fits into the Bible. Shiloh is another name for the Messiah. How do we know that? *Because Christ came!* I'll find some other things to back that up but let's go on here. Here was the problem with too much Judaism in Jerusalem.

Galatians 2:11: "But when Peter came to Antioch..." Who was the one that God sent to Cornelius to open the door for the Gospel to the Gentiles? *Peter!* What did Peter say as a result of the vision and everything? '*God has shown me that no man should be called common or unclean and that God is not a respecter of persons.*' This is why this is so absolutely powerful here because look what Peter did.

Verse 11: "But when Peter came to Antioch, I **withstood him to his face** because he was to be condemned." Is an apostle subject to correction? *Yes!* Are we all subject to correction? "...withstood him to his face..." was publicly.

Verse 12: "For before certain *ones* came from James... [half-brother of Jesus] ...he was eating with the Gentiles... [Just like he did when he stayed for a number of days with Cornelius and his household.] ...However, when they came... [political consideration, falling back to old Judaism habits] ...he drew back and separated himself *from the Gentiles*, being afraid of those of the circumcision party."

Why would he be afraid of those? He had no reason to be afraid. He was afraid that they would bring a bad report to James about his conduct. Don't ever worry about that. This was really a great mistake and this is why it had to be put in the Scriptures here. Was Peter afraid of James? *No!* He said he was afraid of those of the Circumcision Party who would report to James when they got back; another nice word for politics.

Notice what happened, v 13: "And the rest of *the* Jews... [There were a lot of Jews in the congregation with the Gentiles.] ...joined him in *this* hypocritical act, insomuch that even Barnabas was carried away with their hypocrisy." In other words it would be like coming in here and we're all ready to eat and all of sudden here comes in this person and half of you get up and go out of the room and leave everybody else, because now 'you are all contaminating me.' You get up and walk out and carry your food with you and go into another room.

Notice what Paul did, v 14: "But when I saw that they did not walk uprightly according to the Truth of the Gospel..." What was the command at the end of Matthew? '*Go into all the world, to all nations, teach them everything I have commanded you*'—right? *Yes!*

"...I said to Peter in the presence of them all... [Paul reminds me of General Patton] ...'If you, being a Jew, are living the Gentiles... [not separating yourself] ...and not according to Judaism...' (v 14). That's what the problem was—Judaism, not the laws of God. I defy anyone to find in the Old Testament a law that says *you shall not eat with uncircumcised people*. Doesn't say that!] ...why do you compel the Gentiles to Judaize?" (v 14).

That is, make them separate because the Jews separate. If the Jews separated themselves and you follow and separate yourself and say, 'If they are going to take that attitude, we want nothing to do with them.' You talk about a house divided against itself. Do you see the problem here? That's why this is in the Scripture.

Verse 15: "We who are Jews by nature—and not sinners of the Gentiles—knowing that a man is not justified by works of law..." We covered that in our sermon series: *Romans*—right? How are you justified? *Through faith in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ and His shed blood!*

"...but through the faith of Jesus Christ..." When it says the faith of Jesus, that means Jesus' faith that He imparts to us. That's how you are justified. Justified means *put in right standing with God*. What was going on here? *Very simply this: the Jews were trying to justify themselves before God* by their actions rather than the love of Christ.

Verse 16: “Knowing that a man is not justified by works of law...” What works of law was being done here? *A tradition of Judaism!*

In the back of the book of Judaism, we have a whole section from the *Code of Jewish Law*. The whole book is much thicker and there are thousands and thousands of laws about every little detail and thought that you are to do all the day long—every week, every month, every year, etc.

“...works of law, but through the faith of Jesus Christ, we also have believed in Christ Jesus in order that we might be justified by *the* faith of Christ... [Did Jesus have to have faith? *Yes!* He had to have faith in the plan of God, the love of God, His sacrifice to pay for the sins of the world as the Lamb of God.] ...and not by works of law; because by works of law shall no flesh be justified” (v 16).

Galatians 3:21: “...For if a law had been given that had the power to give life... [the power to give eternal life] ...then righteousness... [justification through faith] ...would indeed have been by law”—instead of by the faith of Christ. There is no law in the Old Testament which says if you do thus-and-such you shall receive eternal life—not there. That’s the whole nature of what we’re talking about here.

As we go through, you will see if you read the *King James Version* or other versions where in Galatians 2:16 it reads: “Knowing that a man is not justified by *the* works of *the* law...” Those two definite articles are not in the Greek but *inserted by the translators*.

Everyone thinks that those are *the laws of God*. This is nothing to do with the laws of God, but the laws of Judaism. No more than that big prayer book that you assume is the Bible that the pope kisses. There is no law that can bring eternal life. That’s where the bad translation of the *King James Version* and other translations and misinterpretation and lack of knowledge of Judaism—all combined.

“...because by works of law shall no flesh be justified.... [no law can cleanse the heart, only repentance and God’s Spirit] ...Now then, if we are seeking to be justified in Christ... [Which we are, through repentance and baptism and access to God and continuous repentance, etc.] ...and we ourselves are found to be sinners, *is* Christ then *the* minister of sin? MAY IT NEVER BE! For if I build again those things that I destroyed, I am making myself a transgressor” (vs 16-18). Let’s put it another way: he came out of Judaism. If he goes back to it, seeking eternal life, even using Christ’s name, not going to work.

Verse 19: “For I through law died to [works of] law... [That’s what we’re talking about here, so that’s why it is works of law. He did not die to *the* Law, but *works of law*, the human works of

Judaism.] ...in order that I may live to God. I have been crucified with Christ... [How is that? *Through baptism* (Rom. 6)] ...yet I live. *Indeed*, it is no longer I; but Christ lives in me... [Christ *in* you will **not** lead you back into the traditions of men.] ...For *the* life that I am now living in the flesh, I live by faith... [rather than tradition] ...that *very faith* of the Son of God, Who loved me and gave Himself for me” (vs 19-20).

Notice what happens when you bring in *works of law*, traditions of men, v 21: “I do not nullify the grace of God; for if righteousness... [that comes by justification] ...is through works of law, then Christ died in vain.” There would have been no need for Christ to come, no need for Him to die. Create a law and that will solve the problem.

One of the reasons for this translation is to correct the egregious errors and misinterpretations of the *King James Version* and other translations. One good thing about what they have done is this: they have documented all the changes they have made so you know what they did incorrectly. How far will these bad translations carry on? I’m going to give a sermon because the United Bible Societies, the top translation organization in the world, wants to make the Bible Muslim-friendly. There are certain things in the Bible that offend those ‘poor little dears.’ Are they going to make the Koran Christian-friendly? You mean by removing the part that says ‘kill Christians’? *I doubt it!* They are going to change it to where He (Christ) is no more than just a man.

What is the principle of the Word of God? ‘*A little leaven leavens the whole lump.*’ The further you get away from the Truth of God and the more you seek to please people—and was not this the error of Peter—‘Oh, you don’t want to offend them’; poor little babies. So, you placate them. Guess who controls United Bible Societies? *The Roman Catholic Church!* The same society that chose to take 67,000 words out of the Bible. The truth is that’s all documented so you can find out what they have done. But the average person out there who is in a fog in every way wouldn’t understand a thing. You wouldn’t have that issue if you are reading and studying the Bible everyday *if* you have a good translation, or *if* you knew the original Hebrew or Greek. Before I started translating the New Testament I studied New Testament Greek for 17 years.

Since the Spirit will lead us into all Truth, if we study the *King James Version*, will you come to all Truth? *Without some knowledge of the Greek, you will not!* You may discover some, but without some knowledge of the Greek you will not. With some knowledge of the Greek, one of the very first things you learn in New Testament Greek is that when in the Greek there is the definite article that is

important. Where there is not the definite article, do not insert it unless the context clarifies that it is needed. If you got that far in Greek, then you could probably unwind Gal. 2 if you had a *King James Version*. But what you would have to do is write the correct translation, because you now understand a little bit of Greek.

If you have a *King James Version* and you know the Truth and you're seeking the Truth, you want to obey the Truth, you will see the conflicts that come up even though you may not understand the correct full answer. But that's where having some knowledge of the Greek comes into play. They changed a bunch of things in the different translations. In reading it he began to feel that something wasn't right, didn't understand it until his Bible was stolen and he was forced to read the *KJV* again.

People can read the Bible and come to a certain point and find themselves in a fog. It's hard to understand. How do you understand? *The first thing to do is to pray about it!* Ask God to help you and guide you. Next thing to do is broaden your search.

1. Look at different translation. If you are online, you can get all different kinds of them.
2. If you don't understand Greek, at least get an interlinear, especially *Interlinear Greek-English New Testament* by George Ricker Berry.

You can pick up an awful lot of those things if you diligently study. That's one of the reasons that I did this new translation. The more you study in the *KJV* the more you see that it causes confusion, plus misinterpretation on top of it.

What we're going to do is look at here in Galatians 3 some of those misinterpretations. The reason this becomes important is so that you can see that when we are under grace, which I'll bring in the next sermon, *our requirement of law-keeping is not eliminated*, but elevated to a higher standard.

There is another purely Greek New Testament—in the original order—put out by Robinson and Pierpont. If you don't anything about the Greek, I don't recommend you get this except that if you go online and read about the Byzantine Text Form and read the explanation in the English you will see that the Received Text is about 99% accurate to the Byzantine Text Form. When I was doing the translation, Gary Staszik was in direct communication with Pierpont and Robinson both. Pierpont has since died. They show how they were able to identify the most accurate text of the New Testament. They completely reject the Caesarean, the Alexandrian, and the Vaticanus New Testament.

If you are diligent enough in your study and you really are hungering and thirsting for the Truth, you will not be satisfied until you find the correct answer. *God will lead you to it* because the tools are there. I want to prove a point because once you understand about Judaism as the traditions of men and not the law of the Old Testament, it's like turning on the lights in a dark room.

Galatians 3:8: "Now in the Scriptures, God, seeing in advance that He would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the Gospel beforehand to Abraham, *saying*, 'In you shall all the nations be blessed.' *It is* for this reason that those who are of faith are being blessed with the believing Abraham" (vs 8-9)—because he believed it was counted as righteousness. He 'obeyed God's voice, kept His laws, His statutes, His commandments, and His charge.'

Notice v 10. in the *King James* it reads: "For as many as are of the works of the law..." *Not true!* The Greek reads: For as many as are of *works of law*.

Correct translation in English, v 10: "For as many as are *relying* on works of law... [which are what? *The traditions and laws of men!*] ...are under a curse..." Why? How do you get under a curse? By keeping the laws of God? *No!* He said you would be blessed—right? Didn't we cover that on *What Does it Mean to Be Under Law?* {see June 2012 letter at cbcg.org} This is where the Protestants turn and say, 'If you try and keep the law, you're under a curse.' Because they are not taught the truth of what it really means. Let's clarify the first part:

Verse 10: "For as many as are *relying* on works of law are under a curse... [Those works of law are not the Biblical laws and commandments, but Judaism.] (Now you will understand the next part of it): ...because it is written, 'Cursed is everyone who does not continue in all things that have been written in the book of the Law to do them.'"

If you substitute tradition for the laws of God written in the book of the Law, you are sinning. Nowhere do you find that you are cursed for keeping the laws of God. God says you are blessed. That's why the first sentence here in v 10 has nothing to do with the laws and commandments of God, but the laws and commandments of Judaism. They have rejected the laws and commandments of God written in the book of the Law, so therefore, they are *under a curse!* I hope you understand that from this point of view. This is why if you go by Protestant tradition and *King James* and other translations that implies that you're cursed for relying on 'the works of the law,' then explain why the curse talks about those who do not keep or continue in the things written in the book of the Law. It's an absolute complete

‘moryoxon.’ I don’t like oxymoron. I like moron first; moronic thought, because the first part of v 10 contradicts the last part of v 10—does it not? It doesn’t say, ‘Cursed is everyone who does the things written in the book of the Law.’ *It does not!* It says, ‘Cursed is everyone who does **not** continue in all...’

What did we read in Deut. 28 and all the way through the Old Testament? If you keep *all* the laws and statutes and judgments, you will be blessed. Read Deut. 28 because that has the blessings and the cursings. Does everybody understand that? If you have a *King James*, go home and read it in the *King James* and see the contradiction.

Verse 11: “Therefore, *it is* evident that no one is being justified before God by *means of* law... [No definition with the definite article. *By means of law* or you could have *by works of law*. That’s what v 10 is talking about.] ...because *it is written*, ‘The just shall live by faith.’”

Does it take faith to keep the laws of God? *Yes!* If you’re to continue in everything written in the book of the Law and by faith you do so, you are not under a curse, because you are within law. When you eliminate law, you put yourself above the Law, you judge the Law, you judge God and you judge your thoughts, *your* traditions, *your* laws as better than God’s. And, in fact, so good that God is obligated to recognize them.

Verse 12: “Now then, the law is not based on faith... [No, the law states what sin is.] ...but, ‘The man who practices these things... [in the law] ...shall live in them.’” But since ‘all have sinned and come short of the glory of God,’ here is how most of Christendom reads v 13: ‘Christ has redeemed us from the law.’ That’s how they interpret it. *No!*

Verse 13: “Christ has redeem us from **the curse** of the Law...” What is the curse? *The curse is law-breaking, not law-keeping!*

Even living *in the land*, if you are within law, because you’re under law and under the Constitution, you are a law-abiding citizen and you have no trespass against you worthy of correction—correct? *Yes!* Likewise, if you are practicing the things that are in the Law, then you’ll be blessed. But since not everyone can keep the Law perfectly we have sin. How do we handle sin? Do we make another law? *No, we repent!*

Verse 13: “**Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law**... [not obedience to the law] ...having become a curse for us (for it is written, ‘Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree’).”

Everyone is under law. ‘All have sinned and come short of the glory of God.’ If you are all under

God’s laws, is there any law that you can do to remove sin? *No!* The only way sin is removed is by

- repentance to God
- faith in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ
- a set mind to be obedient and quit sinning

What did Jesus say for those who He healed? *Go and sin no more.* Once you’ve broken the law, you are under the curse. If you tell a lie and you’re not in the habit of telling lies, but you tell a lie, what happens to your conscience? If you steal and get caught, we read what those laws were, how you are supposed to pay back in restitution, and all of that.

This helps you understand. I know it got a little heavy and I know it got a little complicated, but if we understand the difference between *works of law* and *the laws and commandments of God*, which then works of law are *tradition*, whether it be Catholic, Protestant or Jewish.

Now you can understand Rom. 9 and 10. In *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version* we have Appendix Z, which is a compilation of all the difficult Scriptures of Paul to explain the truth of them. The *King James* has it which is a complete misunderstanding, Romans 10:4 (*KJV*): “For Christ the end of the law...” They turn there and say, ‘Christ did away with the law,’ but that’s not what it means. Here is one of the rules of Bible study: You have to take it in context, so come back to:

Romans 9:30: “What then shall we say? That the Gentiles, who did not follow after righteousness, have attained righteousness, even the righteousness that is by faith. But Israel... [including the Jews] ...although they followed after **a** law of righteousness, did not attain to **a** law of righteousness. Why? Because *they did not seek it by faith, but by works of law*...” (vs 30-32). That’s the topic here. What have we learned concerning works of law? *Works of law are traditions of men and laws and commandments of men to substitute for the laws of God.* Did the Jews and Israelites do that? *Yes, the Jews did it with Judaism!* The Israelites did it with Baalism.

“...for they stumbled at the Stone of Stumbling. Exactly as it is written: ‘Behold, I place in Sion a Stone of Stumbling and a Rock of Offense, but everyone who believes in Him shall not be ashamed’” (vs 32-33).

Romans 10:1: “Brethren, the earnest desire of my heart and my supplication to God for Israel is for salvation. For I testify of them that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge” (vs 1-2). Is that not true for the Israelites today? *Yes!* Do they believe the Bible? *No!* They believe what they

want to believe of the Bible, but have their own traditions, just like the Jews.

Verse 3: “For they, being ignorant of the righteousness *that* comes from God, and seeking to establish their own righteousness... [not God’s] ...have not submitted to the righteousness of God” (v 3). How did they seek to establish their own righteousness? *By works of law!*

That’s why v 4 should properly be translated this way: “For Christ *is the end of works of law*... [which are human laws and traditions. That’s what is set aside, not the laws of God. They are eternal. They are perfect. They are right. They are good and true.] ...for righteousness to everyone who believes.”

Does that make sense to you? We’ll talk about the righteousness that is under grace (part 6). This has been heavy and this has been deep. *But if you can grasp this, I am here to tell you, you know more than any Protestant minister.*

Scriptural References:

- 1) Romans 6:14-15
- 2) Romans 7:1
- 3) Isaiah 33:22
- 4) Romans 3:3-6, 19
- 5) James 4:1-8, 10-12
- 6) John 5:35-47
- 7) John 7:16-19
- 8) Galatians 2:11-16
- 9) Galatians 3:21
- 10) Galatians 2:16-21
- 11) Galatians 3:8-13
- 12) Romans 10:4
- 13) Romans 9:30-33
- 14) Romans 10:1-4

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Matthew 13
- Mark 7
- Deuteronomy 28

Also referenced:

Sermon: *What Does it Mean to Be Under Law*

Sermon Series: *Romans*

Booklet: *God or No God*

Books:

- *Judaism: A Revelation of Moses or a Religion of Men?* by Philip Neal
- *Judah’s Sceptre and Joseph’s Birthright* by J.H. Allen
- *The Code of Jewish Law* by Ganzfried and Golden
- *The Interlinear Greek-English New Testament* by George Ricker Berry (available at: amazon.com)
- *The New Testament in the Original Greek* by Robinson and Pierpont

Article: *Church Leaders, Be Aware of These Seven Habits* by David Havis (the journal.org/issues/issue149/)

Letter (June 2012): *Part One: “Under Law” vs. “Under Grace” What does It Mean to be “Under Law”?* (cbcg.org)

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)

Grace Upon Grace VI

Fred R. Coulter

We need to focus in on *grace upon grace*. That's why Christ came to give us *grace upon grace*. We will see that the whole operation of the New Covenant is *grace upon grace*.

Let's just review again. I know this is repetitious, but I also need you to understand this. Too many people still come to the Bible with the thoughts of the Protestant doctrines in mind. We understand very clearly what Paul is writing about. Mistranslations and misinterpretations and direct rejection of the Word of God are the hallmarks of Protestantism. The way that the Church of God has destroyed itself is they've gone to the Protestants to say:

- How do you understand grace?
- How do you understand law?
- How shall we evangelize?

—when they fail to realize that the hand of God's correction is upon them and they need to repent.

Romans 6:14: "For sin shall not rule over you because you are not under law, but under grace." The way it's interpreted of being under law is that you are keeping the commandments of God. *Not true!* Some may be keeping some of them. Some may have a wonderful exterior of pleasantness and obedience, being very nice people, but devout idol-worshippers, devout Sunday-keepers, devout holiday-keepers. They think they're under grace.

The next thing they read, not under law but under grace, meaning God has done away with His laws and commandments and you don't need to keep anything. We covered last time what happens when you judge the Lawgiver and you reject His laws. But what they are actually saying here, the way that they interpret *under grace*, is you are *above* law.

Romans 7:1: "...that the law rules over a man for as long a time as he may live." Everyone in the world is under law. They are under sin and they are under judgment.

Let's look and see what that leads to, just like this last week we had this Supreme Court decision. I'm speechless as to what to call it, so I'll leave it for a later analysis. But what it does, it breeds lawlessness. Jesus said in the end-time that 'the love of many will grow cold because lawlessness shall multiply.' The whole system of the world is called the *mystery of lawlessness*. Why is it called the mystery of lawlessness? *Because they take part of God's laws and then add their own traditions and their own ways to it!* They cast the rest of God's laws behind their backs. All religions do it: Jews, Protestants, Catholics, Hindus, Muslims,

Animists. Occasionally they may stumble across some of God's laws, but nevertheless, it's called the *mystery of lawlessness*.

Why does God give people over to the mystery of lawlessness? I'm not going to go through the prophetic part of it, but let's come to 2-Thess. 2. We will see a simple explanation as to why people are turned over to the *mystery of lawlessness*. When they are turned over to the *mystery of lawlessness*, they don't hear the Word of God, they can see the Word of God but they won't obey the Word of God, so they are blinded.

