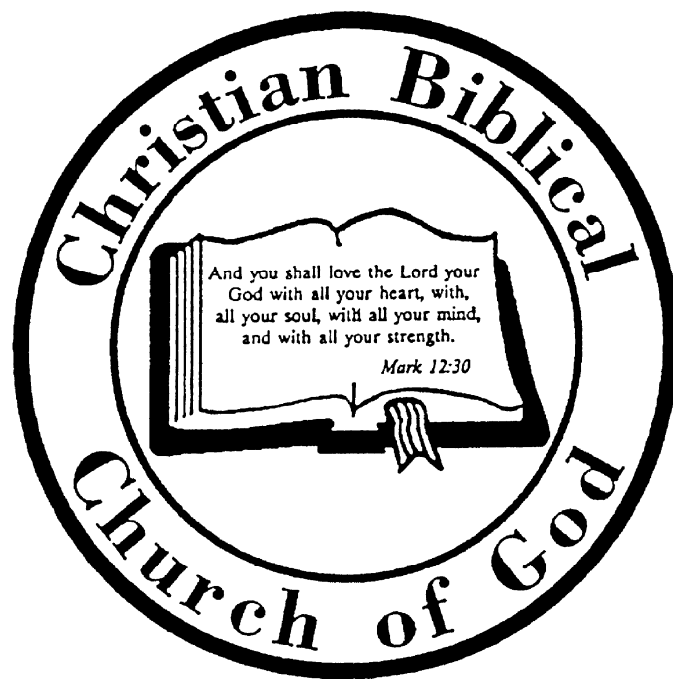


The Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews



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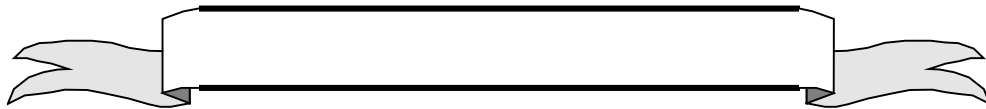
By Fred R. Coulter

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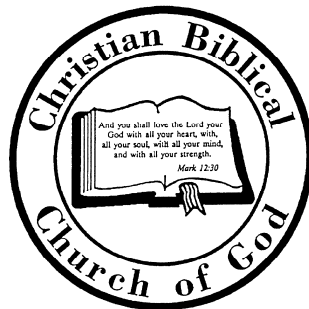
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Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews

Series of 41 sermons by Fred R. Coulter



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Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews

Foreword

This book contains forty-one transcripts of sermons going through each of the thirteen chapters in the Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews. The audio messages for all of the Hebrews Series are contained on three MP3 CDs that accompany this book. This combination of the book and the CDs are designed to help you develop a thorough understanding of the book of Hebrews. Using the transcripts while you listen to the audio message has shown to improve comprehension and memory as well as provide a convenient way of making personal notes.

It should be noted that this book is composed of sermons given throughout the years that used other study aids that are not part of this transcript book. When you read in the first chapter, page one, of Fred R. Coulter's translation being in nice large print with wide margins on both sides with a column reference, you will not find in this transcript of sermons his translation in that format. We encourage you to use The Holy Bible in Its Original Order—a Faithful Version as your study aid along with this book.

Additionally you find mentioned on page one of Fred R. Coulter's Bible translation of Hebrews being compared with the Authorized *KJV* Bible translation of Hebrews. Because of size constraints for this transcript book this was not included. You will find a few other things mentioned that were originally found in the four section study of the book of Hebrews that is not found in this present printing.

Upon finishing this book of sermon transcripts you will find that the book of Hebrews is thoroughly covered in great detail with much thought having been given to each verse. You will find that much of the book of Hebrews is covered in other books of the Bible, not only in other e books of the New Testament but also in many of the books of the Old Testament. You will find that you now have a greater understanding of what the Apostle Paul was teaching in Hebrews, and that God expects one to live their lives out fulfilling God's Word. The sound understanding that comes from taking time to study this book in depth will greatly enhance your personal relationship with God the Father and God the Son.

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

The Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews I

Why Hebrews was Written & Who Wrote It

Fred R. Coulter

We're going to start this series, and when we finish, we're done. How many sermons that will be, that's what it's going to be. And we're going to find that the book of Hebrews is a very powerful and very unusual book. So, we're going to begin by doing a little background.

First of all, we have *The Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews, A Precise Translation*; you'll see it's in a nice large print, wide margin on both sides, and it has a column reference. If you turn to two opposing pages you will see that you have the marginal reference for each page. This gives plenty of room for making notes.

The next section is a comparison between my translation and the *King James* translation. So we have that side by side. Then the third section is *Special Word Studies in the Epistle to the Hebrews*. It starts out with angels, and it's a good extensive study; covers all the major things in the book of Hebrews. Then we come to the fourth section, and the fourth section is the *Interlinear Greek-English New Testament* by George Ricker Berry. We just enlarged the print of that and included it in here.

This way you have a complete reference all in one: you have the amplified translation that I did, you have the side-by-side with the *King James*, then you have the Interlinear which gives you all of the Greek and the English translation below it of George Ricker Berry; plus you also have another *King James Version* in the columns with it. So, this gives you a *complete study guide*.

Before we begin, let me just mention that we've already done the series in Romans and Galatians, in particularly the one on *The Circumcision Wars*. When we finish the book of Hebrews we will have the three difficult to understand Epistles of the Apostle Paul all done with the translation, with word studies, with the side-by-side, and so forth. {note the Transcript Books for each of these series on the Epistles of Paul} It would really be nice for people who are really serious in their Bible study with the *Seven General Epistles*. And you can have a verse-by-verse, in-depth study going through each one of the difficult Epistles of Paul.

The reason that I started doing the translation, I just might mention, is not because I said, 'Oh, Fred, you're so smart you ought to do a translation.' *No!* You all know how it started. When we got done with the Gospel of John and I went

through and explained what the *King James* endings of the words meant:

- 'eth' means *present tense participle*
- 'th' means a *present tense verb*

Then we discussed it with everyone at that time, and we decided to go through *The Seven General Epistles*. I said I'm really tired of explaining what the *King James* means, separate from the Greek. How about if I just do a translation and we have a study translation, and we go through it verse-by-verse?

As you remember, we started out with James, and then 1st & 2nd Peter, 1st, 2nd, and 3rd John, and Jude. We've got that all compiled in a book called *The Seven General Epistles*.

Now let me just say this, that there is a great debate concerning who wrote the book of Hebrews. It doesn't start out like the other Epistles of Paul. Let's look at one of them. Ephesians, for example, this is how Paul starts out almost all of his epistles:

Ephesians 1:1: "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the saints who are in Ephesus and to the faithful in Christ Jesus: Grace and peace be to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ" (vs 1-2).

That's what you might call a fairly standard opening that Paul has for every one of his epistles. Let's look at the first part of Hebrews, and let's see that it doesn't start out that way. We'll see the reason why in a little bit.

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." Nowhere does this say through the entirety of the Epistle of Hebrews that, 'I, Paul, wrote this...' like he did in:

Galatians 6:11: "See with what large letters I have written to you with my *own* hand." Those who claim to be the experts say:

- Paul did not write this because it's not his style
- maybe Apollos wrote this, because it has the highest level of Greek of all of the New Testament books that we have
- it was known in the days of Clement, because he mentions it in his letter to the Corinthians
- maybe Luke wrote it
- maybe Timothy wrote it

So, they don't know who wrote it. We'll go through and show you why it has to come from Paul.

This is really not a traditional epistle—a letter. This is not a letter. There are only just a few features similar to a letter, which we find going here; this gives us a clue:

Hebrews 13:23: “*I want you to know that our brother Timothy has been released; with whom, if he comes soon enough, I will see you.*” Or “If Timothy sees you and comes back to me, that’s good enough as if I have seen you.” Timothy was with the Apostle Paul! Timothy was also in prison with him. He’s released, then it says:

Verse 24: “Greet all your leaders and all the saints. Those from Italy send greetings to you. *May God’s grace be with all of you. Amen*” (vs 24-25).