We know there is one who is coming. The antichrist is coming. People still ask, 'I wonder if our current President is the antichrist.' He may or may not be, but one thing for sure, he's devoid of truth. So, if he is later selected to be the antichrist, because he's pretty young, he meets the first qualification.

2-Thessalonians 2:9: "*Even* the one whose coming is according to *the* inner working of Satan... [Working within the mind and body and heart of this individual. Totally yielded to Satan if not Satan-possessed.] ...with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness..." (vs 9-10).

It was said when they were doing the healthcare law, 'Pass it so you can read it, then you'll know what's in it.' It's kind of like the same thing when they start reading it, there are a lot of things in there they don't like. That's analogous to what they do with the Bible. Keep all of these traditions and then you read the Bible and nothing makes sense because they are getting rid of Truth. They are supplanting God's way with men's way; God's interpretation with men's interpretation. Guess who is right there with a lot of spiritual power to say, 'Oh, yes, God didn't mean what he said.' And who is the god of this world? You put all of that together here.

"...in those who are perishing... [here is why]: ...because they did not receive the love of the Truth..." (v 10). Let's think of some Scriptures. Jesus said what of Himself? *I am the Way* (know the way) *the Truth* (nor the truth). It's not like our current attorney general says, 'Oh, truth on this problem is evolving.' In other words, don't disturb me until I make up the paperwork and make it look good. That's what a lot of people do with the Bible.

- Your Law is Truth
- Your Word is Truth
- All Your precepts are true from the beginning

- The Law of God is perfect
- God is perfect
- God cannot lie
- God inspired the Bible to be
- All Scripture is given by inspiration of God or God-breathed
- Holy men of God wrote it who were moved of the Holy Spirit

Yet, they condemn the Word of God and lie and say, 'It wasn't written down till 200-300 years later.' Really? Internal evidence shows the other way. That's why we have the commentaries. That's why we have the appendices in the Bible.

"...they did not receive the love of the Truth, so that they might be saved" (v 10)—*God's way!* People want to be saved by what they want to hear, rather than be saved by repentance and hear what God wants them to know.

Verse 11: "And for this cause... [There's a cause. There are *causes* that God brings upon people.] ...God will send upon them a powerful deception... [That's what we're seeing going on right now.] ...that will cause them to believe *the* lie, so that all may be judged who did not believe the Truth, but who took pleasure in unrighteousness" (vs 11-12).

Those in the Church are entirely different. Those who have the Spirit of God are entirely different. We have seen God does not give His Spirit without repentance and covenant baptism to receive the Holy Spirit of God with the laying on of hands. That is the dividing line. Only at that point do you come under grace. God's grace will lead you, will draw you, but you're not yet under grace. God has to, in His grace, apply the death of Jesus Christ as penalty for your sins and by the grace of God He tasted death for everyone. 'God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whoever believes on Him *may* not perish but *may* have everlasting life.' Men assume the infallible position and put the *if* on God. God is perfect and is infallible and men assume the fallible position as sinners.

Verse 13: "Now we are duty-bound to give thanks to God always concerning you brethren, who are beloved by *the* Lord..." If you are under grace you have the Spirit of God within you, which consists of the Spirit from the Father of begetting and Christ in you for the mind of Christ. God's purpose and goal is strictly grace.

- you can't buy it
- you can't earn it
- you can't obey 'jillions' of laws to make God give it to you

You have to repent and agree absolutely with God, absolutely with Jesus Christ, absolutely with the Word of God. Yes, there are translations out there

that are not reliable. But the good part of it is all the changes they have made, guess what they did? *They documented them!* So if you search it out, you can find out right from wrong. But some cases you really have to search. God has given His Word. We're all sitting here with our Bibles open reading the same thing. These are unique occasions in the history of mankind, even from the time that they had enough printed Bibles that it could be done this way compared to all the history of mankind.

God has given a lot to us and 'to whom a lot is given, much is expected.' So, we have a lot that we need to do to be faithful to God in our personal lives and in preaching the Gospel to the world as well. So we are beloved of God.

"...beloved by *the* Lord, because God from *the* beginning has called you until salvation through sanctification of *the* Spirit and belief of *the* Truth" (v 13). To be under grace means *you have received the Holy Spirit, you are sanctified with that Holy Spirit.* That sets you apart from the world. We live in the world, but we're not a part of the world. ***God has called us to an eternal inheritance!***

I know just the other night they were showing some of the things of the Hershel Telescope. I never heard of the Hershel Telescope. And they have a Hubbell 2 Telescope. They are astonished at the creation of God in the universe. I think God has caused that technology and let it be spread abroad so every man, woman, and child will be without excuse who assume there is no God

Every time I see that, every time I see that great creation of God, it's hard to keep the eyes dry that God has made that for His saints. Not a matter of belonging to a church. It's not a matter of being on the church roles.

- It's a matter is your name written in the book of Life.
- It's a matter that God has called you by His grace and He's going to establish certain things in your life by that grace which cannot be done any other way.

You can't do it without the Spirit of God!

Verse 14: "Unto which He called you by our gospel to *the* obtaining of *the* glory of our Lord Jesus Christ." What does it say that Jesus looks like there in Rev. 1?

- His face shines like the sun.
- He is clothed in radiant garments from the head to His feet.
- His feet are so glorious it's like brass burning in a furnace.

That's just part of the glory that He revealed to John when He began giving him the book of Revelation.

What is it going to be like? I want you to *think* ahead. We're not dealing with a church against a church.

- we're dealing with Truth against untruth
- we're dealing with pure Truth against mixture of Truth
- we're dealing of true interpretation of the Scriptures *vs* misinterpretation of the Scriptures
- we're dealing with the teachings of Christ vs the traditions of men

That's what it's all about. The ultimate reality of it is this. No one will ever fulfill their ultimate destiny unless they wholly, absolutely agree with and function *under the power of God the Father*. That's what it means to *become one in the Father and Christ*. God wants us to

- learn to *think* like Him
- *act* like Him
- *reason* like Him
- *perceive things* like He does

That's why we're here. This is all of the grace of God. This is why we have the fellowship with God.

- Our fellowship is with God the Father and Jesus Christ—*that's grace*
- The Spirit of God within us—*that's grace*
- The Word of Truth and understanding—*that's grace*
- The preaching of the Gospel to the world—*that's grace*
- The serving of the brethren in the Church—*that's grace*
- Our love toward each other—*that's from the grace of God*

Let's see what else it does and why. In part 5 we saw concerning the Lawgiver. Christ is the Lawgiver—Old Testament and New Testament. We're going to look at a statement, and we're going to see what grace does. Grace establishes the laws of God and our relationship with God that cannot be obtained any other way.

Romans 3:24: "*But* are being justified freely by **His grace**..."

- God's gift
- God's blessing
- encompassing God's mercy
- God's love
- God's Truth

It's *grace upon grace upon grace*. Being justified means to be put in right standing with God the Father and Jesus Christ in heaven above—freely. Not like the Catholic Church: come and pay for a mass and you get indulgences. *No!* Come with a

broken heart and a contrite spirit and repentance and God will receive you and He will change you.

"...being justified freely by His grace through redemption that *is* in Christ Jesus" (v 24). The death of Christ—and I'm going to bring this out on Church at Home—is the greatest thing that God could do; to be manifested in the flesh as a full human being, preach the Gospel to the world, die for the sins of all mankind. The greatest thing He could do to redeem us. God being just took that penalty upon Himself because He gave us as punishment through Adam and Eve a sinful nature.

So therefore, only God's effort and grace and Spirit can change that. Without that, we can discipline ourselves, we can be nice people in the society, but we can't convert ourselves and we can't live forever by God's grace. Also, Jesus is the propitiation for our sins because if you are under grace then you have access to God the Father and the sacrifice of Jesus Christ for the continuous remission of your sins. That's grace. As we see in the daily prayer: 'Forgive us our sins as we sin against others—daily.' God wants us to repent daily.

With God's Spirit in us, guess what He does? *He reveals the inner depths of the deception and human nature and the evil associated with it that is lodged in our minds!* In going through the sermons, *The Washing of the Water by the Word*—which ties in together with this—God cleanses our minds. That is the grace of God, as well.

Verse 25: "Whom God has openly manifested to be a propitiation through faith in His blood.... [v 26]: ...Through the forbearance of God.... [v 28]:...Consequently, we reckon that a man is justified... [Put in right standing with God because of repentance and baptism and the Holy Spirit, all through the shed blood of Christ. You *must believe* in that.] ...separate from works of law" (v 28). Works of law has nothing to do with the commandments of God whatsoever, but the traditional works of 'religions.'

Verse 29: "*Is He* the God of the Jews only?... [the Jews still think so today] ...*Is He* not also *the* God of *the* Gentiles? YES! *He is* also God of *the* Gentiles, Since *it is* indeed one God Who will justify *the* circumcision by faith, and *the* uncircumcision through faith.... [meaning exactly the same kind of operation] ...Are we, then, abolishing law... [Protestants say yes. **God says no!**] ...through faith?..." (vs 29-31). Those who believe they are under grace have perverted the grace of God and exalted themselves above the law as judges of the law. So they say:

- You don't need to read this.
- This part of the New Testament was meant for the Jews.

- You don't have to worry about anything that is in the Old Testament. It has all been fulfilled.

They never understand, as the sermons I gave: *How Would Your Preach Christ from the Old Testament?* That's what they did! The Bereans checked the Scriptures of the Old Testament in the Jewish synagogue in Berea and proved these things whether they were so or not.

Verse 31: "Are we, then abolishing law through faith?..." **No!** Everything under grace, because God is dealing in your life, is on a higher spiritual standard.

- You're not reducing obedience, *you're increasing it.*
- You're not reducing responsibility, *you are increasing it.*
- You are not placating human nature, you are exposing it.

Verse 31: "Are we, then abolishing law through faith? MAY IT NEVER BE! Rather, we are establishing law." How does God establish law? Keep that in mind. We're going to learn something about the New Covenant. Everyone likes to say, 'We're under the New Covenant of grace.' Yes, *if* you have the Holy Spirit of God you are.

- by proclamation and declaration does not make it so.
- by misinterpreting of Scriptures
- by bad translations
- by teachers who do not hunger and thirst after the Word of God but are more concerned with money and political power

—they'll never understand the Word of God. But they've got to have a false grace to get people in because people want to have their conscience clean. ***God wants you converted!***

Hebrews 8:6: "But on the other hand, He has obtained[Christ] a *supremely* more excellent ministry..." That is compared to Aaron and the temple and the animal sacrifices under the Old Covenant. If the Jews would have read the Old Testament—Jeremiah and Ezekiel—would they not see where God said He's going to make a new covenant with Israel and Judah.

If the Old Covenant were good enough, why make a new one? It's absurd to say that those in the Old Testament received salvation through law and then come to the New Testament and say, 'If you try and keep the law, you're trying to earn your salvation.' If they did under the Old Covenant, why can't we under the New Covenant? Because the answer is they never did under the Old Covenant. Only certain of the patriarchs and prophets and the

kings received salvation to the first resurrection. You read it. God was *among* them. God was *near* them. But God was ***never*** *within* them. That's what's necessary for true conversion and New Covenant.

"...a *supremely* more excellent ministry, as much greater as the superior covenant... [Are not eternal promises of glory and an eternal inheritance through grace, is that not greater than a piece of land on the earth? *Yes, it is.*] ...which He is also Mediator, which was established upon superior promises.... [that's why it's by faith] ...For if the first covenant had been faultless, then no provision for a second covenant would have been made.... [But God prophesied of it.] ...But since He found fault with them..." (vs 6-8).

- Why did He find fault with them?

You read the whole Old Covenant with this question in mind.

- How many repented?
- How many believed God?

Even when they were on the Exodus coming out of Egypt.

- How many believed the miracles that God did?
- How long did it last?

Until they were running out of water and running out of food and then they were rioting, running to Moses accusing him, forgetting what God did to make Pharaoh let them go.

Not one place in all of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers or Deuteronomy do you find that the whole congregation of Israel got on their knees and all faced the tabernacle of the congregation and all prayed to God, 'God, we're thirsty, please send water. God, You have sent us meat one time with all the quail. Please be merciful and send us some more. God, we love You and trust You.' *Not once!*

When they sent the spies to go check out the land, they sent one from each tribe. Only two came back with a good report. The rest moaned and groaned and bellyached and rejected God and didn't believe Him. He said, 'That's it! I've put up with you these ten times—another 38-1/2 years. Everyone over 20 is going to die because My presence was right here in the pillar of fire and the cloud. I put My presence in the tabernacle of the congregation. I fed you with manna and I fed you with quail. I gave you water out of the rock. When I said you go into the land and I'll fight the battle for you, you didn't believe Me.'

Then you go through all the judges, what happened? *Same thing happened when Moses was on the mount, right back to Baal sun worship—right? Yes, indeed!* The fault was with them.

That's why He said: "...Behold, the days are coming,' says the Lord, 'when I will establish a

new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah; not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in *the* day that I took hold of their hand to lead them out of *the* land of Egypt because they did not continue in My covenant, and I disregarded them,' says *the* Lord" (vs 8-9).

Again, read the Old Testament. How many times were they obedient to the covenant? *Only when the king virtually got them by their knap of the neck and said, 'You will obey.'* God doesn't want that. Do you establish law that way? *No, you don't establish law that way!* You establish law with a willing heart and repentant mind, that you desire to keep it. That comes with the New Covenant.

Verse 10: "For this *is* the covenant that I will establish with the house of Israel after those days,' says *the* Lord. 'I will give My laws into their minds... [That's how you establish law, because it comes from the *inside* out. It is part of your being. It is part of your thinking.] ...and I will inscribe them upon their hearts... [It's part of your emotions and your feelings.] ...and I will be their God, and they will be My people.'" That's something! That is the grace that God has called us to.

Let's see how else this grace of God works for us. Not only do we have the Spirit of God within us, the two parts, because Jesus said that 'the Father will love us and **We** will come—that is the Father and Christ—and make **Our** abode with you.' That's something!

That's why, brethren, you look at what's going on in the world and you look what's going on in too many people in the Churches of God. You've got to ask: With everything God has given to us, this is what they are doing? *Men rising up as false prophets!* Churches wouldn't correct him, the brethren wouldn't correct him, so God did using the federal government. Now he's going to spend some time in jail. He's going to sit there and learn he was not one of the two witnesses. He's either going to repent or he's going to be staring at a very much worse punishment when he's standing at the edge of the Lake of Fire trying to explain to God that 'I did this because I wanted to be someone great.'

Hebrews 10:16, almost a repeat of it, but now read it and you find it's not just to the house of Israel and Judah, but *to all* including the Gentiles. "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; And their sins and lawlessness I will not remember ever again'" (vs 16-17). That's why God sends His Spirit to be in your mind, to help clean out your mind.

Verse 18: "Now where remission of these *is*, it is no longer necessary to offer sacrifices for sin.

Brethren, I'm going to tell you right here one the greatest graces of *grace upon grace* that God gives us. This has to do with our prayers to God. This has to do with our relationship with God. Right here:

Verse 19: "Therefore, brethren, having confidence to enter into the *true* Holiest by the blood of Jesus." Your prayers go right to God. We find in Rev. 5 that our prayers come up like incense upon the golden altar of God. It is the Holy Spirit that carries them there. It is the Holy Spirit that leaves off all the nonsense that flits around in our minds if we get distracted when we are praying. It's like an automatic get rid of the fluff. "...into the *true* Holiest by the blood of Jesus..."

He's comparing the high priest, the most important man in Israel. He was over the king. Guess what his privilege was? Once a year on the Day of Atonement, go into the Holy of Holies and it was pitch black in there. The Jews later had a custom because of fear that they would put a rope around him when he went in there just in case he did something wrong and God would zap him dead they could pull him out. All right, that is the law.

Now let's look at grace. You can enter into the true Holiest by the blood of Jesus. How often? *Any time of the day or night!* Any time you say, 'Our Father. Father, help me, give me understanding, forgive me.' You need to be on your knees every day, that's true. But the rest of the day you can pray like Paul says, pray without ceasing. That means continuously be in prayer to ask God to help you. He will. God's Spirit will guide you—everyday!

Now he calls it, v 20: "By a new and living way... [which is grace] ...which He consecrated for us through the veil (that is, His flesh)." Because when Jesus died the veil that hung over the face of the temple was ripped in two from top to the bottom. The way I vision is that there was this great lintel stone that was up seven stories high at the top of the temple. Here hung this great woven linen veil, which was as thick as a hands breath.

There were the twelve signatures of it for all the twelve tribes of Israel. The way I view what happened, because you read it and it said there was an earthquake and the veil of the temple was rent, now that's not the one inside the Holy of Holies. This is the one outside the temple door. It was torn in two from top to bottom. Yes, the earthquake I'm sure had a part of it. Yes, the great stone falling down I'm sure added weight to help tear it. But I think there was a mighty angel standing there and he gave a great karate chop and that thing went tumbling down to signal *the end of the temple service*. God gave them another 40 years to repent, but they didn't do it. That's why He says 'it's a new living way which He consecrated for us through the veil, that is His flesh.'

Verse 21: “And *having* a great High Priest over the house of God.” *That’s grace!* Who is the Head of the Church? *Christ! That’s grace!* Did He give ministers and elders and teachers and prophets and evangelists and apostles? *Yes! That’s grace so that we’re all taught!* We all come into the unity of the faith. We all grow and develop in the mind of Christ. *That’s grace!* Now you see how all of these graces are stacked one upon another.

Now notice what this is to do for us, v 22: “Let us approach *God* with a true heart, with full conviction of faith, our hearts having been purified from a wicked conscience, and our bodies having been washed with pure water. Let us hold fast without wavering *to the hope that we profess*, for He Who promised *is faithful*” (vs 22-23).

That’s how you establish law, that’s how it’s done!

(go to the next track)

This is the kind of relationship that we have with God. We have many series and Jim is anxious for me to announce as many as I can because he doesn’t have enough work to do. He’s only three weeks behind. But we have the series, *The Keys to Answered Prayer*. The whole foundation that we build on Christ in our relationship with God the Father and Jesus Christ is *prayer and study*.

- Study—God talks to us
- Prayer—we talk to God

This tells us what we can pray to Him concerning. If you don’t have the series, *The Keys to Answered Prayer*, there are 21 sermons on that. We go through the whole Bible and we spend especially a lot of time in the book of Psalms. If you’re not used to praying, the book of Psalms tells us how to pray. If you’re not used to praying, then what’s going to happen, you’re going to come across some difficulties you cannot solve on your own. You take them to God in prayer.

Here’s the promise, Hebrews 4:14: “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... [We all have weaknesses. We all have temptations. We all have sins that come along. We don’t intend to. You ever go along and do something and said, ‘Why did I do that?’ *Yes!*] ...but *One Who* was tempted in all things...” (vs 14-15). That’s why He came in the flesh. That’s why God made us after His image, after His likeness, a little lower than God because the ultimate purpose is to be in the Kingdom of God as a spirit-glorified son or daughter of God.

What we are as we start in the flesh, that little pinprick of life, what it’s going to be at the

resurrection and the glory that we will receive, the comparison between the two is like standing here on the earth and looking up at the sky and seeing as many stars as we can, compared to looking at the universe through the eyes of these great telescopes, which show us the greatness and beauty and power of God. That’s the vast difference that it’s going to be.

That’s why God doesn’t want us to play church. That’s why God doesn’t want us to merchandize the brethren. That’s why God wants us first of all to have an individual relationship with God the Father and Jesus Christ through prayer and study. Then when we come together on the Sabbath and God puts His presence here, then the Sabbath becomes a real great spiritual fulfillment of God’s will and desire and teaching for us.

“...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... [Think of all the graces that God has given to us—*grace upon grace upon grace*.] ...so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need” (vs 15-16).

Now let’s look at something else. We’ve seen how God has established law. Now we’re ready to examine another phrase, which is almost like an opposite that sits in a conundrum to each other.

Romans 3:27: “Therefore, where *is* boasting? It is excluded. Through what law? *The law of works*? By no means! Rather, *it is* through a law of faith.” Here, law and faith are together when in the normal explanation of things in Protestantville law and faith are opposites. But this means the *operation of faith*. We have faith in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. God has set the law that if you repent and you turn from your sins and you turn to God by faith in the sacrifice of Christ He will blot out your sins and remove them just like we saw there in the book of Hebrews.

Also the law of faith means that we *follow God*. Hebrews 11 is called *the faith chapter*. Notice what faith does. The law of faith gives us hope and belief, and grants us obedience all the way through here. Here’s the law of faith explained:

Hebrews 11:1: “Now faith is *the substance*...” Not just confidence, because this is ‘hupostasis’ and that means substance, which then is spiritual substance from God because we have the faith of Christ given to us. Not just our faith to God, that’s part of it, but *the faith of Christ given to us through the power of the Holy Spirit*. That’s the substance we receive. What does this cause us to do?

“...of *things* hoped for...” We

- ***stand in grace***

- *walk in faith*
- *believe in hope*
- *live in love*

“...and the conviction of things not seen... [from the Spirit of God] ...For by this *kind of faith* the **elders...**” (vs 1-2)—those who were the patriarchs. The patriarchs all had an individual relationship with the one Who became Jesus Christ, directly in their lives. Abraham saw God, Isaac saw God, Jacob wrestled with God. David brought the Ark and put it in a special tabernacle in his house. When he was praising God with his Psalms, he saw the outline of God under the curtains where the Ark of the Covenant was. **A relationship with God!** That’s why they are all listed here.

Verse 3: “By faith we understand that the worlds were created by *the* Word of God... [You can read in the Scriptures. When you see the universe, as I have said, it’s magnificent.] ...so that the things that are seen were made from *things* that are invisible.” That is absolutely true today. They don’t know the ultimate source of the power and energy of life or even the energy in the smallest particle that is so small it passes through everything on earth as if it doesn’t exist. *That’s something!*

Verse 4: “By faith Abel... [Notice what the law of faith does. The law of faith does not have us ignore the laws of God or the commands of God, the *law of faith impels us to obey God!*] ...offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and through it, though he died, *he is yet speaking.*”

Here’s something to learn. The Word of God as recorded in the Bible is the living Word of God, inspired by God through His Spirit. Since these are the words of God, that’s why Jesus said to the scribes and Pharisees who didn’t believe Moses, ‘There is one who accuses you, even Moses whom you say you believe, but don’t.’ He used the present tense: Moses is accusing you, because all of God’s Word continues on. He is yet speaking.

Verse 5: “By faith Enoch was transported so that he would not look upon death, and was not found... [that is by those who sought to kill him] ...because God had transported him; for before his departure it was testified of him that he pleased God.”

- he saw God
- he walked with God
- he talked with God

So did Noah, which is the next one we come to.

Here’s also part of the law of God and the faith of God combined, v 6: “Now without faith *it is*

impossible to please *God*. For it is mandatory... [No guessing, no opinions, no half-hearted beliefs, no ‘maybes,’ no ‘yeah-buts.’] ...*for* the one who comes to God to believe that He exists... [That exists means everything that He is, everything that He claims He is, that He reveals that He is.] ...and *that* He is a rewarded of those who diligently seek Him.” So this is part of the law of faith.

Verse 7: “By faith, Noah, after being divinely instructed by God about the things *he could* not yet see, was moved with fear *and* prepared an ark for *the* salvation of his house; through which he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.”

You think back to what they were doing there and I think it’s really interesting. God does some special things on occasions. Remember God sent all the animals, they all got in the Ark. God sealed the Ark and it sat there for seven more days. I imagine all of those who didn’t believe him were out there chanting and yelling, just like the occupy movement. On the seventh day they’re all gathered out there and all of a sudden—drip, drip, drip. Then BANG! The windows of heaven opened and the fountains of the deep break open and here comes water that is unbelievable.

Recently northern Florida had just a wee little sample of it: 20 inches of rain in a day and a half. That was nothing; that was like an eyedropper.

Then it comes down to Abraham, v 8: “By faith Abraham, being called of God to go out into a place which he would later receive for an inheritance... [How late is later? *Yes, the Kingdom!* Abraham has not yet received it.] ...obeyed and went, not knowing where he was going.” That’s also part of the law of faith—you believe God and obey God in spite of the circumstances that you see because God is capable of changing any circumstances.

Verse 9: “By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, like a foreigner, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the joint heirs of the same promise; for he was waiting for the city with *the* foundations of which God is the Architect and Builder” (vs 9-10). What city is that? *New Jerusalem!* How far down the road does God look? *He’s got all eternity to plan!* A couple thousand years to God is kind of like a sip of tea.

Verse 11: “By faith also Sarah herself... [Even though she laughed. The Lord said, ‘You laughed.’ She said, ‘No, I didn’t laugh.’ He said, ‘Yes, you did laugh.’ At 90-years-old what woman wouldn’t laugh.] ...received power to conceive seed, and gave birth *when* she was *well* beyond the childbearing age because she esteemed Him faithful

Who had personally promised *her a son*.” He told her directly.

This is interesting in the Greek. Wherever you see in the *Faithful Version* ‘personally’, this is a special verb that is called a middle voice verb. The middle voice verb is used in two things:

1. It is something that cannot be expressed in English in the same way because in the Greek it’s expressed in a single word. The subject, the verb, the mood, the tense, the case are all contained in one word.
2. The middle voice verb when it is something that you do, it is you are the subject of the action and you receive the action back to yourself, so you become the object of the action.

We don’t have any such verb in English like that. But when it’s used in relationship to people it means that God Himself *personally* did this and also for His own benefit.

Verse 12: “Because of this *faith*, there came into being from one man—and moreover, *one* who was *reproductively* dead—*descendants* as numerous as the stars in the heavens, and as countless as the sand on the seashore.” That’s what it’s going to be.

I’ve often thought what it’s going to be when Abraham is resurrected and he’s on the Sea of Glass and I think one of the things God is going to do, He’s going to say, ‘Abraham, come here with Me. I want you to view down on the earth. You see all of those down there. Turn around and look at everybody on the Sea of Glass. These are all your descendants, your seed, as the stars of heaven. The ones down on the earth are the other half that I have yet to deal with. Unfortunately, I’ve got to correct Ishmael and Amalek and Esau. There’s going to be a great slaughter. But let me tell you what My plan is. They will have an opportunity for salvation because at the end of the first thousand years of the reign of the Kingdom of God earth, I’m going to resurrect them all and they will be all yours. Just like I promised you.’

Isn’t that going to be something? That’s how God thinks. He thinks greater and beyond what we do. For a lot of us it’s a great effort to plan out a whole day. God plans out the whole universe—doesn’t He? *Yes!*

Verse 13: “All these died in faith... [Where did Enoch go? *To the grave*.] ...not having received the promises, but having seen them from afar... [Paul talks there in 1-Cor. 13 like looking through a glass darkly.] ...and having been persuaded of *them*, and having embraced *them*, and having confessed that they were strangers and sojourners on the earth. For those who say such things make it manifest that they seek *their* own country, *as promised by God*” (vs 13-

14). I said they had opportunity to go back but they chose not to, likewise with us.

Let’s see the grace that God wants us to have. The book of Ephesians you could call *the grace epistle of God to His children*. Paul talks an awful lot about grace in it and I’ve covered that in a couple of sermons. I want to pick up on some of the things that I didn’t do before.

Ephesians 4:22: “That concerning your former conduct, you put off the old man... [That’s part of the law of faith—overcoming, believing what God says.] ...which is corrupt according to deceitful lusts; and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind... [that’s where God’s Spirit is; that’s what conversion is all about] ...and that you put on the new man, which according to God is created in righteousness and Holiness of the Truth” (vs 22-24).

In this relationship with God and *grace upon grace upon grace*, each one of us is a special creation of God. God is creating us in His spiritual image. We’re already created physically in His image. But first He wants the character because the eternal life that God is going to give us and the inheritance that we are going to receive requires the righteous character of God free from sin. That’s what we need to work at.

Verse 25: “Therefore, let each one put away lies and speak the truth with his neighbor because we are members of one another. *When* you become angry, do not sin. Do not let the sun go down on your anger; neither give place to the devil. Let the one who stole, steal no more... [v 29]: ...Do not let any corrupt communication come out of your mouth... [In this day and age that’s a real challenge.] ...but that which is good and needful for edification.... [v 30]: ...And grieve not... [do not vex]...the Holy Spirit of God...” (vs 25-30). That is to frustrate. In other words, don’t try and go out and fulfill the will of the flesh and then come back and try and have God sanctify that bad choice. That works against the Holy Spirit. That frustrates the Holy Spirit.

By the way we have a series that I did quite a few years ago entitled, *How to Use God’s Holy Spirit*. Jim and Betty were listening to it for Bible study here some time ago and Jim said we ought to get this ready so we can send it out. *How to Use God’s Holy Spirit*, so it’s ready, three sermons on a CD and transcripts, brand new. I’ll announce a few other things because Jim and Betty don’t have enough to do. The fourth one is *How the Holy Spirit Works*.

Verse 31: “Let all bitterness, and indignation, and wrath, and clamor, and evil speaking be removed from you, together with all malice; and be kind *and* tenderhearted toward one another, forgiving one another, even as God has also

in Christ forgiven you” (vs 31-32). Now what do you do? You build on all of that grace.

Ephesians 5:1—perhaps one of the most important verses in the Bible: “Therefore, be imitators of God... [Think of that. The *King James* says ‘followers,’ but this means imitators. How are you to live? The way God wants you to live.] ...as beloved children.... [Loved of God the Father; loved of Jesus Christ] ...and walk in love, even as Christ also loved us... [Notice the high level of using the grace of God to live by.] ...and gave Himself for us *as* an offering and sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savor. But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, do not permit it even to be named among you... [I think about some of the behavior that was justified. Completely different—right?] ...as is fitting for saints; nor filthiness, nor foolish talking or jesting, which are not becoming; but instead, thanksgiving. For this you know... [here’s a warning]: ...that no fornicator, or unclean person, or covetous *person*, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God” (vs 1-5).

Now then he says this is the way you used to behave, v 8: “For you were once darkness; but now *you are* light in *the* Lord. Walk as children of light, (Because the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and Truth); proving what is well pleasing to the Lord; and have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose *them*” (vs 8-11).

Let’s see how we do this. This is the whole goal of the greater grace of what God is doing right here. Paul says imitate God. Peter says think like God.

1-Peter 1:3: “Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who, according to His abundant mercy, has begotten us again... [With the Spirit of begetting from the Father in the spirit of our mind.] ...unto a living hope through *the* resurrection of Jesus Christ from *the* dead; unto an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and unfading, **reserved in heaven for us**” (vs 3-4). What did Jesus say? ‘*If I go, I’ll come again, but I’m going to prepare a place for you.*’ Individual place in New Jerusalem for each of us.

Verse 5: “Who *are* being safeguarded by *the* power of God through faith... [That’s grace in action.] ...for salvation *that is* ready to be revealed in the last time.”

2-Peter 1:2: “Grace and peace be multiplied to you...” How’s that for grace upon grace? *Multiplied!* Do your multiplier, double a penny every day for a month and you come out with more than a million dollars at the end.

“...in *the* knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord. According as His Divine power... [This can

only come through grace. There is no law that is going to bring this.] ...all things that *pertain* to life and Godliness, through the knowledge of Him Who called us by *His own* glory and virtue; through which He has given to us the greatest... [Not just ordinary promises, not goody-two-shoe promises, not vain and empty hollow thoughts, but the greatest] ...and *most* precious promises, that through these you may become partakers of *the* Divine nature, having escaped the corruption *that is* in *the* world through lust” (vs 2-4).

Isn’t that something? We are going to partake fully in the Divine nature. We are going to be the sons and daughters of God, meaning we will be *as God is*. Paul wrote that when we are resurrected He is going to transform our vile bodies to be made *like His glorious body*.

Now then he tells us what we need to do. These are the things we need to do in faith. I’ll let you read all of those. If we do, then we have a guarantee of entering into the Kingdom of God. Paul wrote of this in a little different way. Ephesians 3 is one of those chapters in the Bible that is so profound that you need to go back and read it and study it many, many times. As you do, and you go back there, you will see that it means so much more for you.

This tells us what He is going to do in giving us the divine nature. That is not only the divine mind, but the nature. That means character and personality. In order to have that you need to have a body of spirit—correct? Isn’t that what it says there in 1-Cor. 15 that we are going to receive a spiritual body; physical first, then a spiritual body? *Yes!* Notice, this understanding of our purpose and destiny, of *grace upon grace*, Paul also calls grace. So we’re going to finish grace upon grace by going through Ephesians 3.

Ephesians 3:1: “For this cause I, Paul, *am* the prisoner of Christ Jesus for you Gentiles.” Remember, it doesn’t matter what your circumstances are. God knows them. He’s going to change them all anyway—isn’t He? *Yes, indeed!*

Verse 2: “..If indeed you have heard of the ministry of grace of God that was given to me for you.... [that is contained in all the epistles] ...how He made known to me by revelation the mystery... [the secret of God] ...(even as I wrote briefly before, So that when you read *this*, you will be able to comprehend my understanding in the mystery of Christ). Which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men...” (vs 2-5).

God didn’t make this known until Christ came, till the apostles preached. He didn’t even reveal it to the apostles until way later in their ministry. He let them

- grow in grace and knowledge
- grow in understanding
- be inspired to write the epistles
- serve the brethren
- pray for them
- travel
- experience

“...as it has now been revealed to His Holy apostles and prophets by *the Spirit*” (v 5). So, God revealed it to *all* the apostles. Peter wrote of it, John wrote of it, Paul wrote of it, Luke wrote of it, Matthew, Mark. Then we have following up on that we have even the Apostle Jude. All the apostles and the prophets. So this would be preached to the whole Church.

It’s interesting that this knowledge was given to the whole Church a few years before the destruction of Jerusalem so they could have this hope before then. The world was going to become disintegrated, that is the society they were living in was going to be turned upside down. We’re going to be facing that same kind of situation here somewhere down the road sooner or later. This is why we need to have it in our minds.

Verse 6: “That the Gentiles might be joint heirs, and a joint body, and joint partakers of His promise in Christ through the Gospel, of which I became a servant according to the gift of the grace of God, *which was given to me through the inner working of His power*” (vs 6-7).

Even the preaching and teaching is to be an operation of grace. Notice how he felt after receiving this fantastic revelation, v 8 “To me, who am less than the least of all the saints, was this grace given, that I might preach the gospel among the Gentiles—*even the unsearchable riches of Christ; and that I might enlighten all...* [it is recorded for us that we can be enlightened] *...as to what is the fellowship...* [The fellowship with God the Father, which is a secret.] *...of the mystery that has been hidden from the ages in God, Who created all things by Jesus Christ; so that the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known through the Church to the principalities and the powers in the heavenly places, according to His eternal purpose...* [it is laid bare as much as could be for us to understand] *...which He has wrought in Christ Jesus our Lord, in Whom we have boldness and direct access with confidence through His very own faith. So then, I beseech you not to faint at my tribulations for you, which are working for your glory....* [Count all the difficulties you go through in this same way. They are eventually going to work out for the glory of God.] *...For this cause I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of Whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named*” (vs 8-15).

Verse 16: “That He may grant you... [through the grace of God] *...according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power by His Spirit in the inner man... [that which no one can take from you] ...That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; and that being rooted and grounded in love, you may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and depth and height, and to know...*” (vs 16-19) the plan of God. *That is the greatest grace!*

Brethren, though it’s written here in the book of Ephesians and this book now is nearly 2,000 years old, the understanding of it is for us today. They understood it to the degree that they could then, but now we can understand it to a greater degree.

“...the love of Christ, which surpasses *human knowledge...* [here is the end result of *grace upon grace*]: *...so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God*” (v 19). This brings us right back to where we started. Of His fullness we have all received and *grace upon grace*.

Now notice this promise. Never get down and discouraged that you forget this promise, v 20: “Now to Him Who is able... [The Greek there is ‘*dunamis*’—*has the power.*] *...to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that is working in us.*”

Have you ever just thought of something and lo and behold somewhere down the road God answered that thought? Wasn’t even a prayer, wasn’t even, ‘Oh, Lord, this, that or the other.’ It was, ‘Oh, that would really be nice.’ And God answered that! I’ve had a good number of them. I’m not going to tell you what they are. I’ll let you have your own.

Verse 21: “To Him *be* glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all generation, *even* into the ages of eternity. Amen.”

That’s what it means *grace upon grace*. I’m sure that there are many other things we could add to it as well, but this is what we need right now. We need to understand what God is doing in our lives. Then we can look at prophecy and see what is happening and have the strength to be able to go through what is coming down. When it comes down, Jesus said it is going to be a time such as not has been since the beginning of the creation of the world.

We’re going to need grace upon grace to see us through that. God will do that for us!

Scriptural References:

- 1) Romans 6:14
- 2) Romans 7:1
- 3) 2-Thessalonians 2:9-14

- 4) Romans 3:24-26, 28-31
- 5) Hebrews 8:6-10
- 6) Hebrews 10:16-23
- 7) Hebrews 4:14-16
- 8) Romans 3:27
- 9) Hebrews 11:1-14
- 10) Ephesians 4:22-32
- 11) Ephesians 5:1-5, 8-11
- 12) 1-Peter 1:3-5
- 13) 2-Peter 1:2-4
- 14) Ephesians 3:1-21

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Revelation 1; 5
- 1-Corinthians 13; 15

Also referenced:

Sermon Series:

- *The Washing of the Water by the Word*
- *How Would You Preach Christ From the Old Testament?*
- *The Keys to Answered Prayer*
- *How to Use the Spirit of God*
- *How the Holy Spirit Works*

Grace Upon Grace VII

Fred R. Coulter

We've had quite a few sermons on grace upon grace and the whole concept of grace *vs* law. When we understand what it means to be *under law* and *under grace*, it becomes entirely different than the normal religious argument that you find between those who keep the law and those who don't keep the law.

Since we have covered these things, we might go ahead and take some questions first and then I have some other aspects of *grace upon grace* I want to cover.

Does everybody understand what it means to be *under law*? *Under law* means the *absence of grace*, although God can do gracious things to those who *under law*. Being *under grace* is an entirely different category. It means that all people, as long as they live, each and every one, is subject to the working of God's law, every bit of it. Not only the laws of conduct as defined in the Ten Commandments, but the laws governing our bodies, our minds, everything that God has done is by law.

Let's go back and just look at those Scriptures again so we really understand what it's telling us here in the book of Romans. Then we will find out what it means to be *under grace* and who then is under grace.

Let's review this again because this is a concept that has not been understood before. Even though we have grasped some aspects of being *under law*, we haven't applied it to everyone in the world. Religious people apply *under law* to those who keep the commandments. Those who are *under grace* assume the position of being above the law, not subject to the law. Grace does not mean above the law and not subject to the law.

Romans 6:14: "For sin..." Here's how to stop as you're going along and study the Bible. What is sin? *Sin is the transgression of the Law*. We're going to see the literal translation is: sin is lawlessness. That goes all the way back to Adam and Eve. Lawlessness, which is sin, means that *you reject God's definition of sin and law and you follow your own understanding!* Think about that for a minute.

When you follow your own understanding, what Proverbs comes to mind? 'There is a way that seems right to a man (or a woman), the end thereof are the ways of death.' Then the other one: 'Lean not to your own understanding, but trust in the Lord.'

"For sin... [the transgression of the law] ...shall not rule over you..." (v 14). Why does sin rule over people? In other words, why is their conduct perpetually sinful? Adam and Eve sinned to decide for themselves what is good and evil. When

you reject what God has given and you accept your way, you are saying, 'I know better than God. I'm going to choose what is right.'

The other day I was watching the *Swamp People* on History Channel. They make their living by getting alligators and it's quite a job going out and hunting alligators and catfish. Almost everything that they eat, including catfish, crawfish, shrimp, lobster and gator, is *all unclean*.

Can you imagine the turmoil that you would cause if you went down on the bayou and said, 'Ya'all, this gator meat ain't good for you, nor the shrimp, nor the lobster, nor the catfish.' *What?* 'God says you shouldn't eat it.' *Well, I don't know about that. We're under grace and Jesus declared all meat clean, so here have some jambalaya.* There would be an uproar! You put them out of business! They would lose their livelihood. The comment was made that a man quit eating beef because of mad cow disease, but he says pork is good. 'There is a way that seems right to a man, the end thereof is the way of death.'