This is the only part of it that is in letter form; in other words, personal rather than a sermon. The whole book of Hebrews is *a sermon*. It is not an epistle, therefore, the style is different.

Now notice the ending, v 25: “*May God’s grace be with all of you. Amen*”—To the Hebrews, written from Italy, **delivered by Timothy.** He carried it. It doesn’t mean that he wrote it. Let me just give you something that I feel is strong evidence that Paul wrote Hebrews. Having translated 1st & 2nd Cor., as well as all the other Epistles of Paul, but in particularly 1st & 2nd Cor., the style in the both 2-Cor. and Heb. is very similar in the Greek.

Let’s read the note right at the end of 2-Corinthians. “The second *epistle* to the Corinthians written from Philippi of Macedonia, by Titus and Luke.”

Paul wrote it, but Luke probably edited it. After all, Luke wrote the book of Luke and the book of Acts, and this was under the Apostle Paul. Not only did Paul have fourteen epistles in the New Testament, he is also responsible for the book of Luke and the book of Acts. You see many similarities in the Greek, especially in 2-Cor., and we will see the preaching of Paul in the book of Acts. Saying this could not be Paul’s writing because it’s not his style is incorrect to say. There is a writing style and there is a preaching style. The preaching style is different from the writing style. So, you could say that it’s not from the same person.

Over time, has my style of teaching modified, and changed? *Yes!* Over time has my style of writing changed? *Yes!* You could probably go back and get something that I wrote in 1981 and read that, and then get something that I have written today and you would say it’s similar, but it’s not the same style, so it can’t be the same author. We have the same situation with Paul. Not all writing is the

same. When you take notes on a sermon, is that like writing a letter? *No!* It has nothing to do with a letter. That’s why Hebrews is different; this is Paul’s *sermon*.

Now, let’s look at a couple of things that are important here that we need to understand. Most of the scholars say that Hebrews was written between 60 and 70 A.D., and in that they are fairly correct. We need to understand something, that James, who was the apostle at Jerusalem. He was martyred by the Zealots in 63 A.D. So, this book of Hebrews, as we will see a little later, had to also go to Jerusalem. It doesn’t mention James. Since it doesn’t mention James, could it be that James was already martyred and this was written after 63 A.D.? We’ll answer that question a little bit later.

Hebrews 11:32: “Now, what more can I say?....” Who is the *I*? Everyone understood who it was then. If there was anything that the Apostle Paul put his signature on, or identified in whatever he wrote that it came from Paul, going to Jerusalem, do you think it would have survived? *The way the Jews looked at Paul they would have burned it on arrival*, in my opinion.

Let’s look at another one where it talks about *I*; “...what more can I say?....”

Hebrews 13:19: “Now, I am earnestly exhorting *you* to do this more diligently that I may be sent back to you more quickly.”

Obviously, Paul was not going to go back to Jerusalem because he was run out of town. But the book of Hebrews was written to go to *every* congregation and every congregation that had converted Jews. They were all Greek-speaking. So is Paul’s saying:

“...that I may be sent back to you more quickly.” Timothy—who hand-carried it—would have told them that he’s coming back to wherever that place may be. So, it doesn’t tell us; this becomes a mystery to the scholars.

Just putting it together, I’m going to say that it is my *educated opinion* that this is a very refined sermon that Paul preached over and over again. Then it was added to, because of the condition of the Church overall. I think, he dictated it to Luke; I think that Luke wrote it—because it’s very similar to 2-Cor., and Acts in particularly—and Timothy was the one who delivered it. I suspect that Timothy brought it back to Antioch, because Antioch was the home base for the Apostle Paul. Remember that? And he wrote it while he was in his first imprisonment and made sure that it was sent to all the Churches.