Sin rules over you because what does it tell us in Rom. 7? *Everyone has 'the law of sin and death!'* Sin rules over you because you do not have the Holy Spirit of God until you repent and are baptized, etc., so you have no power to rule over sin. You may discipline yourself for a while, but you can't get rid of it. Even with God's Spirit we grow and overcome, but God gives us the strength and the power through His Spirit to overcome it.

"...sin shall not rule over you... [Who are the *you* that he is talking to here? People in general or people that have God's Spirit? *God's Spirit!*] ...because we are not under law..." (v 14).

So, *under law* has very little to do with keeping the commandments of God or not. *Under law* means this, Romans 7:1, the whole principle has been there right before us all the time: "Are you ignorant, brethren (for I am speaking to those who know law), that the law rules over a man for as long a time as he may live?"

Think about that. If the law—God's law—and every other law that God put on earth to help regulate physical life of human beings on earth, you are all *under law*, every human being. Some of them may not keep very many of the commandments of God. Some of them may keep more of the commandments of God, but all of those are in the letter of the law.

Romans 6:14: "...you are not under law, but under grace." How does one come under grace, instead of under law? What is the dividing line? We

read in the Bible, ‘Many are called, but few are chosen.’ Why are few chosen? *Because few repent!* The call goes out to be under grace. Let me just tell you what it is right here and then we’ll come back to that again. To be under grace means:

1. You have the Spirit of God within you through baptism and laying on of hands. Baptism comes with repentance.
 - repent
 - be baptized
 - receive the Spirit of God
2. Then you are under grace, because now with the Spirit of God, God is directly dealing in your life.

We saw how Paul wrote that we are ‘a temple of God,’ because we have the Spirit of God. That puts you in a very separate and special category that is something that cannot be joined as coming to and signing up on a roster to join an organization.

Verse 15: “What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law, but under grace?....” In other words, since you’re under grace, are you free to do anything you want? This tells us that if you are under grace, you are not above the law. Is God Himself above law? He created the laws. As Creator, in that sense, He’s greater than the law, because the law cannot give life, but God can give life.

We are not to sin: “...because we are not under law, but under grace?....” (v 15). So, the first category *under law* is how everyone in the world is before God. To show that the whole world is subject to the Law of God. If God did not have His laws, even if people know them or not, what is the principle in the Bible? ‘*The one who knows to do good and does it not shall be beaten with many stripes. The one who knows not to do good and does it not shall be beaten with few.*’ So, there’s still a penalty for both.

Romans 3:19: “Now then, we know that whatever the law says, it speaks to those who are under the law... [Notice the category how it defines to be *under law*.] ...so that every mouth may be stopped... [Does every mouth mean every mouth? *Yes!*] ...and all the world may be become guilty before God.”

God offers the way out. God offers repentance. God even grants repentance for those who are seeking Him in Truth and in sincerity. Because we are *under grace*, we now see we have a higher standard to live by. God writes His laws in our hearts and in our minds. Whatever is in your heart and in your mind, this is what motivates you and directs you to do how you live your life—isn’t that correct?

Let’s see how Paul defines it here because he says, Romans 6:15 “...MAY IT NEVER BE!” The

Greek there is ‘*me genoito*,’ meaning don’t let this thought ever come into existence. So, the question for all dear Protestants, though you are well intended, why do you think that Jesus did away with the Law? Why do you think that you don’t have to keep the commandments of God? ‘If you do, you’re trying to earn your salvation.’ *No!* We’re talking about after you receive the Holy Spirit of God. No one can earn salvation—period! ***It is the gift of God through His grace!***

Paul doing a comparison *before* baptism, with a comparison *after* baptism. We have covered here in Rom. 6 that you are baptized into the death of Jesus Christ and co-joined to His crucifixion. This is a personal, individual thing that God does. We’re going to see that being under grace, rather than relieve us of responsibility to keep the laws and commandments of God, *it obligates us to keep it at a higher standard!* No one is exempt from law.

Verse 16: “Don’t you realize that to whom you yield yourselves *as* servants to obey, you are servants of the one you obey, whether *it is* of sin unto death, or of **obedience** unto righteousness?” How does righteousness come? *By obedience!* What do you need to have the kind of obedience required? *You need the Spirit of God!*

Verse 17: “But thanks be to God, that you **were** the servants of sin... [But you now have been baptized and received the Spirit of God. That’s filling in the other Scriptures that all of this means behind the meaning that you *were* the servants of sin.] ...but [now] you have **obeyed**...”—*obedience* (v 16) and *obeyed* (v 17) shows there are things to keep. What are the three words that describe your relationship with God? There are three words all the way through the Bible: **Obey My voice!**

Let’s see something very interesting. There is a form of Protestantism that comes out of Atlanta, Georgia. I don’t know the organization. I have read some of their things, but I don’t remember the name. They say that you do not have to follow the things in the Gospel because that was for the Jews because Jesus was a minister to the circumcision. Since we’re all Gentiles, we don’t need to be bothered with that.

1-Timothy 6:3: “If anyone teaches any different doctrine, and does not adhere to sound words, *even those* of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the doctrine *that is* according to Godliness.” Here’s the answer to that group which says you don’t have to keep the words of Jesus. But what did Jesus say? ‘Why call you Me Lord, Lord, and do not the things that I say?’ *Yes!* Now notice what category they are in:

Verse 4: “He is proud... [unconverted] ...and knows nothing... [doesn’t have any understanding of the Word of God] ...Rather, he has a morbid

attraction to questions and disputes over words...” That’s what they do. Yeah-but this; yeah-but that; yeah-but everything.

“...from which come envy, arguments, blasphemy, wicked suspicions, vain reasonings of men... [In their theological interpretations. Don’t they have a lot of those? *Yes!*] ...who have been corrupted in *their* minds... [rather than converted] ...and *are* destitute of the Truth...” (vs 4-5). We’re going to talk a little bit about Truth.

- Is God a God of Truth?
- Are His laws Truth?
- Are His commandments Truth?

What did Jesus say of Himself? ‘I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life.’ If they’re destitute of the Truth, they are destitute of Jesus. They may have arguments about doctrine, but notice: “...men who believe that gain is Godliness...” (v 5).

If you turn on the Trinity Channel you will see that’s so true. I saw one the other day. These men were just all excited and huffing and puffing about the \$1,000 seed. ‘You send in the \$1,000 and God is going to prosper you. This is your seed to prosperity.’ They were beside themselves with it. They got their money, but they didn’t get God.

Notice the commandment here, v 5: “...**From such withdraw yourself.**” Those are pretty strong words. That puts a lot of religionists into that category—does it not?

Since we just talked about the wholesome words of Christ, Luke 6:39: “Then He spoke a parable to them, saying, ‘Is a blind *man* able to lead a blind *man*?... [that’s obvious] ...Will not both fall into the ditch?’” How do people become spiritually blind? They don’t even know that it takes place.

This is subject to the Laws of God. Remember everyone in the world is *under law* and are judged by the Laws of God. Let’s see how someone becomes blind. A lot of people say they see, *but they don’t see*. Jesus explained to them why He spoke to them in parables. Here’s the answer. God gave them some tricky things to try and figure out to see if they really wanted the Truth.

Matthew 13:11: “And He answered *and* said to them, ‘Because it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven, but to them it has not been given. For whoever has *understanding*, to him more shall be given, and he shall have an abundance; but whoever does not have *understanding*, even what he has shall be taken away from him.... [That’s precisely what is happening to Protestantism today.] ...For this *reason* I speak to them in parables, because seeing, they see not; and hearing, they hear not; neither do they understand.... [we’ll see how the automatic blinding takes place.]

...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 their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed...”” (vs 11-15). They have made a choice to *not listen*. They have made a choice to *not obey*. They could.

How many Sunday-keeping ministers you go up to them and you talk to them and you really corner them. You say, ‘Tell me now really, really, just between you and me, which day does the Bible uphold, Sabbath or Sunday?’ *Well, now, the Bible teaches Sabbath, but...* Automatic blindness! Automatic deafness, too!

““...lest they should see with their eyes, and should hear with their ears, and should understand with their hearts... [here is a tough saying right here] ...and should be converted, and I should heal them”” (v 15). Think about that!

Did not God cause the people to blind? *Yes!* Did not the people cause themselves to be blind? *Yes!* It is a joint project. It’s a living law. If you will not hear, if you will not obey, you’ll become blind and you will become unable to hear the Words of God and the meaning of it.

So, this also shows that *few are called*. This one verse here I don’t think very many Protestants read this, because they think it’s their job to convert the whole world—right? If they don’t get out there and do it, then all of those they don’t reach are going to burn in hell automatically.

If you don’t understand about the second resurrection, you will never understand why Jesus said this. When you understand about the second resurrection, you know that now is not the only day of salvation. It’s just like it is in the Lord’s Prayer, ‘God’s will be done on earth as it is in heaven.’ It’s not my will or your will or the preacher’s will or someone else’s will, *it’s the will of God the Father and Jesus Christ!*

Remember those three words: ***Obey My voice!*** That’s why we have the Bible. These are the Words of God. Let’s understand something also about the Word of God. Here’s also something about the Word of God—John 6. It comes directly from God—is that not true? Does God live forever? *Yes!* His words, therefore, are *spiritual and eternal*. Let’s see what Jesus says here.

John 6:63: “It is the Spirit that gives life... [here He didn’t tell you how to receive the Spirit] ...the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you, *they* are spirit and *they* are life.”

You tie that together with 1-Tim. 6 where if they do not adhere to the sound words of Jesus Christ they know nothing. If they are spiritual,

which they are, that means they function automatically, just like the law of gravity. That applies to everyone in the world. That's why the world is shut up under sin so that God will have mercy on them in His time. That's why understanding the second resurrection is so important because if God blinds them, who is responsible? *God!*

The people blinded themselves, but God blinded them. If they are condemned to never have an opportunity for salvation, then that goes absolutely contradictory to John 3:16, that 'God gave His only Begotten Son that whosoever believes in Him may not perish but may have everlasting life.'

What if they never heard the name of Jesus Christ? What if they were born before Jesus ever came? Now what is God going to do about them? *You have to stick around for the Last Great Day and find out because that's important!* God blinds them. Can they overcome the blindness if they repent? *Yes!*

What we're doing in this Bible study is we're putting together the Scriptures so we can understand what it really means Scripture by Scripture; 'line upon line; precept upon precept; here a little, there a little,' etc.

Luke 6:39: "... 'Is a blind man able to lead a blind man? Will not both fall into the ditch? A disciple is not above his teacher...' " (vs 39-40). Think about that for a minute! Who is the teacher? *Christ, yes indeed!* Those that He sent better speak the words of God, not his own words. That has to do with foot-washing. Remember what Jesus said? *We're obligated to wash one another's feet* because the disciple is not above the teacher nor a messenger above him who sent him.'

Now when you put yourself above the Law you make your own rules and regulations in the name of Christ.

- What have you done? *You've put yourself above Christ!*
- What did Adam and Eve do? *Put themselves above God!*
- What do all people do?

You walk up and you ask someone,

- 'You believe in God?' *Oh, yeah, I believe in God.*
- 'Do you believe that you should follow His Word?' *Yeah, I believe we should follow His Word.*
- 'Have you ever read what it is eating fried rabbit?'
- Have you ever read which day is the day He made Holy?'
- *Oh, well, that's all been done away.*

Those three words—*all done away*—what does that do? *Put you above the Law, above the teacher!* Grace has nothing to do with that.

Then He talks about judges, v 41: "And why do you look at the sliver that is in your brother's eye, but you do not perceive the beam that *is* in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, 'Brother, allow me to cast out the sliver that *is* in your eye,' *but* you do not see the beam that *is* in your own eye? Hypocrite! First cast out the beam from your *own* eye, and then shall you see clearly to cast out the sliver that *is* in your brother's eye.... [Then He brings a parable]: ...For there is not a good tree that is producing corrupt fruit; nor *is there* a corrupt tree that is producing good fruit'" (vs 41-43).

What is the tree? The tree that comes from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob who are the roots (Rom. 11). Israel who then are the descendants of Jacob coming on down to Christ. What did Paul say? That some of the branches being Israel were cut off because of disobedience and the Gentiles were grafted in. If you're grafted into a good tree, you'll produce good fruit.

Verse 44: "'For every tree is known by its own fruit; for they do not gather figs from thorns, nor do they gather a bunch of grapes from a bramble. The good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth that which *is* good... [What does this tell you? How can anyone be good? *Only if they're converted and have the Spirit of God!*] ...and the wicked man out of the wicked treasure of his heart brings forth that which *is* wicked; for out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.'" (vs 44-45).

Take this verse, set it right next to you and do some channel surfing. Look at all the evil that is produced out of the wicked man's heart. Then He makes a point because there are a lot of people who call Jesus Lord:

Verse 46: "And why do you call Me, 'Lord, Lord,' but *you* do not practice what I say?" Isn't that interesting? You just don't acknowledge them; you have to practice them. Entirely different—*isn't it?*

Let's look at something interesting here, 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). A little later He said, 'Everyone who is not *with* us is against us.'

Luke 6:46: "And why do you call Me, 'Lord, Lord,' but *you* do not practice what I say?" Were those men who were trying to cast out demons, were they practicing what Jesus said? *No!* They weren't

even disciples with the disciples. They were just *using* the name of Jesus.

Let's see what Jesus says about those who use His name, call Him 'Lord, Lord.' Let's see what category they are in. It's talking about the good tree and the corrupt tree, v Matthew 7 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."

- Is it the will of the Father that you sin? *No!*
- Is it the will of the Father that you have lawless grace? *No!*
- Is it the will of the Father that put yourself above the laws of God? *No!*

He wants you to keep them with His Spirit, as we'll see here.

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? And *did we not* perform many works of power through Your name?'" Isn't that what He was talking about there in Luke 9:49? What's going to happen to those?

Verse 23: "And then I will confess to them, 'I never knew you.... [How do you *know* that you are under grace? How do you *know* God? A lot of people say they do, but don't.] ...Depart from Me, you who work lawlessness.'" Now the *King James* says *iniquity*, but this is 'anomia'—*lawlessness*—you place yourself above the law and you make your own laws and say, 'This is what God means.'

Look at what's happening to the country when we have a lawless government, a lawless Senate, a lawless Congress, all the way down through every levels of government—and lawless 'Christians,' because they set the tone.

Luke 6:46: "And why do you call Me, 'Lord, Lord,' but *you* do not practice what I say? Everyone who comes to Me and hears My words and practices them, I will show you what he is like: He is like a man building a house who dug deep and laid *the* foundation on the rock; and a flood came, and the torrent beat against that house, but could not shake it, because it was founded on the rock. But the one who has heard *My words* and has not practiced *them* is like a man who built a house on *top of* the ground, without a foundation; and *when* the torrent beat against it, it fell at once, and the ruin of that house was great" (vs 46-49).

You also have another example: Remember all the house fires we've had in Colorado? Have you ever wondered what happened? It goes along and burns a whole bunch of homes and then it skips over one. Who knows, maybe they were really

beseeking God. Maybe they took a few precautions and did some things they should have.

I know in California now when you're out in an area that's subject to fires, you must have a tile roof and you must stucco under the eaves. Most of the houses that do that never get burned up because there's nothing to catch fire. They did some things that were correct. Likewise, if you heed the Words of Christ, then whose side are you on? *Christ's side!*

(go to the next track)

The question came up concerning abolishing the Law. Once you have your sins forgiven, you have been baptized, received the Holy Spirit, now you are *under grace* and the Protestants say the Law has been abolished so you don't have to keep the Law. Paul was confronted with the same thing.

Romans 3:31: "Are we, then, abolishing law through faith?... [That's exactly what Protestants believe. They say, 'Yes, you don't have to keep anything. The old law is done away.'] ...MAY IT NEVER BE! Rather, we are establishing law." This does not mean they have license to establish their own version of the law. Rather, you are establishing the Law of God spiritually for what it is written in your heart and in your mind, Heb. 8 and 10. This helps us to understand under grace. Let's just summarize:

Romans 6:14: "For sin... [transgression of the Law] ...shall not rule over you because you are not under law, but under grace. What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law, but under grace? MAY IT NEVER BE! Don't you realize that to whom you yield yourselves *as* servants to obey, you are servants of the one you obey, whether *it is* of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?" (vs 14-16). So we have:

- obey—v 16
- obedience—v 16

Jesus said, 'Why do you call me Lord, Lord, and do not practice the things which I say?' If you practice what Jesus says, what are you doing? *You are obeying!*

Verse 17: "But thanks *be* to God, that you **were** *the* servants of sin... [But you have repented and have been baptized, have received the Spirit of God.] ...but you have obeyed from *the* heart..." That's where it all comes from. Your heart must be converted and you must have the laws and commandments of God written in your heart and your mind. That's the whole process of growing and overcoming.

"...that form of doctrine which was delivered to you. And having been delivered from sin, you became *the* servants of righteousness" (vs 17-18). If you're the servant of righteousness, you are what? *Obeying!*

Verse 19: “I speak from a human point of view because of the weakness of your flesh; for just as you once yielded your members in bondage to uncleanness, and to lawlessness unto lawlessness... [transgressing the Laws of God; replacing the Laws of God] ...so, now yield your members in bondage to righteousness unto sanctification.”

I want you to learn something very important. That’s why you need the book, *Judaism: A Revelation of Moses or a Religion of Men?* Matthew 23 is where He castigates the scribes and Pharisees in no uncertain terms. Showing the works of the flesh:

Matthew 23:25: “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you cleanse the outside of the cup and the dish, but within you are full of extortion and excess.... [Doesn’t matter what kind of front you put on. It’s what’s in your heart.] ...Blind Pharisees!.... [What did we read about the blind leading the blind?] ...First cleanse the inside of the cup and the dish, so that the outside may also become clean” (vs 25-26).

How do you do that? *Through repentance*—right? *Yes!* ‘Cleanse me from all unrighteousness. Wash me with hyssop and I shall be clean’ (Psa. 51).

Verse 27: “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whited sepulchers, which indeed appear beautiful *on the outside*, but within are full of the bones of the dead, and of all uncleanness. Likewise, you also outwardly appear to men *to be* righteous, but within you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness” (vs 27-28).

Remember, lawlessness means making your own rules and laws and regulations in place of Gods. Did the Jews have their traditions? *Yes!* What did Jesus say? ‘*Full well you reject the commandment of God that you may keep your tradition*’ (Mark 7).

- Do Protestants have traditions? *Yes!*
- Do Jews have traditions? *Yes!*
- Do Catholics have traditions? *Yes!*
- Does Islam?
- Does Buddhism?
- Does Hinduism?
- All have traditions? *Yes!*
- Do they have the Word of God? *Some may hold the Word of God but they don’t understand the Word of God!*

‘Full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.’

Romans 6:19 talks about human conduct: “I speak from a human point of view because of the weakness of your flesh; for just as you *once* yielded your members in bondage to uncleanness, and to lawlessness unto lawlessness...” That means *multiple breaking of the commandments of God!*

What did Jesus say would be in the end time? ‘*Because lawlessness will be multiplied...*’ If you don’t think it’s being multiplied in ‘religion’ and in the government, and in people’s lives today, then you don’t know what’s happening.

“...so now yield your members in bondage to righteousness unto **sanctification**.... [to be made Holy through the power and Spirit and Word of God] ...For when you were *the* servants of sin, you were free from righteousness. Therefore, what fruit did you have then in the *things* of which you are now ashamed? For the end result of those things *is* death. But now *that* you have been delivered from sin and have become servants of God, you have your fruit unto sanctification, and the end result *is* eternal life. For the wages of sin *is* death, but the gift of God *is* eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord” (vs 19-23).

Once you have repented, been baptized, received the Holy Spirit of God, and are letting God write His laws and commandments in your heart and in your mind, you are striving to overcome sin. You are relying on Christ. You have weakness of the flesh and you can repent of those sins, because you are under grace. We are going to see the dividing line is clear: who is *under grace* and who is *under law*. Being under grace does not mean that you are not in obedience to God and His laws. Rather it means you’re keeping them in the spirit.

Romans 7:6: “But now we have been released from the law... [in this particular case that was the law of the marriage covenant] ...because we have died... [through water baptism] ...*to that* in which we were held so that we might serve in newness of *the* spirit, and not in *the* oldness of *the* letter.”

It’s not a question of keeping the Laws of God or having them abolished. That is not the question. The question is how do you keep it? People in the world who are nice and decent and good people in the world keep the Laws of God in the letter. They don’t have the Spirit of God. Even though they keep Christmas, Easter, Sunday, all of these things, follow all the pagan doctrines, many of them are still nice and good people as the world would look at people. Law abiding citizens within the land. But are they converted? Do they have the Spirit of God? *No!*

So therefore, they’re *under law*, they’re not *under grace*. We serve in newness of spirit by having them written in our heart and in our mind because a law, just because it’s written in a book or on a code of law in some governmental building, has no enforcement. It’s just there. With God’s Spirit in you and a desire to obey and God’s Spirit to lead you, that’s how you establish law because:

- you desire to love God

- you desire to obey God
- you desire to keep His commandments
- you want to know that you're living your life correctly
- you repent when you sin

All of that is what Rom. 8 calls the spiritually-minded.

Romans 8:1: "Consequently, *there is* now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who are not walking according to *the* flesh, but according to *the* Spirit." If you have the Spirit of God and you are being led by the Spirit of God, you are *under grace*. We're going to see how this works:

Verse 9: "However, you are not in *the* flesh, but in *the* Spirit... [This is your standing before God. Yes, we still have a fleshly body—don't we? But now we have something added to our minds which is the Spirit of God.] ...if *the* Spirit of God is indeed dwelling within you...." Notice this dividing line.

- Everyone who does not have the Spirit of God dwelling *within* them is *under law*.
- Everyone who has the Spirit of God dwelling *within* them is *under grace*.

Only those who have the Spirit of God dwelling in them are under grace. Let's see that:

"...But if anyone does not have *the* Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him" (v 9).

- It's not a matter of what you profess.
- It's not a matter of what you proclaim.
- It's not a matter of what you believe independent from the Word of God.
- *It is do you have the Spirit of God dwelling in you or not!*

Then you have to go back—how do you receive the Spirit of God? You receive the Spirit of God through:

- repentance
- baptism
- laying on of hands

Here's another one, v 2: "Because the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus..." So the Spirit of God is law; Truth.

- Will the Spirit of God lead you to disobey?
- Will the Spirit of God lead you to reject the commandments of God?
- Will the Spirit of God lead you to disobey God?
- *No!*

But with the Spirit of God within you, you are delivered from 'the law of sin and death.' It is not removed until the resurrection, but you have been delivered from its *dictatorial clutch* over your life. Nothing else can do that. You can see people in the

world who are really successful. They do this, they discipline themselves, they study, they improve their minds, they live decent lives, and all of that sort of thing. *But* are they converted? *No!*

What you can do if you want to know how people appear good on the outside but within they are really crooks, watch CNBC's *American Greed*. These people are professional in what they do. They can appear that they are very good. But they are not converted. The law of the Spirit of Life from Christ then is going to give you the inner hungering and thirsting of the Word of God, wanting to love God, wanting to obey God, and so forth. There is the dividing line.

If you don't have the Spirit of Christ, you don't belong to Him. There may be people that are close. There may be people that God is working with. But unless they answer the call and repent, they don't belong to God.

I don't know if you want to do this, you might not get out of the room alive, maybe you will, you corner a Sunday-keeping preacher and say, 'Doesn't the Bible teach that we should keep the Sabbath?' *Yes!* 'Do you think that we should keep the commandment to not murder?' *Yes!* 'Do you think we should keep the commandment to not commit adultery?' *Well, in most cases!* You go on down the Ten Commandments. 'Don't you think then that you're a hypocrite to come to church here on Sunday and tell everyone that they are in God's favor when they are breaking God's Sabbath? *Oh, no, I'm good intentioned.* 'No, you have a well-intended hypocrisy which is sin and iniquity.' Wouldn't that be something? 'Well, then do you consider yourself a hypocrite? *Oh, No!* 'What do you consider yourself then?

'I just want to leave you with this one thought before I get out of here—and you better have your escape planned—***Jesus said that He was Lord even of the Sabbath Day.*** So that means the Lord's Day is the Sabbath. Now what are you going to do before God? You can mail me your answer.'

Scriptural References:

- 1) Romans 6:14
- 2) Romans 7:1
- 3) Romans 6:14-15
- 4) Romans 3:19
- 5) Romans 6:15-17
- 6) 1-Timothy 6:3-5
- 7) Luke 6:39
- 8) Matthew 13:11-15
- 9) John 6:63
- 10) Luke 6:39-46
- 11) Luke 9:49-50
- 12) Luke 6:46
- 13) Matthew 7:21-23

- 14) Luke 6:46-49
- 15) Romans 3:31
- 16) Romans 6:14-19
- 17) Matthew 23:25-28
- 18) Romans 6:19-23
- 19) Romans 7:6
- 20) Romans 8:1, 9, 2

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- John 3:16
- Romans 11
- Hebrews 8; 10
- Psalm 51
- Mark 7

Also referenced: Book:

Judaism: A Revelation of Moses or a Religion of Men? by Philip Neal

Grace Upon Grace VIII

Fred R. Coulter

Greetings, everyone! Welcome to Sabbath services! I thought last week was my last one on *grace upon grace*, but no, there's another one.

Everyone understands that *under law* is everyone in the world who does not have the Holy Spirit of God *within* them—that's everyone. Within that then there are varying degrees of law-keeping in the letter and varying degrees of depths of evil. But they are all *under law*—the whole world, every person, as long as they live. They're also subject to all the laws that we call the laws of health. They're also subject to the laws of financing. They're also subject to all the laws relating to the earth and human physical behavior: air, water, food, etc.

We also know that in the end-time that the lawlessness is going to arise. As Dolores and I were discussing the other night, the worst kind of lawlessness is when they take lawless inactions and make it the law of the land. For example:

- same-sex marriage
- oppressive taxes
- executive edicts like in our government here by the President
- policemen who don't carry out the law but have their own agenda
- Judges who do not adhere to the Constitution or the law

They make and create more lawless acts. So we end up with, as Jesus said, 'because lawlessness shall be multiplied...' (Matt. 24:12).

If you feel frustrated watching the news and looking at all the lawless acts that everyone is doing and everyone is violating whatever laws apply to that section. Just take the financial laws of being in debt. We're all right here very close from the edge of a \$16-trillion cliff. The deceptiveness about borrowing money today is they get it at virtually no interest. What are you going to do when the interest goes up to 6%? *Everything will come crashing down!*

Let's understand *who* is *under grace*.

Can God extend grace to someone who does have God's Holy Spirit in forgiving their sins? *Yes, God can!* We find that throughout the whole Old Testament. Can God give mercy, which then is an act of grace, to hold back evil if people change their behavior? *Yes, He can!* But that doesn't mean they are *under grace*.

Let's look at the Protestant definition of *under grace*: under grace means you have no laws to keep. But that's an impossibility because every

human being is *under law*. As we saw last time, those who are *under grace* are not exempt from law. They have a higher spiritual standard in keeping the law and because it's written in their hearts and in their minds, which is an act of grace.

What is the cut-off point and the dividing line between being *under law* or *under grace*? The dividing line is when a person has been baptized, after repentance and receiving the Holy Spirit of God, *they are under grace*. Why? ***Because God Himself is personally intervening in their life and has given the Holy Spirit to them***, which is an act of grace on God's part. Grace is something you cannot earn. Grace comes from God. Grace does not come from human beings back to God, but grace comes from God to us as human beings.

Let's see how Paul describes the dividing line. We'll define this as we go along, so you will know who is under grace. What did Jesus say about the Church? *'Many are called but few are chosen.'* When you answer the call, we will see you become the elect or the select. *God selects you* to give you the Holy Spirit. This is the whole topic of Romans 8, the first part. Everything that God does:

- to give us His Spirit
- to put His laws in our heart and our mind
- to seal us with the earnest of the Holy Spirit, to give us understanding of His Word
- to grant us of His love and hope and mercy and grace
- to personally apply the sacrifice of Christ to our sins
- that we are joined in covenant in that baptismal death with Christ

—all of that is grace—*grace upon grace*—all comes from God.

Here's our standing before God--though we are still in the flesh with the Holy Spirit of God within us—God does not view us as carnal fleshly people because we are His begotten children. He has *selected* us.

After Rom. 7 explaining about 'the law of sin and death' and how we need to overcome it, then chapter eight tells us how that is accomplished. That is grace. People in the world, they can discipline themselves all they want. They can make themselves the best that they can be. You talk to athletes and they say:

- I'm going to be the best swimmer in the world.'

Okay, go ahead. Does that change your nature?

- I'm going to become the fastest runner in the world.
- I'm going to become the richest man in the world.
- I'm going to become the strongest man in the world.
- I'm going to be the most beautiful woman in the world.
- I'm going to own the most property that I can possibly own and I'm going to control and rule people.

All of that may be discipline and it does take discipline. It does take education. But none of those things equal conversion.

They can be very nice people. Many of the things that they do, if they're successful, follow along with the Laws of God in the letter. Now when they don't I recommend you watch *American Greed* on CNBC some night—good example of counterfeit; good example of stealing while appearing innocent.

With the Holy Spirit of God, how is your standing before God? You're not *under law*; you're *under grace*! So, you're standing before God is you receive God's Holy Spirit.

Romans 8:1: "Consequently, *there* is now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who are not walking according to *the* flesh, but according to *the* Spirit." What will the Holy Spirit do?

- The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Truth.
- The Holy Spirit will lead us into all Truth.
- The Holy Spirit is that which comes directly from God through His grace.

This does something within us that cannot be accomplished by all the discipline in the world. Yes, we need to use the Spirit of God to lead us, to guide us, to give us the strength.

Verse 2: "Because the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has delivered me from the law of sin and death." We know it has not been removed, but we are delivered from the enslavement of it through the power of God's Holy Spirit. That's why we are told to overcome. That's why we are to seek after the Divine nature because with the impregnation of God's Spirit we receive of the Divine nature. That's why we are to grow in the fruits of the Spirit.

If you're keeping the commandments of God and you're loving God, you have God's Spirit in you, you're striving, you're growing, you're overcoming, you are walking in the Spirit, not in the flesh. If you're in the flesh, you're out there doing everything you can to improve all the works of the flesh, breaking the commandments of God, denying

that God has rulership over you, etc. You see the difference? We have hope in overcoming. That's why with this series I want you to go back and review the (series) *Washing of the Water by the Word*, how God's Spirit does that. It doesn't happen in people who don't have the Spirit of God.

Here's a hard verse for people to understand, v 3: "For what was impossible for the Law to do... [The Law or any law does not have any inherent power to make you do something. The Law defines right and wrong, good and evil. That's what the Law does.] ...in that it was weak through the flesh..." That's what happened to the children of Israel. Look at the roller coaster of history that they had, from righteousness to the depths of sin. Finally, captivity and the Jews twice and still they haven't gotten the point, because they don't have the Spirit of God.

Remember this: ***if you are chosen and you reject it, you become the last, not the first.*** That's what's happened to the Jews.

Why was the flesh weak? What does it have inherently in it? *The law of sin and death*! So, as good as people want to be, there is no way they can overcome death; there is no way they can forgive their sins. You can't forgive your own sins; there is no way. You get rid of one of bad behavior another one pops up.

- What is the only solution?
- Who put 'the law of sin and death' in us? *God did*, through Adam and Eve.
- Who alone can take care of 'the law of sin and death'? *God!*
- Is God righteous? *Yes, totally!*
- Is God fair? *Yes, completely!*
- How then is God going to solve a problem that He left all human beings with to inherit from their parents? *It's within them!*

That's why Christ in the greatest act of grace divested Himself of His power and glory and became a human being born of the virgin Mary, so that He, by the grace of God, *would taste death for everyone.*

We've covered v 3 before, but maybe this will help you understand it even more. "...God, having sent His own Son in *the* likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh." This tells us that Jesus had to have full human nature with 'the law of sin and death,' which He got from His mother, Mary, yet, never sinned. So, the requirement for Jesus was high above the requirement for any human being—correct? *Yes, indeed!*

Here is the purpose in it for all of those who say that you don't have to keep the Law or the Law has been done away or the Law has been abolished, how do you read v 4? "In order that the

righteousness of the Law might be fulfilled **in us...** [The *us* are the ones who are *under grace*. The righteousness means the full spiritual aspect of it.] ...who are not walking according to *the flesh*, but according to *the Spirit*.”

That’s how God looks at it. That is the dividing line. What did Jesus say? He said, ‘I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life, and **no one comes to the Father except through Me.**’ Can’t do it! There’s only one way! So, all the religions of men, all the borrowing of Scriptures, all the twisting and turning of the Word of God to bring an acceptable ‘religion’ to people, is all the *works of the flesh* and null and void.

Verse 5: “For those who walk according to the flesh mind the things of the flesh... [they are interested in it] ...but those who walk according to *the Spirit* mind the things of the Spirit.”

- How’s their relationship with God?
- How are they keeping the commandments of God?
- How are they overcoming?
- How are they changing?
- How are they growing?
- How are they praying?
- How are they studying?

All these things, are the works of the Spirit?

Verse 6: “For to be carnally minded *is* death, but to be spiritually minded *is* life and peace”—because you are under the grace of God. True life! True peace! Doesn’t mean we won’t have troubles and difficulties, but there is a way out of every one of them through God.

Verse 7: “Because the carnal mind *is* enmity against God, for it is not subject to the Law of God; neither indeed can it *be*.” That’s why when people say, for example, they’re Christian, ‘We keep the commandments, except for this one.’ That’s carnal-minded. ‘Oh, well, the church changed it. So we now go to church on Sunday. Let’s make it convenient. Let’s make Sunday the seventh day of the week, how’s that?’

When everybody looks at the calendar, the seventh day, they don’t think Sunday is the seventh day of the week. Of course, after a generation or two people growing up in that atmosphere, what day of the week is Sunday to them? *Seventh day of the week!* You can see how complicated all of this gets.

“...not subject to the Law of God...” (v 7).

- they want their idols
- they want their crosses and crucifixes
- they want their saints
- they want their beads
- they want their temples

- they want their idol

It’s like this one judge said recently, because at the school they had the Ten Commandments, the U.S. Constitution and the amendments all on the bulletin board. Somebody got offended because they’re of the flesh. ‘Oh, we can’t have that, so I’ll go to court.’

The judge says, ‘The way we can solve this is only have six commandments. Get rid of the first four.’ The first four are more important than the last six, because you can’t be in contact without the first four. Is that enmity against God? Is that enmity against His laws? *Sure it is!*

“...not subject to the Law of God; neither indeed can it *be*” (v 7). This means it has no power to be subject to the Law of God.

‘Yah, but, if you keep nine of the ten...’ Look at it this way. Here’s a cliff, here’s a cliff on the other side and below is a great, steep gorge, and you have to get to the other side. You get back and you run and huff and puff and you jump, and you get 90% of the way across! In your self-righteousness you say, ‘I’ll keep nine. Aren’t I good.’ Compared to someone who is locked up in prison for the rest of his life because of multiple murders, your conduct may be better by comparison this way between man and man. But ***how is your standing between you and God,*** the comparison this way?

Verse 8: “But those who are in *the* flesh cannot please God.” We’re going to see ***we can*** please God. So this shows the impossibility of it.

Now then, Paul brings us the dividing line, v 9: “However, you are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, ***IF...*** [That’s the little two-letter word that needs to be big and printed in red. I guess that would be the way to print the Bible, capitalize all the *ifs* and print them in red.] ...the Spirit of God is indeed dwelling ***within*** you.” ‘En’ is the Greek, within, not with you, not among the people. Under the Old Covenant God said, ‘Build Me a tabernacle that I may dwell among the people, *not in them* with My Spirit.’

God gave them laws so that they would have laws that other nations would say, ‘What nations is there so great with all these laws and judgments and everything and has God near to them.’ *No*, this is *within*.

Come to John 14 because we need to get this into the record. We have covered this in different ways before, but now let’s look at it again. Sometimes some of the most familiar Scriptures that we deal with, it’s good if we go back and restudy them again when we’re looking at things from a different perspective.

John 14:14: “**If** you ask anything in My name, I will do *it*.” [that’s subject to the will of God; that’s subject to the timing of God] (and subject to): **If** you love Me, keep the commandments—namely, My commandments” (vs 14-15). That is a literal translation. This is magnified even more because someone will say, ‘I’ll go through all the commandments and see what Jesus said.’ That’s fine, but unless you know who Jesus was:

- He was the Lord God of the Old Testament
- Who created Adam and Eve
- Who gave the laws to all the patriarchs
- Who worked personally with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob
- Who gave the laws to Israel through Moses

it includes all of those.

Verse 16: “And I will ask the Father...” Very important thing indeed, because this is the dividing line. Who is the Father? *The great Sovereign of the whole universe*—correct? Where is the Holy Spirit coming from? *God the Father to you!* That’s grace! That’s the greatest grace that can be.

“...and He shall give you another Comforter [Holy Spirit], that it may be with you throughout the age... [until the resurrection] ...*even* the Spirit of the Truth...” (vs 16-17). Do a word study on Truth.

- The Spirit of Truth is not going to come and tell lies.
- The Spirit of Truth is not going to do away with the Word of God.
- The Spirit of Truth is not going to lead you into lawlessness because lawlessness is founded on lies.

“...which the world cannot receive...” (v 17). Why? *Because they haven’t repented!* It’s impossible for them to do so, so they flock to their churches on Sunday, supposedly praising God on the wrong day, thanking Him for their lawlessness that they don’t have to keep the Law, and expect God’s Spirit to be there with them while they hear all of these lies from the pulpit. But **God’s Spirit is not with them because it is the Spirit of the Truth!**

“...the world cannot receive because it perceives it not, nor knows it; but you know it because it dwells with you...” (v 17). There is a distinguishing factor right here. When you begin answering the call of God, God’s Spirit can come and lead you and draw you if you keep seeking God. If not, it will withdraw. Maybe you will come back at it at another time. Some people have started, backed off, years later God is still dealing with them. They come to their senses. God’s Spirit will again begin to draw them.

Why is it that before you’re baptized all of a sudden you’ve got to know what God is about?

You’ve got to know what the Word of God means. God works through our lives and disasters and things that happen in our lives so that we’ll ask, ‘Why this? What is happening?’ *You start seeking God!* Maybe you utter your first prayer, ‘God, I’m in trouble, help me.’ Then God’s Spirit, one of the seven Spirits of God will come be with you, lead you. As long as you keep seeking, it’ll lead you. Then you come to the point that God’s Spirit will be *with* you. What is that going to do?

“...dwells with you, and shall be **within** you” (v 17). That’s the dividing line. How many people are there out in the world that have God’s Spirit with them who may be seeking to understand about God, we don’t even know. Remember what God told Elijah when he said, ‘Oh, Lord, I’m just the only one. Poor me.’ He said, ‘Now, now, Elijah, cheer up, there are 7,000 that haven’t bowed the knee to Baal.’ So, we don’t know; God knows! “...dwells with you, and shall be within you.”

Then He says something very important because this becomes the vital key in understanding that you’re under grace. We covered part of this before, v 21: “The one who has My commandments... [tie that in with v 15] ...and is keeping them... [present tense participle] ...that is the one who lives Me; and the one who loves Me shall be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will manifest Myself to him.”

Judas Iscariot didn’t understand that. How can Christ manifest Himself to people without the world knowing about it? *He manifests Himself to you as you seek Him and He sends His Spirit to be with you!* That begins to open your mind. That begins to draw you to God. Why did you all of a sudden become interested in the Word of God? Why did you want to know what it says? *Because of God’s Spirit!* He does it that way.

He answers here, v 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’” That’s what we covered last time in 1-Cor. 3:16 that the Spirit of God is dwelling within us. We see two parts of the Holy Spirit here:

- from the Father
- from the Son

All of those who say they love the Lord but are not willing to keep the commandments of God, not willing to go by the sound words of Jesus Christ. Oh, they’re willing to take a few of the nice ones that make them feel good. But here’s what Jesus said.