Here is who it has been written to: to all the Churches, and especially to where there was the

Greek-speaking Jewish community, or the Diaspora. The reason being is that all of the Scriptural quotes from the Old Testament taken out of Psalms and taken out of the Law come from the Septuagint word for word. Those parts of the Septuagint are still accurate. Some of the historical things, because of what Jerome and different other ones did to the Septuagint, have messed up the historical chronologies. But at least the Law and the Psalms are very accurate. This is important to understand, because this is the way that Paul could get this out to everyone.

There's one other thing that's also important to understand in getting this out. There came a time when the only way for Paul to preach and to get it across was that he did not identify that it came from himself.

2-Timothy was written from his second imprisonment just before he was martyred. 2-Timothy 1:12: "For which cause I am also suffering these things; nevertheless, I am not ashamed. For I know Whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He has the power to keep what I have committed to *Him* for that day. Hold *as the standard for doctrine* the sound words that you heard from me, in *the* faith and love that *are* in Christ Jesus. Guard the good thing that was committed *to you* by *the* Holy Spirit that is dwelling in us. You know this, that all those who *are* in Asia have rejected me..." (vs 12-15).

If they're turned away from the Apostle Paul, how is he going to get something to them, in the way of something written or in the way of a warning? *By not identifying himself!* Send it in the form of a sermon with exhortation and admonition. Do not send it in the way of an epistle. Now this was toward the close of his ministry.

Why the book of Hebrews was written:

1. it was for the Greek-speaking church containing the Jews and the Greek-speaking Gentiles

All of the quotes are taken from the Septuagint. Meaning that *they had the Septuagint Bible there as a guide* that they used for the Old Testament.

2. it was written for the Jews at Jerusalem

as well as the different churches that were rejecting Paul. In Jerusalem they spoke the two languages: Greek and Hebrew.

Let's see the situation concerning Paul. You know how Paul started out when he was Saul. He was persecuting the Church. He was getting letters to take people to the high priest, bind them in chains, and take them there. When we come to Acts 21 we find the whole table—after the conversion of Paul—

has been turned on him. The Jews who were cheering him on as Saul to get rid of the Christians were now disillusioned that he became a Christian and an apostle. The Jews had their mossad out to try and get Paul in many different places in Asia, and so forth, as he was traveling.

Now then, when it comes to the Jews in Jerusalem, there's a second problem: circumcision, the offerings at the temple, and the vows, and things like this. So, Paul said he was bound in the Spirit to go to Jerusalem. He knew that everywhere he went the Holy Spirit said that he was going to have trouble, but nevertheless he went.

Acts 21:17: "Now, when we arrived in Jerusalem, the brethren gladly received us. And on the following *day*, Paul went with us..." (vs 17-18). This is Luke writing. Luke went with him, and probably Timothy, too.

"...to *see* James... [there is the 'head apostle' as it were, in Jerusalem; this is the brother of the Lord] ...and all the elders *were* assembled" (v 18).

The reason that they had a lot trouble—as we covered in *The Circumcision Wars* in the sermon series on the Epistle of Galatians—from those who came down from James and so forth, was when you were in Jerusalem and you're only dealing with Jews, and you set it up just like the Jews did; that's what James did. He had a little Sanhedrin, or council of elders. So, let's see what happens, and here's where I say that politics entered into it. Here is where the mistake was made of *looking to numbers* rather than God, and that's why Paul was sent there to give the witness, because no one else would give the witness.

Verse 19: "And after greeting them, he reported one by one the things that God had worked among the Gentiles through his ministry. And when they heard *this*, they glorified the Lord. Then they said to him, 'Brother, you see how many thousands of Jews there are who believe, and they are all zealous of the law *of rituals*.'" (vs 19-20).

We're going to see that their belief was not based and rooted *in faith*, as it should have been. Remember, we have learned many times over, it's one thing to say you believe in Christ; it's another thing to actually live by that, because you actually believe it. ***If they really believed***, would they try and kill Paul? ***If they really believed***, would they give up on Christ as the Passover lamb and go back to the 'paschal lamb,' which we'll see there indications of in Heb. 6? *No, they wouldn't!*

Verse 21: "But they have been informed that you are teaching all *the* Jews who are among the Gentiles to apostatize from Moses..." Remember in

The Circumcision Wars, the Jewish interpretation, as led by the Pharisees in Jerusalem, was that the Law of Moses was interpreted by their method of doing so. No, he did not teach the Jews to forsake Moses.

“...telling them not to circumcise their children...” (v 21). Paul never said that. Nowhere is it recorded. He did say that circumcision is not required for salvation (Rom. 2). That was the problem, as we saw in the book of Galatians with the circumcision wars.

“...nor to walk after the **customs**” (v 21). There’s the key: *the traditions*. Even Jesus didn’t want the apostles following the customs or the traditions.

But when you get into a situation, and you can see all the pressures that would be coming from the Jews of Judaism against the Church, and you know for sure that in Jerusalem they could not preach against circumcision as a means of salvation, they had a great problem with that. So, here’s a political solution, which backfired. And **God intended the political solution to backfire**, because this was a witness. We will see that the book of Hebrews carries through this witness.

I suspect that the book of Hebrews was written during Paul’s first imprisonment, reflecting back upon what happened here in Jerusalem. In order to give them a warning, and in order to bring them to Christ in faith, that’s why it is so loaded—the whole book of Hebrews—having to do with the history and God’s working with:

- Israel
- Abraham
- the Old Covenant
- the temple
- the priesthood

Verse 22: “What then is going to happen? A multitude is going to assemble, for they will hear that you have come.... [you’re in Jerusalem] ...Therefore, do this that we tell you: there are four men with us who have a vow on themselves; take these and be purified with them, and pay their expenses, so that they may shave *their* heads; and everyone will know that what they have been informed about you is nothing, and that you yourself also are walking orderly *and* keeping the law of *rituals*. But concerning the Gentiles who believe, we wrote *to them* after deciding *that* they do not have to observe any such thing, except to keep themselves from things that are offered to idols, and *from* blood, and *from* what is strangled, and *from* sexual immorality” (vs 22-25).

Paul goes along with it, v 26: “Then Paul took the men, *and* on the next day he was purified

with them *and* went into the temple, signifying the fulfillment of the days of purification, until each of them had offered *his* offering. But when the seven days were about to be completed, the Jews from Asia, who had seen him in the temple, stirred up all the multitude; and they laid *their* hands on him” (vs 26-27).

These were the Jews who were after him. You go through the book of Acts and see how he was chased by the Jews from city to city.

Verse 28: “Crying out, ‘Men of Israel, help! This is the man... [We got him!] ...who is teaching everyone everywhere against the people... [Jews] ...and the law and this place...’”

Remember what happened when Stephen was martyred? He said, ‘God does not dwell in temples made with hands.’ They wanted to preserve that temple, because that temple gave them power. That temple gave them institutionalization.

“...and furthermore, he has also brought Greeks into the temple, and has defiled this Holy place.’ For they had previously seen Trophimus, the Ephesian, in the city with him, *and* they supposed that Paul had brought him into the temple” (vs 28-29). *No, he didn’t!* No different than today. Division is caused by *disinformation! Rumors! Lies!*

Verse 30: “And the whole city was stirred up, and the people ran together ...” Here is almost a riot. I mean, when you watch the news about the riots in Italy because of the G-8 meetings, just think of this that they are rioting against Paul.

“...and they took hold of Paul *and* drew him outside the temple, and the doors were immediately shut.... [he was contaminating it] ...But as they were attempting to kill him, a report came to the chief captain of the band that all Jerusalem was in an uproar” (vs 30-31).

Where was Fort Antonia? *Right next to the temple!* So, this is why the Roman soldiers were so close at hand and they could get down there right away.