Verse 24: “The one who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word that you hear

is not Mine, but the Father's, Who sent Me." Under grace God the Father and Jesus Christ are personally dwelling within you by the power of the Holy Spirit. You are *a temple of God* and that is ***the greatest grace of God*** that He can give to you. The world is not under grace. Christianity of the world is deceived. They have a clever counterfeit but they don't have the Spirit of God.

Verse 26: "But when the Comforter comes, even the Holy Spirit, which **the Father will send in My name...**" So, it comes from the Father in the name of Christ. That's why when you're baptized it's into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, because it's the power of the Holy Spirit that God gives to you as a begetting in your mind to become a begotten son or daughter of God, and the power of God's Holy Spirit so that God the Father and Christ are dwelling within you.

- it's the earnest
- it's the down payment
- it is the guarantee

Notice what it will do: "...that one shall teach you all things... [everything you need to know for salvation] ...and shall bring to your remembrance everything that I have told you" (v 26).

- How do you think we got the Gospel?
- How do you think we have the words of Christ recorded for us?
- *God inspired them to be!*

We will see that the sending of the Holy Spirit is a joint operation between the Father and Christ.

John 15:26: "But when the Comforter has come, which I will send to you from the Father, *even* the Spirit of the Truth... [Jesus sends it; the Father sends it; that means it's a joint operation by both of Them.] ...which proceeds from the Father, that one shall bear witness of Me."

John 16:12, Jesus said: "I have yet many things to tell you, but you are not able to bear them now. However, when that one has come, *even* the Spirit of the Truth, it will lead you into all Truth because it shall not speak from itself, but whatever it shall hear, it shall speak. And it shall disclose to you the things to come" (vs 12-13).

Before the modern age when we could understand that God does things by power, because we didn't know about electricity, that God can do things without being there through the power of the Holy Spirit. Just like you can be in one room and press a button and you can make something happen in the other room. God does this across the universe.

The Spirit of the Truth! Do we need that to understand the book of Revelation today? Let's just do a little sidebar here before we finish this section

here. John was the one who wrote the book of Revelation. He did it while he was on the Isle of Patmos. He was exiled to the Isle of Patmos because they tried to boil him in oil and the oil vomited him right out of the hot oil and he wasn't touched with anything. So, they exiled him to the Isle of Patmos, all alone. I don't know if he was kind of like in a little dungeon, prison, or whatever. There he received the vision of the book of Revelation. He was told to write. Keep in mind this: a lot of the church members that at that time believed that Jesus said by time John dies Christ is going to return.

Have there been rumors in the church we have heard of about when Christ is going to return and the things that will happen? *Sure!* Did we believe them? *Yes!* Did they happen? *No!*

But Jesus didn't say that. So here comes the book of Revelation. I want you to read the book of Revelation in the timeframe that people thought Christ was going to return by the time John died. Read it in the timeframe of when it was sent to the churches. Right at first a lot of the churches didn't accept the book of Revelation. You know why? *Because when they got past the first five chapters—and getting on in toward the end of the book of Revelation, chapters 13-22—'What is this?' It wasn't for them to understand at that time. 'You mean John wrote this? It doesn't make any sense. How can this be from what God has sent?' Yet, John wrote it. But it did disclose the things to come—did it not? Also this is prophecy for us. How do we understand it?*

It's easier to understand 2,000 years later looking back and having some understanding of the book of Daniel in addition to it. That was done by the power of the Holy Spirit, by vision from Christ to John showing him things to take place.

With that in mind, Romans 8:9: "However, you are not in *the* flesh, but in *the* Spirit, if *the* Spirit of God is indeed dwelling within you. But if anyone does not have *the* Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him." An absolute dividing point! No half-ways in between. Almost—doesn't count. You either are or you are not. You either have the Spirit of God within you or you do not.

If you don't have the Spirit of Christ within you, you do not belong to Him. 'God gives the Holy Spirit to those who **obey** Him' (Acts 5:32). Jesus said, 'If you keep My commandments...' What does this tell you about Christianity in the world regardless of the brand? Do they keep the commandments of God? *No!* 90% doesn't get you across the gap—does it? *No, it doesn't!* Do they belong to Christ? *No!* They are the ones that James and John found one man casting out demons in Jesus' name. They said, 'Lord, we forbid him.' Jesus said, 'Don't forbid him.' *Well, Lord, they're*

not of us. He said, ‘If they are for us, they are on our part.’ But they have nothing to do with the reality of conversion because they didn’t receive the Holy Spirit, unless they happened to come there on the Day of Pentecost when the Holy Spirit was given and they repented and were part of the 3,000 that were baptized that day.

So, all of these churches that say they are Christian—I don’t even think they could tell you what Christian is. I know there are a lot of people who will just say, ‘Who do you think you are in saying that!’ I understand that. I’m just reading the Word of God, that’s all. I’m reading what God has decided, what He is inspired, what He has put in His Word. So if you do not have the Spirit of Christ *within* you, you don’t belong to Him. You can profess it, you can have a ‘religion over it’; you don’t belong to Him.

Verse 10: “But if Christ *be* within you, the body *is* indeed dead because of sin; however, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. Now, if the Spirit of Him Who raised Jesus from *the* dead... [What Spirit was that from? *The Father!* We have the Spirit of Christ and the Spirit of the Father combined together right here just like it showed us John 14.] ...is dwelling with in you, He Who raised Christ from *the* dead will also quicken your mortal bodies because of His Spirit that dwells within you” (vs 10-11). *That is the dividing line between being under law or under grace.*

(go to the next track)

Under grace does not mean *above the Law*. I may have to give one more sermon on lawlessness to cover that. *Under grace* means you have a direct relationship between you and God the Father because you have received the Holy Spirit of God. Having received the Holy Spirit of God, you are now required to keep the commandments of God in the Spirit. You are now required that they are written in your heart and in your mind. God’s Spirit will do that for you. For those to say, ‘We’re under grace and we don’t have to keep the Law,’ they are *under law* and they are lawless.

Jim said it is to legalize lawlessness. That was first done in churches. They have set the tone for how the society is. When you walk into a church and they tell you, ‘Hallelujah, brother, we’re under the New Covenant. Raise your hand, look at the preacher and give your heart to the Lord. You are saved and now you don’t have to keep any law.’

That sounds so deliriously simple, but it is the greatest lie in the world and deceives millions of people into a lawless religion that claims to follow Christ Who is the Lawgiver. So what they are actually doing is judging God and saying, ‘We are above God.’ They are not under grace at all.

- they may be well intentioned
- they may have a lot of ‘do-gooder’ works
- they may be thought well of in the community
- they may have nice personalities
- they may be good people in the world

—but *they don’t belong to Christ because they do not have the Holy Spirit of God!* For all of those in Protestant-land, that’s a hard one to take. Because they say, ‘We’re under grace. We don’t have to keep any laws.’

Like one man was approached recently. He was told, ‘You’re getting legalistic.’ Who is the Lawgiver? Is God legalistic in who He gives His Spirit to? *If you don’t obey Him, you don’t get it!* If you don’t repent and if you are not baptized in covenant baptism, you do not receive the Holy Spirit of God within you—period! Don’t bring to me about Cornelius and his household. That was an exception so God could show Peter that the Gentiles could receive the Holy Spirit without physical circumcision. Then they were baptized after the fact.

Let me tell you what that means in the Greek. That is called a *hapax legomenon*, which refers to a word meaning a ‘one-time occurrence’ of the word. This was a one-time event when the Holy Spirit was given before baptism to show Peter from God Himself what God was going to do. Let’s add a little bit more to it, which is this:

- Can any man tell God what to do?
- Can any man plead with God to accept his way instead of God’s way and demand that God do it?
- Will God honor that? *Of course not!*

The one trying to enforce that upon God is trying to make himself greater than God.

Likewise when they put themselves above the law, saying it is ‘done away’ when Jesus said ‘don’t even think that I come to abolish the law,’ that you don’t need to keep the Ten Commandments. We’re going to see that’s one of the evidences that you belong to God.

Let’s finish this section of it. The only way you’re going to be guaranteed of eternal life is Romans 8:11: “Now, if the Spirit of Him Who raised Jesus from *the* dead... [from the Father] ...is dwelling within you, He... [God the Father] ...Who raised Christ from *the* dead will also quicken your mortal bodies because of His Spirit that dwells within you.” No one’s going to be in the resurrection unless they have had the begettal of the Holy Spirit of God—period! That’s why there’s the second resurrection.

Verse 12: “So then, brethren, we are not debtors to the flesh, to live according to *the* flesh;

because if you are living according to *the* flesh, you shall die... [Isn't that what is happening in the religions of this world? Are they not all fleshly religions? Think about it!] ...but if by *the* Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you shall live... (vs 12-13). Here shows our part:

- we must work
- we must overcome
- we must use the Holy Spirit

Here's what the Holy Spirit will do for us, v 14: "For as many as are led by *the* Spirit of God, these are *the* sons of God." That is not said of anyone who does not have the Spirit of God.

That's not to say that you must belong to the Christian Biblical Church of God. No, you must belong to God the Father and Jesus Christ. Rev. 2 and 3 shows us that as God views His churches on the earth, and lo there are many fellowships and churches, but they fall into seven categories of the seven churches of Rev. 2 and 3. They all have to have the Spirit of God within them. Some may have a few different doctrines than others. Some may have problems with sin amongst their midst, etc. But nevertheless they still belong to Christ and He wrote a personal letter to all seven churches.

Of the seven He told five of them to repent. And of all seven He said, 'The one who has an ear to hear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.' That comes direct from Jesus Christ! This is why if you're not putting to death the deeds of the body, you're going to have problems as described in the seven churches, Rev. 2 and 3.

Verse 14: "For as many as are led by *the* Spirit of God, these are *the* sons of God. Now, you have not received a spirit of bondage again unto fear... [that comes from Satan the devil] ...but you have received *the* Spirit of sonship, whereby we call out, 'Abba, Father'" (vs 14-15). That is you have direct connection to God the Father and Jesus Christ in heaven above because you have the Holy Spirit within you. That is the greatest grace that God can give you.

Verse 16: "The Spirit itself bears witness conjointly with our own spirit, *testifying* that we are *the* children of God.... [Paul understood this]: ...Now, if *we are* children *we are* also heirs—truly, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ..." (vs 16-17). He's going to inherit the whole universe—joint heirs. Think of that! What is it going to be like? Just like we could not conceive that we were just a little speck at conception, and however old you are trying to look back to that time, you can never understand what that was like. Likewise, in the flesh that we are with the Spirit of God within us, we can have a deep understanding what it's going to like to be a spirit being. We look through a glass darkly and we can

see some things. We are told some things. But think about it this way: if God has put so much into this physical body and to give us the spirit of man and then give us of His Holy Spirit so that we now become the begotten sons and daughters of God, we are no more than just a little speck of what it's going to be like at the resurrection when we receive the full glory that is going to be given to us.

He says it right here: "...if indeed we suffer together with Him, so that we may also be glorified together with Him" (v 17). Paul writes that He's going to transform our bodies to be made like His glorious body. I don't know about you, I can think about that all day long, I can pray about it, I can read about it, I can study in the Greek, I can look through the glass darkly, but what is that going to be like?

The Epistle of 1-John becomes very, very important in understanding what do we do because God has not given us this body in mind and spirit of man and Spirit of God that we just sit back and do nothing. We have to be active. Every one of the seven churches were told by Christ, 'to the one who overcomes shall be...' whatever the promise was. We have to constantly be overcoming. This is why Paul said that he 'forgets the things that are behind and reaching forward to the things which are before.' You've got to do that. We all have to do that. We're all going to have enough difficulties and problems that what was yesterday, that's over and done. What we have today, don't spoil it with feelings from yesterday. What you do tomorrow, don't carry anything over into the next day.

1-John 3:1: "Behold! What glorious love the Father has given to us, that we should be called the children of God!...." The word here in the Greek is 'teknon'—*God's own begotten children*. The King James translates *sonship* as 'adoption.' Adoption means that you're taking someone who is not of your genetic bloodline and you legally make them a son or daughter. That's not what God is doing. He is giving of His Spirit in our minds, and we are begotten by God. We are His begotten children.

"...For this very reason, the world does not know us because it did not know Him. Beloved, now we are the children of God, and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be; but we know... [we can know this]: ...that when He is manifested, we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him exactly as He is" (vs 1-2). We can look at each other and we know exactly what we're like—right? Think what it's going to be like to be a spirit being, raised from the dead and we say, 'There is God! There is Christ!'

I'll have to tell a little one on myself. The other night in channel surfing I came across the Sci-Fi channel—science fiction. The world is really being programmed to fight Jesus Christ. I'm going to have to give some sermons on 'I believe in

aliens,] not the kind that the movies try to tell you to believe in. But since you don't know God the Father, you don't know Jesus Christ, you don't know the whole Holy angels. You deny Satan the devil and the demons, you want these aliens over here from Satan in your life, but the true aliens to you are God the Father, Jesus Christ, and the Holy angels. They are coming to this earth and the world is going to fight against them. That was the whole thing concerning this movie.

What was interesting, you've heard me talk about the Sea of Glass that is huge. In this movie they had great space ships that were gigantic. I couldn't help but think of the Sea of Glass and how when the sign of the Son of man appears in the heavens it'll be there for about a year and a half. Then it will all of a sudden streak to the earth. Just as it gets to the clouds it'll go ZOOM! into this giant Sea of Glass and the world is going to gasp. Then they're going to see the sons and daughters of God raised from the dead being carried by the angels up to the Sea of Glass. I think God is going to show that to them because they're going to say, 'Look what they're doing, body snatching. What is this?'

They do have agreements, all nations, if there is an alien invasion they'll all come together and fight. So, all the presidents are on the phone and all of this, and television, 'Aliens are here. All the armies gather together.' Called Armageddon. That's what they were doing. The movie ended this way: One brilliant man who was drunk the night before, because he thought he was worthless, came up with a computer program where he could put a virus into the space ships, because there were a lot of these spaceships over the major cities of the world. It would take away their supernatural protection from any of the weapons, ballistic things to shoot them down. So that's how they defeated them.

Right after that was the movie, *Independence Day*, but it was about 10 o'clock so I said sayonara, I'm going to bed. But think what it's going to be. When 'He is manifest, we shall be like Him because we shall see Him exactly as He is.' Here's what this is to do for us. This is so when, in overcoming the world and overcoming sin and overcoming self you get a little discouraged.

Verse 3: "And everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, even as He is pure." That's through Christ, that's through repentance, that's through growing and overcoming.

Let's see what God has done for us. We're going to see some other things which we do in concert with God's Spirit and motivated and led by God's Spirit so that we know that we are of God. That's not to treat other people in a bad way. We don't categorize people. God does—*under law* or *under grace*. That comes from God.

Verse 4: "Everyone who practices sin is also practicing lawlessness... [The *King James* says, 'Sin is the transgression of the Law.' That's not a literal translation. This is a literal translation. Lawlessness. I've got to give a sermon on that to finish this off.] ...for sin is lawlessness."

Verses 5-9 is the most correctly translated section of the Epistle of 1-John than any other translation. Some others come close to it. The *King James* has one verse there which says—v 9—that 'he who is begotten—or that is born again—cannot sin.' That has caused so much confusion. That's why they say the Law is done away and it has nothing to do with that.

Verse 5: "And you know that He appeared in order that He might take away our sins; and in Him is no sin. Everyone who dwells in Him... [because you have the Spirit of God] ...does not *practice* sin..." (vs 5-6). Doesn't say they don't sin.

1-John 5:16 says: "If anyone sees his brother sinning a sin *that is* not unto death..." We'll see, what are we to do with our sins? First chapter—*confess them*—correct? *Yes!* It is he does not *practice* sin, doesn't mean he won't sin or she won't sin, but you can't *practice* it. Why? *Because God's Spirit will bring it to your attention that you are sinning so that you can repent and get rid of it!* That is a spirit-motivated conscience.

1-John 3:6: "...anyone who practices sin has not seen Him, nor has known Him. Little children, do not allow anyone to deceive you; the one who practices righteousness is righteous, even as He is righteous" (vs 6-7). In other words, because Christ in us is motivating us, we do it according to the Spirit of God, comes from Christ.

Verse 8: "The one who practices sin is of the devil because the devil has been sinning from *the* beginning... [That's pretty clear—isn't it?] ...For this purpose the Son of God appeared that He might destroy the works of the devil." That's the ultimate goal! Get rid of all of that! Nullify everything he has done as if it did not happen!

Verse 9, the key. "Everyone who has been begotten by God does not practice sin because His seed *of begettal* is dwelling within him..." That comes from the Father and from Christ to develop the mind of Christ. So, you don't practice sin. It doesn't say you won't sin. But what happens when you sin and you are convicted of it in conscience? *You repent*—right? *Yes!* That's what God's wants. The word in the Greek for seed is 'sperma.' You can draw the parallel there.

"...is dwelling within him, and he is not able to *practice* sin because he has been begotten by God. By this *standard* are manifest the children of God

and the children of the devil.... [There is the dividing line between the world.] ...Everyone who does not practice righteousness... [What is righteousness? *Keeping the commandments of God!*] ...is not of God... [regardless of what they profess] ...and neither is the one who does not love his brother” (vs 9-10).

Let’s look at some simple-to-understand Scriptures so we know that we know God. We know that we have a relationship with Him. Let’s see where it tells us about being begotten again. So this ties in with 1-John 3:9.

1-Peter 1:1: “Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to *the* elect strangers, scattered in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia; *who have been chosen* according to the predetermined knowledge of God *the* Father...” (vs 1-2). What is that predetermined knowledge?

- repentance
- baptism
- receiving of the Holy Spirit

That was predetermined by God. You have to repent before the whole process begins.

“...by sanctification through the Spirit...” (v 2)—because you are sanctified when you receive the Spirit, because sanctified means *to be made Holy*. If you receive the Holy Spirit, you have been sanctified.

“...unto obedience...” (v 2). There is that word again. Not above the law. If you obey the law, you’re not above the law—correct? *Yes!*

“...and sprinkling of *the* blood of Jesus Christ: Grace and peace be multiplied to you” (v 2).

The whole topic we’ve been going through is *grace upon grace, grace upon grace*. That Jesus ‘was full of grace and truth and His fullness we have all received and grace upon grace.’ Every act that God does in our lives is through the grace of God.

Verse 3: “Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who, according to His abundant mercy, **has begotten us again**... [The Greek there is ‘anagennao.’ We read back there in 1-John 3:9, *His seed*; that’s the seed of His begetting.] ...has begotten us again unto a living hope through *the* resurrection of Jesus Christ from *the* dead.”

1-John 1: 3 shows that with the grace of God we have fellowship with God the Father and with Jesus Christ.

1-John 1:6: “If we proclaim that we have fellowship with Him, but we are walking in the darkness, we are lying to ourselves, and we are not practicing the Truth.” Look at how many times it says *obey, practice, Truth*. Isn’t this exactly where

Protestantism is? They proclaim to have fellowship with Him, but are walking in darkness. We’ll see because they don’t keep the commandments.

“...we are lying to ourselves, and we are not practicing the Truth.... [Again, you can take the study. What is Truth? All the way through. Verse 7: However, if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, *then* we have fellowship with one another... [Our fellowship starts with God the Father and Jesus Christ. Then with each other.] ...and the blood of Jesus Christ, His own Son, cleanses us... [present tense] ...from all sin” (vs 6-7). We don’t practice sin, but we do sin. So therefore, we need forgiveness. “...and the blood of Jesus Christ, His own Son, cleanses us from all sin,” and that is another operation of grace.

Verse 8: “If we say that we do not have sin... [That’s why the translation there in 1-John 3 cannot read: ‘the one who is born again cannot sin.’ That would contradict what he has written here.] ...we are deceiving ourselves, and the Truth is not in us. If we confess our own sins... [To whom? *God the Father and Jesus Christ*. Right? Doesn’t say if you confess your sins to the priest. If you sin against God, how can *a man* forgive you your sins? *He can’t, only God can!*] ...He is faithful and righteous, to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His Word is not in us.” (vs 8-10). How are you going to make God a liar, Who is Truth? He’s stating the impossible to know that you don’t dare say you have not sinned.

We’ll read some things here in 1-John 2 and then in chapter 3, because this tells us some very important things. It’s interesting that in talking to some Protestants the very first time, one man mentioned to me, ‘In the church that I attended they hardly ever read from the Gospel of John and never from 1-John.’ Now we’ll see why.

1-John 2:1: “My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin.... [Temptation comes along; you can put it down; you have not sinned.] ...And *yet*, if anyone does sin... [It can’t be that you cannot sin.] ...we have an Advocate with the Father; Jesus Christ *the* Righteous; and He is *the* propitiation... [the continual atoning mercy seat for our sins] ...and not for our sins only, but also for *the sins of the whole world*” (vs 1-2). However, according to God’s plan.

Verse 3: “And by this...” Let me explain those three words to you. The Greek word for *and* is ‘kai’—pronounced *key*. *By* is ‘en.’ *This* is ‘toutoo.’ It reads: ‘kai en toutoo.’ He uses this over and over again in the Epistle of 1-John. We are to supply the meaning of *by this* or ‘en toutoo.’

“And by this *standard*...” (v 3). We derived that from the context because we are measuring something so you need a standard.

“...we know... [this is what God wants you to know] ...we know that we know Him...” (v 3). That’s

- by faith
- by grace
- by God’s commandments
- by the Word of God
- by the Spirit of God within us

And all of this is grace.

“...we know that we know Him: if we keep His commandments” (v 3). Because there was already the changing of the grace of God into something else, John is writing here to make it clear.

Verse 4: “The one who says, ‘I know Him,’ and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the Truth is not in him.” Where does that put everyone who says we don’t have to keep the laws and commandments of God? What does that make them? *Liars!* They may be nice people. They may be well intentioned, but they are liars.

Always remember this: *Con men*—you watch *American Greed*—are always the *slickest liars*. What did Jesus say? ‘Many will come in My name saying I am the Christ and deceive many.’ If you deceive someone, how do you do it? With truth? or With a lie? ‘We know Jesus. He’s abolished the law.’

John says, 4: “The one who says, ‘I know Him,’ and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the Truth is not in him. On the other hand, *if* anyone is keeping His Word... [key that to John 14] ...truly in this one the love of God is being perfected.... [Why? *Because you’re loving God and keeping His commandments.*] ...By this *means*... [of this perfection taking place—‘en toutoo.’] ...we know that we are in Him” (vs 4-5). *We know* we know Him if we keep His commandments. If we are keeping His Word and the love of God is being perfected, *we know* we are in Him. God wants us *to know*. The power of faith and the Holy Spirit of God gives the conviction that it is so.

Notice what v 6 requires: “Anyone who claims to dwell in Him is obligating himself also to walk even as He Himself walked.”

- Did Jesus sin? *No!*
Which means He didn’t break a law or commandment of God—correct?
- Did He love God? *Yes!*
- Did He always do the things that pleased the Father? *Yes!*

- Did He preach the words that the Father gave Him to preach? *Yes!*

With that in mind, 1-John 3:13: “My brethren, do not be amazed if the world hates you. We know that we have passed from death into life because we love the brethren. The one who does not love *his* brother is dwelling in death. Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life dwelling within him” (vs 13-15). That’s why there’s always repentance because of sin and difficulties that come along.

Verse 16: “By this *very act* we have known the love of *God* because He laid down His life for us: and we ourselves are to lay down *our* lives for the brethren. But whoever has this world’s goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his feelings of compassion from him, how can the love of God be dwelling in him? (vs 16-17).

Now it comes out, how do you live and practice your life? Verse 18: “My little children, we should not love in word, nor with *our* tongues; rather, *we should love* in deed and in Truth.” What does this do for us? Notice how much we are to know, because of the Spirit of God, the love of God, and what we do.

Verse 19: “And in this *way* we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before Him... [have confidence in God] ...That if our hearts condemn us... [Which happens when you sin—doesn’t it? *Yes!*] ...God is greater than our hearts, and knows all things.... [You can repent and have that wiped away.] ...Beloved, if our hearts do not condemn us, *then* we have confidence toward God” (vs 19-22). You have faith, you have confidence, you have hope, all these things together.

Verse 22: “And whatever we may ask we receive from Him because we keep His commandments and practice those things that are pleasing in His sight.... [*Yes, we can please God.* There it is right there.] ...And this is His commandment: that we believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and that we love one another, exactly as He gave commandment to us. And the one who keeps His commandments is dwelling in Him... [Remember what Jesus said back in John 14?] ...and He [Christ] in him... [that is the one who has the Holy Spirit.] ...and by this... [kai en toutoo] ...we know that He is dwelling in us: by the Spirit which He has given to us” (vs 22-24).

Those are the ones who are *under grace*. Under grace means that **God has intervened in your life directly**. Every part of the operation of God in the New Testament *is part of His grace, so we receive grace upon grace!*

Scriptural References:

- 1) Romans 8:1-9
- 2) John 14:14-17, 21, 23-26
- 3) John 15:26
- 4) John 16:12-13
- 5) Romans 8:9-17
- 6) 1-John 3:1-6
- 7) 1-John 5:16
- 8) 1-John 3:6-10
- 9) 1-Peter 1:1-3
- 10) 1-John 1:6-10
- 11) 1-John 2:1-6
- 12) 1-John 3:13-24

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Matthew 24:12
- Romans 7
- 1-Corinthians 3:16
- Acts 5:32
- Revelation 2, 3
- 1-John 1:3

Also referenced: Sermon Series:

The Washing of the Water by the Word

Grace Upon Grace & Lawlessness

Fred R. Coulter

Today we live in an age that Jesus described in Matthew 24. Let's see how this has come about and let's see how this is working.

I don't know how many of you watched the news last night, but it was absolutely incredible. All the lies coming through—it's no longer they talk out of both sides of their mouths, they cut it in two and they have eight things they're all saying, how they bring things out and so forth, truth cannot be heard. It's just something! It's been increasing! We're going to find out that this is a result of the modern lawless grace that's preached in Christianity.

Matthew 24:10, Jesus said: "And then shall many be led into sin..." That's certainly what's happening today. People are just led into sin. They're not taught anything in schools. They're all reared on emotion and sex in school. If the electricity goes out, no one knows how to count change. Everyone thinks they're smart and educated because they have a Smartphone; turn it off and you don't know anything.

"...many be led into sin... [they're gullible] ...and many false prophets shall arise, and shall deceive many" (vs 10-11). This means the majority. Have you ever wondered and some people probably have wondered this, why are there so few really true Christians? The answer is: *Because those who are supposed to teach the Truth do not teach the Truth!* What does that lead to?

Verse 12: "And because lawlessness shall be multiplied..." You've heard of the old story of taking a penny and doubling it every day for a month and at the end of the month you'd end up with \$1.2-million. That's the way that lawlessness is multiplied.

Under Law:

What is lawlessness? There are several forms of lawlessness, but they all count. I hope you've been following along with the sermons on *Grace Upon Grace!* After being in the Church so many years we finally have understood what it means to be *under law* and then what it means to be *under grace*.

Romans 6:14: "For sin shall not rule over you because you are not under law, but under grace." *Under law* means: *Every human being in the world is under law to God!* That's how God deals with them. He doesn't deal with them directly. He doesn't deal with them personally. They are *under law!*

Paul describes it, just across the page in Romans 7:1: "Are you ignorant, brethren (for I am speaking to those who know law), that the law rules over a man for as long a time as he may live?" If the law rules over you, you're *under law*. Every human being in the world is *under law* and subject to law. The laws that God has created is for

- our conduct
- our bodies
- our environment
- how we get along with each

God judges them according to His law.

Romans 3:19: "Now then, we know that whatever the law says, it speaks to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God." Have 'all sinned and come short of the glory of God'? Is that a Scripture? *Yes!* If all have sinned, that means *all have transgressed the law*—correct? If all have transgressed the law, that means they're all under the law because if there is no law, there is no sin.

Under Grace:

To be *under grace* is an entirely different thing that what the Christianity of this world has understood it as. The reason they have misunderstood it is because they do not know anything about Judaism and the problems of *works of law*. How many have the book, *Judaism: A Revelation of Moses or Religion of Men?* Be sure and read it. You'll find out the pope is not the only man who thinks he is greater than God. Every rabbi does.

Here is their misinterpretation, Romans 6:14: "For sin shall not rule over you because you are not under law, but under grace." When you've heard this read, even in the Church of God, they say, 'That doesn't mean you're not to keep the commandments.' But they never told you what being *under grace* was—right? Being *under grace* means that *you have repented, have been baptized, and received the Holy Spirit, and now God is directly, personally involved in your life!* And, in fact, has *made you a temple of God* by putting the Spirit of God in you.

What is the Spirit of God? *It is a Spirit of love, obedience, of faith!* What does it tell us in Heb. 10 that God is going to do with His laws and commandments? Where is He going to put them? Since His Spirit is in us, where is He going to put His laws and commandments? *In our heart and in*

our mind! So, to be *under grace* does not remove you from law. It elevates the requirement of the law from obeying in the letter to the spirit, as Jesus taught:

- You've heard it said of old, you shall not murder. *But I say to you, you shall not hate your brother.*
- You've heard it said of old, you shall not commit adultery, *but I say to you any man who lusts after her has committed adultery already in his mind.*

Now the temple of God, with the Spirit of God being in our mind, is the place where the laws and commandments of God are there living and dwelling. The law is Holy, the law is spiritual, you have the Spirit of God, you have the spirit of man, and the law is righteous.

We are to be righteous—aren't we? *Yes, indeed!* Another part of being *under grace* is that in answering the call of God through repentance and baptism, you have been *elected* or *selected*. That means God Himself has selected you. Being *under grace* does not mean that you are free from law. Being *under grace* does not mean that now you can live a life assuming that God abolished His laws.

What did Jesus say about that? *'Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to abolish, but to fulfill,' to make it complete!* And where is the law complete? *Right here in your heart and in your mind.*

- this is why we pray
- this is why we study
- this is why we learn the Word of God
 - ✓ not so that we can ignore it
 - ✓ not so that we can say God did away with it
 - ✓ not so that we can say, 'I'm free from having to keep that harsh law.'

Show me one Law of God that's harsh. God says it's perfect, comes from a perfect God.

How does the world look at it? *Lawlessness will be multiplied!* Why? Why does that happen? Who rules this world? *Satan the devil, the god of this world and the world is under his power!* What is he actively doing right now? We've heard this Scripture how many times. Rev. 12:9 says, *'He is deceiving—present tense—the whole world.'*

That has to be the end-time fulfillment of it because immediately it goes into the martyrdom of the saints—does it not? So it's multiplied. Satan is the author of sin. Look at the world the way that it is today. I couldn't get over it watching the news last night: all of the political lies, all of the commentary lies, all of the killings and shootings. Did you know

that they have had 1200 murders in Chicago this year to date! Now we've got to protect our children.

'Oh, we don't want the family. Oh, women ought to be able to have freedom of their lives so they can have children and be married to the government and let him be the father. Oh, no, we can't tell the teens, don't wait and preserve your sexual life until marriage. No, No!' Twelve-year old girls are out there actively on a daily basis, involved. There's lying, cheating, stealing. If you're honest, you're a dope. That's the way they look at it. So, we have all this lawlessness. How does that appeal to the carnal mind? How does that appeal to the deceitful mind? Right on!

Let's see how all of this comes about. On Thursday I went over to Randy's and I've been reading the book of Proverbs. We're putting on a special Proverbs series. We came to Proverbs 31, so I had him write down several of the references that we're going to cover today that I want to bring with my sermon. We want to read this with a prophetic interpretation as well.

Proverbs 31:1. "The words of King Lemuel, the prophecy which his mother taught him: 'What, my son? And what, O son of my womb? And what, O son of my vows? Do not give your strength unto women, nor your ways unto that which destroys kings'" (vs 1-3). What are women also prophetically called? *Churches!*

Verse 4: "'It is not for kings, O Lemuel, it is not for kings to drink wine, nor for princes strong drink, lest they drink, and forget the law, and pervert the rights of all of the afflicted'" (vs 4-5).

Let's take those thoughts and let's apply them to Rev. 17. Here is the religious system that has brought the lawlessness to the world. This religious system is not the Roman Catholic Church, it is Mother Babylon of which the Roman Catholic Church, the Protestants, the Muslims, the Hindus, the Buddhists are all daughters of Babylon and has inherited that.

Revelation 17:1: "And one of the seven angels who had the seven vials came and spoke with me, saying to me, 'Come here; I will show you the judgment of the great whore... [Don't give your strength to women—*spiritually speaking*.] ...who sits upon many waters.'" The many waters in v 15 are peoples, multitudes, nations, and languages. So you view the world and look what is happening in the world.

Verse 2: "'With whom the kings of the earth... [King Lemuel, don't do this] ...have committed fornication, and those who dwell on the earth were made drunk with the wine of her

fornication.” That wine of her fornication is *lawlessness*.

Verse 3: “Then he carried me away in the spirit to a wilderness; and I saw a woman sitting upon a scarlet beast that had seven heads and ten horns, full of names of blasphemy. And the woman *was* clothed in purple and scarlet, and *was* adorned with gold and pearls and precious stones; *and* she had a golden cup in her hand, filled with abominations and the filthiness of her fornication; and across her forehead a name was written: MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF THE HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH” (vs 3-5).

So, we look out and see lies everywhere. I couldn’t believe the news last night. Talked about the murders in Chicago; talked about all of the boys that were seduced by Sandusky, one of the coaches at Penn State; all the things going in the schools here. I talked to a teacher who teaches down in south Los Angeles and it’s a total mess, absolute mess.

- the schools are a mess
- the governments are a mess
- the churches are in a mess
- people are in messes

Now we have a President who is ‘Liar-in-Chief’ and lawless captain. He’ll go ahead and make his own laws.

Let’s see what happens when you do that and you get the population sinning more and more. Let’s see how it progresses. Remember, whenever you are reading the Bible, there is a reason for everything that has been written and recorded. It’s there for us to learn. Isaiah 5 talks about what happens when you build a society on sin. The first part talks about where God had Israel and Jerusalem like a vineyard and He planted it, a fine wonderful vineyard. Then He came back to get the grapes and what were there? *Wild grapes!*

Isaiah 5:7: “For the vineyard of the LORD of hosts *is* the house of Israel, and the men of Judah His pleasant plant; and He looked for justice, but behold, bloodshed; for righteousness, but behold, a cry of distress!”

I want you to think as if you’re in a plane flying around the world. You look at the cities and you look at the people and you look what is going on and taking place. When we read the following verses, think about it and think of all the trouble that comes because of it.

Seven Woes:

Verse 8: “**Woe**^{#1} to those who join house to house, *that* lay field to field, until *there is* no place

left, and you are made to dwell alone in the midst of the land!” Every big city that is jammed together like that, what do they have? *Crime, drugs, murder!*

Verse 11: “**Woe**^{#2} to those who rise up early in the morning to go after strong drink; who continue late into the night *while* wine inflames them!” You can tie into that drunkenness, alcoholism, drugs, all kinds of drugs—prescription drugs, illegal drugs, marijuana. Now the city of Oakland is fighting the federal government that wants to close down a marijuana medical center because the income from selling the marijuana has become a major part of the income coming to the city of Oakland. As we read some of these things, think for just a minute.

I saw what happened to Mitt Romney when he went to talk before the NAACP. He actually gave a pretty good speech and it was quite well received. But what should have been said to them and every other organization? Planned Parenthood and NAACP, whatever other organization? ‘*If you want to solve your problems, you must teach the Ten Commandments of God and you must have every man married to his own wife and you all stop your adultery and fornication and homosexuality and all of these kinds of things.*’ On top of it, I received a report here that in the Episcopal Church, guess what they’re going to do? *They are going to clear the way for transgender ministers!* One sin leads to another—*lawlessness multiplied!*

Furthermore, you’d have to tell them: ‘*You must stop all the gangs. Anyone in a gang, you have one chance to repent.*’ I think is what Christ is going to institute when He comes back, if there be any gangs that survive all the things that go on. ‘You have one chance to repent, or it’s the end of you. You are executed! No more defiance!’

Then it talks about the music. Look at all the rock concerts. Look at all the music that messes up the minds of young people. They have on Fox News this man, Jesse Watters, and he goes around and has interviews. He went down to the beaches in Florida and was interviewing the young men and women down there, college aged or last part of high school. They didn’t know who the founding fathers were. They did not know anything about anything, but yes, they were down there for fun and games and sex and music and drugs. God is going to judge for that. Most church services now are like mini rock concerts.

Verse 18: “**Woe**^{#3} to those who draw iniquity with cords of vanity, and sin with cart ropes.... [This means that their whole life’s endeavor is to promote sin, which is lawlessness.] ...Who say, ‘Let Him hurry *and* hasten His work, so that we may see it; and let the purpose of the Holy One of Israel draw

near and come, so that we may know!’.... [Mockingly, of course! They don’t want to know.] (Here’s where lawlessness multiplies): ...**Woe**^{#3} to those who call evil good and good evil...” (vs 18-20). That characterizes most of government and most of the plans of this current administration with their *sickness-management tax*. It’s not healthcare, it’s *sickness-management tax*.

I saw two commentators commenting on the lies about Mitt Romney, which are completely unfounded, easily proven untrue. But both of those women commentators said, ‘Well, if it works...’ **No sense of right or wrong! No sense of good and evil!** That’s the same thing that probably got them through college. Kids today cheat because they’re not taught to do right.

“...call evil good and good evil; who put darkness for light and light for darkness; who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter!” (v 20). What have the religionists done? *They have said, ‘All 613 laws of Moses are done away completely.’* They’ve just judged God, rejected His laws. God is going to judge them.

Verse 21: “**Woe**^{#5} unto *them that are* wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight!” Doesn’t that spell out the governments? Every interest group? What you’re going to see in this coming year, just on the financial stage, is city after city declare bankruptcy because of the corruptness of the government, the corruptness of those who were in charge, the corruptness and lawlessness of the unions who demanded that ‘we retire at age 50 with 90% pay and 100% healthcare.’

Even as one city back on Long Island, New York, a very expensive place, their healthcare costs for retired firemen and policemen is \$200-million a year and they have no money. These woes come back. *Lawlessness has a penalty!* We are entering into a time of greater and greater and greater lawlessness in the society. It’s getting closer and closer to home because there’s so much of it. Think of the insanity—the lawless do-gooders want to abolish tobacco smoking, but legalize pot smoking. Then there are those who want to legalize drugs. Perfect! Let the Chinese have their revenge for the Opium War 200 years ago. ‘Wise in their own eyes!’

Look at how many great plans people have done and it ended up with nothing. Wise to have renewable energy from corn. Ethanol, oh, that’s wonderful!^[sarcastically] As I said years ago: until there’s a drought. Guess what we have this year? *A drought!* Guess what they use in almost everything instead of sugar now? *High fructose corn syrup!* That’s going to make the price of everything skyrocket. Seems

good. Oh, yes, and then everybody’s making money on the back side.

Verse 22: “**Woe**^{#6} unto *them that are* mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to mingle strong drink.... [you can add drugs into that] ...Who justify the wicked for a bribe and take away the righteousness of the righteous from him!” (vs 22-23).

A man was arrested and put in jail for having church at home. He went a little too far inasmuch as he had 50 people, but nevertheless that shows you where it goes. Sheriff Arapaio in Arizona: look what they do to him. So, the few that are out there to try and do right, they try and take it away. But **vengeance is going to come!**

Verse 24: “Therefore as the fire devours the stubble, and the flame burns up the chaff; their root shall be like rottenness, and their blossoms shall go up like dust because... [here’s why there is lawlessness]: ...**they have cast away the law of the LORD of hosts, and despised the Word of the Holy One of Israel.**” God lays that at the doorstep of every single Protestant minister and Catholic priest that take the name of God and reject His Word.

The lawlessness from the pulpits have caused the lawlessness in the land. We’ll see that in a bit. They despise the Word of the Holy One of Israel. You try telling a Protestant minister, ‘You know, you ought to keep the commandments of God.’ *Oh, no, that’s that old law. It’s been done away!* Just stop for a minute. If you did two columns—the Bible and world Christianity.

The Bible teaches:

- Truth
- love of God
- Sabbath

Christianity of the world teaches:

- lies
- mixture of some Truth to distort it
- keeps Sunday, a day which God never sanctified

And they call themselves Christians? When a Christian is supposed to one who follows Christ, Who never sinned.