Verse 32: “*And* he immediately took soldiers and centurions with *him and* ran down to them. And when they saw the chief captain and the soldiers, they stopped beating Paul. Then the chief captain came up *and* laid hold of him, and commanded that he be bound with two chains; and he inquired who he might be, and what he had been doing. But some in the multitude were crying one thing, and some another. When he was not able to determine the facts because of the uproar, he commanded him to be brought into the fortress.... [into Fort Antonia] ...Now, when he came upon the stairs, it happened *that* he was being carried by the soldiers because of

the violence of the multitude” (vs 32-35). In other words, the soldiers had to take him and escort him out.

Verse 36: “for the multitude of people followed, shouting, ‘Away with him!’ And when he was about to be brought into the fortress, Paul said to the chief captain, ‘Is it permissible for me to say something to you?’ And he said, ‘Do you know Greek? Are not you the Egyptian who previously caused confusion and led into the desert four thousand men who were murderers?’ But Paul said, ‘I am a man *who is* indeed a Jew, a citizen of Cilicia from Tarsus, which is no insignificant city. I beseech you, allow me to speak to the people.’ And after receiving permission from him, Paul stood on the stairs *and* motioned with his hand to the people; and when there was great silence, he spoke to *them* in the Hebrew language, saying” (vs 36-40).

He gives the whole background; how he studied at the feet of Gamaliel; how that he was called, and about the martyrdom of Stephen (v 20).

Acts 22:21: “But He [God] said to me, ‘Go, for I am sending you afar off to the Gentiles.’ And they listened until they *heard* him say this; then they lifted up their voices, saying, ‘Away with such a one from the *face* of the earth...’” (vs 21-22).

As soon as he mentioned the Gentiles, that was it! That’s why, even with those who believed at Jerusalem, if Paul had his name anywhere identified with the book of Hebrews, it would have never gotten into them, to be read or studied by them as a final witness before the destruction of the temple.

“...‘Away with such a one from the *face* of the earth, for he is not fit to live!’ And as they were shouting and casting off *their* garments and throwing dust into the air” (vs 22-23).

I mean, this was quite a scene going on. When you watch the news in the Middle East you can see the same thing going on. *Nothing has changed, for 2,000 years!* Today in so-called Israel, if you believe in Jesus Christ you must leave the country, even if you are a circumcised Jew. That’s something! Then the captain took him up and found out he was a Roman. I think it was that night, or the next night, you can read it, he had to have a special night escort to convey him down to Caesarea and get him out of Jerusalem.

3. Heb. was written was for all Gentile converts, so that they could understand the things of the Law, which they should keep and should not keep

You can read in *A Harmony of the Gospels* what I wrote there concerning the fulfilling of the Law by Christ—completion of the sacrifices, and so forth—

so they would know. Now they could no longer be subverted by those Jews who would come along and try to convert them either back to Judaism, or a Judaism form of Christianity.

4. the purpose of this epistle was to explain in great technical detail that the covenant with Jesus Christ is the *true, superior, spiritual* Covenant, and to show the *true spiritual worship*

Hebrews 8:6: “But on the other hand, He... [Christ—the heavenly High Priest] ...has obtained a *supremely* more excellent ministry, as much greater as the superior covenant of which He is also Mediator, which was established upon superior promises. For if the first *covenant* had been faultless, *then* no provision for a second *covenant* would have been made. But since He found fault with them, He says, ‘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. ‘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, and I will inscribe them upon their hearts; and I will be their God, and they will be My people’” (vs 6-10).

So, this is to fully explain the New Covenant, that it is *far* superior to the first covenant, and the earthly sanctuary, and the offering of sacrifices. The only one who could have written that in this great a detail could have been the Apostle Paul. Because he was a Pharisee; studied all of Judaism, and he knew all about the rituals and everything at the temple. Plus, he was taught three and a half years personally by Christ in the Arabian desert.

The one most qualified to understand about the technicalities of the temple and everything was the Apostle Paul. Heb. 10:16 shows the covenant. Throughout this he is showing the *superiority* of the New Covenant. I want you to really think and understand that if Paul would have had his name on this, and had it gone to all the Jews and into Jerusalem, they would surely say, ‘You’re writing against Moses.’ But what he was doing was not writing against Moses. He was explaining the New Covenant and preparing the way for them, so that they would understand what they needed to do after the temple is destroyed.