Then you take a little sidebar on that and then the Churches of God have become so corrupt in themselves that they run off to the evangelicals and say, ‘What do you believe about grace?’ And look what’s happened. They ought to read Rev. 2 and 3 because they’re doing in degree what is listed here. “...despised the Word of the Holy One of Israel” (v 24).

Let's see what else happens when you do that. I'm going to read you an indictment of the business world, the governments, the education, and the churches.

Isaiah 10:1: "**Woe**^{#7} to those who decree unrighteous edicts..." Whatever they are. The school systems are so bad and the unions are so strong that if a teacher is accused of wrong doing, the teacher can be relieved of the job but they go to a special room somewhere in the county and all of the teachers just sit there while the union is trying to fight out the situation, and they draw their full salary for as much as two or three or four years. In New York City they have 247 teachers that go to this 'sitting room' to be paid over \$100,000 a year. It's in everything: *religion, education, finance!*

We were joking about the LIBOR interest rate you probably heard of. One clerk said, 'Oop, I hit the wrong key,' and the bank made \$1-billion. It's corrupt, from head to toe, through and through.

Verse 2: "To turn aside the needy from judgment, and to steal the right from the poor of My people, that widows may be their prey, and *that* they may rob the orphans! And what will you do in the day of judgment and destruction..." It's coming! Unless there is a major turnaround in America at this election, it's coming, and be prepared. Everybody's going to be paying 30-50% in taxes. You reject God; He rejects you. It affects everybody.

"...in the day of devastation which shall come from afar? To whom will you flee for help? And where will you leave your wealth? They can do nothing but to cringe among the captives, or fall among the slain. In all this His hand is not turned away, but His hand *is* stretched out still" (vs 2-4).

They could come to God. Anyone who will forsake wickedness and come to God, anyone who will repent, God will honor. God is not limited. Look what He did to Joseph when he was taken off into prison. He protected him, watched over him.

Isaiah 59:1: "Behold, the LORD'S hand is not shortened that it cannot save, nor is His ear heavy that it cannot hear. But your iniquities..." (vs 1-2)—your *lawlessness!* Lawlessness comes in the worst form when lawless decrees are made the law of the land, whatever it may be.

Now in the so-called Obama-tax they found 23 additional taxes within it. 'Oh, it's not a tax.' *Tax, tax, tax!* 'No, that's not a tax. *I'm reading the word t-a-x.* 'That's not a tax.' *I read it 23 times.* 'That's not a tax!'

"...your iniquities have come between you and your God, and your sins have hid *His* face from you, that He will not hear" (v 2). Now, brethren, you

never want to get in a place where God won't hear, but it's going to come for the people in the world. They're going to cry out to God. There won't be any answer.

The book of Jeremiah is quite an indictment. If you want a real education and Bible study, I've recommended this before but I'll recommend it now, read the book of Jeremiah all the way through. Read how God pleaded with the people. He said, 'Look, I'm going to send you off into captivity, but if you would honor the Sabbath, not work on the Sabbath—just the Sabbath—if you would do that, then I would guarantee that the kings of Judah and Jerusalem will ride on their chariots and horses.' But they couldn't do that. Here's exactly what the Protestants have done to the Truth of God.

Jeremiah wasn't liked, he was hated. He was from the city of Anathoth that was a Levitical city. The men of Anathoth wanted to kill Jeremiah because he told the truth. He told one false prophet, Hananiah, he said, 'Because you have given this false prophecy in the name of the Lord, and you have caused the people to trust in your words, you're going to die this year.' He died!

Right now this nation, and yea, even the Churches of God, they are right at a point, they better get serious with God because there comes a point of which the tipping point goes too far. Once you're past the tipping point and it's on the downslide, you can't put the brakes on it.

Jeremiah 7:1: "The Word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying, 'Stand in the gate of the LORD'S house...' (vs 1-2). Think of this. You go back and read all about how the temple was built by Solomon, what David did to provide it. What a wonderful thing it was the day it was dedicated and the Spirit of God and the Shekinah of God, the cloud, filled the temple. The priest couldn't even wait on things.

The trumpeters were trumpeting and the singers were singing. It was a magnificent day. They had seven days of dedication. Solomon was the chosen one of God, the son of David. They had all of the priests and all of their regalia, all of the soldiers, everything. It was a fantastic thing. All of Israel had seven days of dedication. They had so many burnt offerings that they had to put up extra altars for burnt offering, so people could eat and rejoice and be thankful that God was there.

Within less than 40 years Solomon turned his back on God, worshiped other gods, sacrificed to other gods, and the children of Israel rebelled and went back to Egyptian calf-worship. The Jews never learned the lesson that they should have from that. Let's see what they did in the name of the Lord at

the house of the Lord where God put His name and said He would dwell there forever.

Verse 2: “Stand in the gate of the LORD’S house, and proclaim there this Word, and say, ‘Hear the word of the LORD, all Judah, who enter in at these gates to worship the LORD.’” Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, ‘Amend your ways and your doings, and I will cause you to dwell in this place’” (vs 2-3).

- repent
- amend
- change
- stop
- don’t do it any longer

Verse 4: “Do not trust in lying words...” People do that. ‘We’re Americans! We’re Israelites! We’re standing in the temple of the Lord, nothing can go wrong at the temple of the Lord.’ You read in John 8 where all the Jews came to hear Jesus, some who believed in Him. But what were they doing? *They were following their father, Satan the devil, who is a liar!*

Verse 4: “Do not trust in lying words, saying, ‘The temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD *are* these.’” Listen, everybody that has a lucky charm, or the Catholics that put the rosary on their rearview mirror. If the temple of the Lord couldn’t protect these people, don’t think that your lucky superstitious charm is going to protect you or your rosary, because it’s an idol.

God says, v 5: “For if you thoroughly amend your ways and your doings; if you thoroughly execute judgment between a man and his neighbor; *If* you do not oppress the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, and do not shed innocent blood in this place, nor walk after other gods to your hurt; Then I will cause you to dwell in this place, in the land that I gave to your fathers, forever and ever” (vs 5-7).

God was extending repentance and mercy to them. But this is what we see everyday today around the world. How would you like to live in Damascus? Carnage! Bloodshed! Sickness! Disease! If nothing changes, soon famine. There will be no corn from America to rescue them.

Verse 8: “Behold, you trust in lying words that cannot profit.... [lawlessness is exalting lies and replacing the Word of God with those lies] ...Will you steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely, and burn incense to Baal, and walk after other gods whom you do not know; and then come and stand before Me in this house which is called by My name, and say, ‘We are delivered to do all these abominations?’” (vs 8-10). Who is the mother of

harlots and abominations? *Babylon the Great, that whole system:* religious, governmental, and financial.

Verse 11: “Has this house, which is called by My name, become a den of robbers in your eyes?” Think about what’s happened to America just this year, not counting what’s happened leading up to it. We’ve had: floods, drought, fire!

Think of all of those people who lived in those beautiful communities up in Colorado. ‘It’s so wonderful we have our house out here in this beautiful county and smell the fresh air and smell the pines. It’s so great to live here.’ *But none of them honor God!* Now their houses are ashes and dust, so it can come very quickly. It’s amazing how these things come.

(go to the next track)

Here is where God lays the responsibility. Jeremiah 23:1: “**Woe to the shepherds** who destroy and scatter the sheep of My pasture,’ says the LORD.” The shepherds include those who are feeding the flock, in other words the religious leaders. Also the governmental leaders are not excluded from it.

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 9: “As for the prophets my heart within me is broken; all my bones shake. I am like a drunken man, and like a man whom wine has overcome because of the LORD and because of the words of His holiness. For the land is full of adulterers....” (vs 9-10). There’s no such thing as privacy rights between individuals who are sinning against the Laws of God.

What we’re going to see is that *every sin has an effect* on first the person, the one who commits the sin; then on those associated with or friends of or husband/wife of the one who sins. Then the penalty comes upon them if it’s bad. Then it affects the whole society being the cities, the towns, the communities, the states, the nation.

As I read some of these things, this will help you understand why there are the difficulties taking place in the world and in America. Some of these things are going to be very difficult to overcome. Forests that have been burned down that are 100 year-old forests, they are not going to be replaced over night. Lives that have been ruined with drugs and adultery and things like this take a long time to recover. All of those of you who have been in families where there have been drug problems, and things like that, you know it affects everyone in the

family. It affects the whole community. It's not just the leaders. It's not just the ministers. God looks at everyone, everything.

Verse 10: "For the land is full of adulterers. Because of swearing, the land mourns... [not telling the truth] ...the pleasant places of the wilderness are dried up... [then they are burned down with a fire] ...and their course is evil, and they *wield* power unjustly." Is that not explaining nearly all the governments of this world?

The prime minister of Australia is a pretty strong woman, because she said three times to all the Muslims, 'You either live by our laws and you give up Sharia Law or you leave.' I'm sure that God will bless that country because she has enough honesty to stand up and speak the truth.

I did a Church at Home about repentance and how that God would hear anyone who would repent. I explained about the governor of Georgia when they had a drought two years ago where he publicly prayed to God for the forgiveness of the sins of the people of Georgia. They were down in some places to three days of water. *God heard and answered that prayer and sent the rain!* In 60 days all the reservoirs were full.

In bringing things out like this, this is not just to attack and castigate those who are at fault, but it is to show the cause and to bring about what God shows is the solution. *Amend your ways!* All that would have to happen in Washington, D.C., for things to get turned around would be for everyone quit their lying—*everyone!* But they are in so deep they would indict themselves if they quit.

Can you imagine the President standing up there really telling us who he is? Where he was born, where he went to school? Who taught him? That he really had an encounter with God and that he is repenting? He is asking Congress to 'send me a bill to repeal my Obama-tax? I'm getting rid of all of my czars? I'm never going to tell another lie about my opponent? I'm never going to lie to the American people again? I'm asking all of Congress to join me in repentance and we all agree to quit lying to the American people'? If that were sincere, God would honor that. So, that's the whole point in bringing these things out.

But here's the problem, v 11: "'For both prophet and priest are ungodly; yea, in My house I have found their evil,' says the LORD. 'So their way shall be to them as slippery ways in the darkness; they shall be driven on, and fall in *their way*; for I will bring evil on them, even the year of their judgment,' says the LORD" (vs 11-12).

Verse 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!".... [fulfill your lusts; do anything you want to do] ...For who has stood in the counsel of the LORD to see and hear His Word?...." (vs 16-18). Who? *Very few in the world! Hopefully all of us in the Churches of God!* But even some of them when you read Rev. 2 and 3 you see the difficulties they get themselves in when they invite the world's ways in.

"...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... [Notice this sentence:] **...in the latter days you shall understand it perfectly.** 'I have not sent these prophets, yet they ran; I have not spoken to them, yet they prophesied. But if... [Because God is no respecter of persons.] ...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 18-22).

God is right there ready to help. There is not a Protestant minister who could not get up in the pulpit and be honest with all of his parishioners and say, 'Brethren, we have taught lies. We're going to begin to repent by keeping the Sabbath Day. We're going to begin to repent by stop telling lies and following false doctrines. I urge everyone of you, if you're lying, if you're cheating, if you're stealing, if you're committing adultery, if you're taking drugs, if you're loaded down with alcoholism, since this whole church is changing and I'm going to lead the way,' the pastor ought to say. 'I will help you forsake those. But we must get right with God. We cannot go to God any longer and tell God: God, you get on our side because we're good people. No, *we have to repent and get on God's side.*'

They could do it. I don't know if a Catholic priest would be able to do it, but he could do it. That would be pretty hard, because he'd have to say, 'You know, we believed lies and we've been worshiping things instead of God. I'm going to instruct all the deacons, I know this is going to get me in trouble with the bishop, but I'm going to instruct all the deacons to take down all of the idols and crosses' remove all the candle prayers, no more fires in the candle prayers. Instead of preaching the traditions of men, we're going to teach the Word of

God and we're going to start keeping the Sabbath Day.'

Wouldn't that be something? God would honor that, without a doubt! Because God says, v 23: "'Am I a God Who is near,' says the LORD, 'and not a God afar off?... [He's close] ...Can anyone hide himself in secret places so that I shall not see him?'" says the LORD. 'Do I not fill the heavens and earth?' says the LORD.... [Yes, with His power, with His creation.] ...I have heard what the prophets said, who prophesy lies in My name, saying, "I have dreamed, I have dreamed." 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? 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'" (vs 23-27)—the sun-god.

If there's not repentance, then He says and this is to us, brethren, as well, the second part of it, v 28: "'The prophet who has a dream, let him tell a dream. And he who has My Word, let him speak My Word faithfully.'.... [Brethren, that's what we endeavor to do.] ...What *is* the chaff to the wheat?" says the LORD. 'Is not My Word like a fire?' says the LORD; 'and like a hammer *that* breaks the rock in pieces?" (vs 28-29).

Unless there's repentance God says, v 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).

We're getting down to that time here in this nation. We took God into the compact of our Declaration of Independence and Bill of Rights—didn't we? We pledged our name, our sacred honor, and our fortunes! You pledge that and that's for the whole country, coming on down to our time now. ***He's going to hold us accountable!***

Verse 34: "'And as for the prophet, and the priest, and the people, who shall say, "The oracle of the LORD," I will even punish that man and his house.'"

Let's see what we are to do in these cases. Here's the contrast. Here is what we are to do, Psalm 62:1: "Only for God does my soul wait in silence; from Him comes my salvation."

- We are *under grace!*
- We have been *called to salvation!*
- God has given us *His Spirit!*
- We have a *fellowship with God the Father and Jesus Christ* on a daily basis through prayer, study, meditation, and praying all the day long as we go about our day.

God is not only with us; *God is in us!* That is *great grace*. We hope that the people in Churches of God will learn that. The world isn't going to learn it.

Notice the singularity of what we are to do. Verse 2: "He only is my Rock and my salvation; He is my fortress; I shall not be greatly moved." God will watch over you and be with you. Then you can look out at the world. If the news gets so bad, put away your six-shooter and just turn it off.

Verse 3: "How long will you imagine mischief against a man? You shall be slain, all of you; you shall be like a bowing wall and as a tottering fence. They only consult to cast him down from his great height; they delight in lies; they bless with their mouth, but inwardly they curse.... [What do we do when we see that?] ...My soul, wait in silence for God alone; for from Him comes my hope" (vs 3-5). We're the hope of the world! That's why we're going to keep the Feast of Tabernacles.

Verse 6: "He only is my Rock and my salvation; He is my strong tower; I shall not be moved.... [God will give us the strength] ...In God is my salvation and my glory, the Rock of my strength; my refuge is in God. **Trust in Him** at all times, you people; **pour out your heart before Him**; God is a refuge for us. Selah" (vs 6-8).

See what happens when you get your mind on God and on Christ and on the Truth and on developing the character of God. You are called to become like God.

- the whole purpose of the New Testament
- the whole purpose of church
- the whole purpose of study
- the whole purpose of prayer

is so God can put in each one of us His Divine nature. Then at the resurrection when we come back to the earth we are going to rule the world. I guess in a way that makes us subversive to the governments of this world.

Then he takes a look back at man, v 9: "Surely men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree are a lie; when weighed in the balance, they are altogether lighter than vanity. Trust not in oppression, and do not take pride in stolen goods; if riches increase, do not set your heart upon them. God has spoken once; twice I have heard this: that power belongs to God. Also to You, O LORD,

belongs mercy; for You give to every man according to His work” (vs 9-12).

Now let’s see what else God has called us to do and to know the Truth. Let’s see what’s important for us, brethren. Let’s see what we are to be individually and let’s see what we are to be collectively.

1-Timothy 3:14: “These things I am writing to you, hoping to come to you shortly; but if I should delay, *you have these things in writing*, so that you may know how one is obligated to conduct oneself in *the* house of God, which is *the* Church of *the* living God, **the pillar and foundation of the Truth**” (vs 14-15). That’s what needs to be found in the Churches of God—pillar and foundation of Truth. That’s what God wants us to see:

- the Truth
- the love
- the character

Here’s what God wants us to focus on. Here has to be the purpose in our life on a daily basis, especially living in the world that we’re living in and seeing the things that are going on. This is the only way that you’re going to keep your sanity. Remember, there’s not too much you can do to change the greater world overall today. But you are going to help change it permanently at the beginning of the Millennium when Jesus sets up the Kingdom of God and we will rule and reign with Him.

2-Peter 1:1: “Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who have obtained *the* same precious faith as ours by the righteousness of our God and Savior, Jesus Christ: Grace and peace be multiplied to you...” (vs 1-2). That’s what we need in our lives. In the world, lawlessness is being multiplied. In our lives, we need the grace and peace of God to be multiplied in our relationship with God, in our relationship with each other, in the things that we are doing to preach to the world, to preach to the brethren, to help them in any way we can.

Verse 2: “Grace and peace be multiplied to you in *the* knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, according as His Divine power... [Think of this! This is what you have with the Holy Spirit of God, the power of God, it is the Divine power.] ...has given to us all things that *pertain* to life and Godliness... [everything else is below that] ...through the knowledge of Him Who called us by *His own* glory and virtue. Through which He has given to us the greatest and *most* precious promises...” (vs 2-4).

You want something in your life? You want something great in your life? How about having the greatest and most precious promises fulfilled in your

life? Yes, the world is given over to lawlessness, given over to lies, given over to deception, but when God looks down on this earth, can He see that

- we love Him?
- we want Him?
- we want His ways?

What is He going to give back to us? “...that through these you may become partakers of *the* Divine nature...” (v 4).

- No more human nature—*Godly nature!*
- No more sin—*righteousness!*
- No more self deception—*always Truth!*

“...having escaped the corruption *that is* in *the* world through lust. And for this very reason also, having applied all diligence besides, add to your faith...” (vs 4-5). Here is what we are to be busy doing day in and day out, everything that we set our hearts and mind on to do:

- Yes, we keep the Sabbath
- Yes, we keep the Holy Days
- Yes, we keep the commandments of God

But the love of God is the greatest! The love of God is the most important! The Divine power of God gives us the ability to grow in grace and knowledge and this way described by Peter.

“...add to your faith, virtue... [virtue is good behavior] ...and to virtue, knowledge... [all of this comes from God through His Spirit] ...and to knowledge, self-control...” (vs 5-6). God doesn’t want ministers ruling over you, He wants Christ ruling over you that you govern yourself

- with God’s Spirit
- with God’s laws
- with God’s Word within you

and you develop the self-control.

“...and to self-control, endurance... [that’s what it’s going to take in this wicked world] ...and to endurance, Godliness; and to Godliness, brotherly love; and to brotherly love, the love *of God*” (vs 6-7). All of these things build. What we need to become in our daily lives is what we just read here. That’s the only way we’re going to solve the problems of the world.

Here’s a promise. If you have any doubt, if you have any wavering. If you have things that you don’t know whether this is going to work or not, you get on your knees, you open your Bible right here, you read this and claim this promise:

Verse 8: “***For if these things exist and abound in you, they will cause you to be neither lacking effort nor lacking fruit in the knowledge***

of our Lord Jesus Christ. But the one in whom these things are not present is *spiritually* blind—so short-sighted *that* he has forgotten that he was purified from his old sins. For this reason, brethren, be even more diligent to make your calling and election sure; because **if you are doing these things, you will never fall at any time.** For in this way, you will be richly granted an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ” (vs 8-11).

Living in a lawless world, where lawlessness is multiplied, let these things be in us and let them be multiplied!

Scriptural References:

- 1) Matthew 24:10-12
- 2) Romans 6:14
- 3) Romans 7:1
- 4) Romans 3:19
- 5) Romans 6:14
- 6) Proverbs 31:1-5
- 7) Revelation 17:1-5
- 8) Isaiah 5:7-8, 11, 18-24
- 9) Isaiah 10:1-4
- 10) Isaiah 59:1-2
- 11) Jeremiah 7:1-11
- 12) Jeremiah 23:1-2, 9-12, 16-34
- 13) Psalm 62:1-12
- 14) 1-Timothy 3:14-15
- 15) 2-Peter 1:1-11

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Hebrews 10
- Revelation 12:9; 17:15; 2; 3
- John 8

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by Philip Neal

Christian Biblical Church of God Offices:

United States

Post Office Box 1442
Hollister, California 95024-1442

Canada

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