Hebrews 10:16: “‘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).

Isn't it interesting that here in this particular location he does not put in there 'the house of Israel/the house of Judah'? So, what he is doing by not having that there in this quotation, he is establishing that this is also going out to the Gentiles.

(go to the next track)

Hebrews 13:8—again, showing Christ is the Head: “Jesus Christ *is* the same yesterday, and today, and forever. Do not be carried about by all kinds of strange doctrines. For *it is* good *for* the heart to be confirmed by grace *and* not *by* foods, which have brought no *spiritual* benefit to those who have been preoccupied *with them*. We have an altar from which those who are serving the *present earthly* tabernacle do not have authority to eat; for *pertaining to* those animals whose blood is brought into the Holy places by the high priest for *a sin offering*, the bodies of all these are burned outside the camp” (vs 8-11)—over on the Mount of Olives, at the Miphkad altar, right near where Jesus was crucified.

Verse 12: “For this reason, Jesus, in order that He might sanctify the people by His own blood, also suffered outside the gate. So then, let us go forward to Him outside the camp, bearing His reproach. For we do not have a continuing city here *on earth*; rather, we are seeking the one that is coming” (12-14). He was preparing them for the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem.

5. Hebrews was written to brethren who have been in the church a long time, and to second generation Christians who were slipping away

Sound familiar? When we come to understand it in today's terminology, ***the book of Hebrews is written for the Laodicean***, because they got so wrapped up in *their own ways*. I gave a sermon on *The Stages of Apostasy*; they were institutionalized and culturalized. Once they had the culture that they had arrived, they became comfortable and complacent. That's exactly what happened to the Christians at this particular time.

We're doing a little survey, going through and picking up all the reasons why the book was written.

Hebrews 2:1: “For this reason, it is imperative that we give much greater attention to the things, *which* we have heard, lest at any time we should slip away.” And that's what's so important.

6. Paul was telling them to ***take advantage of the time today to get right with God***,

and preparing them for the coming martyrdom; especially at Jerusalem.

So again, he's warning them! And you will see that progressively he gets stronger—from Heb. 1-3 and down on into chapter 4—in admonishing them to watch out for themselves.

Hebrews 3:7: “For this reason, even as the Holy Spirit says, ‘Today, if you will hear His voice.’” Brethren, that message is alive and real for us today. That's for us, because there are many, many brethren and ministers who today ***will not hear*** the voice of God.

Verse 8: “...‘Today, if you will hear His voice, harden not your heart...’” If you harden your heart then you're going to apostatize, and you're going to commit the unpardonable sin, which is discussed in great detail in Heb. 6.

“...as in the rebellion, in the day of temptation in the wilderness” (v 8). What did they do? What was the rebellion?

- **First rebellion:** *they set up the golden calves*
- **Second rebellion:** ‘God says we're ready to go into the Holy Land,’ and they said, ‘Oh, we don't want to go!’

Can you imagine, after spending two years in the desert, you say you don't want to go in? You talk about a rebellion. God said, ‘All right. Since you accuse Me of bringing you out here to kill your children, everyone that is over 20-years-old is going to die in the wilderness, and your carcasses are going to be strewn across this desert, and the children that you said I was going to kill are going into the land. And you are going to wander a total of 40 years’—a year for every day that they spied out the land.

Verse 8: “‘Harden not your heart... [v 9]: where your fathers tempted Me *and* tried Me, and saw My works forty years. Because of this, I was indignant with that generation, and said, ‘They are always going astray in their hearts, and they have not known My ways.’” So, I swore in My wrath, “‘If they shall enter into My rest—’” (vs 8-11). Notice that dash there. That is an incomplete sentence. To enter into the Kingdom of God is conditional; not upon God, but upon *us*. God is not variable in His behavior. We're the ones that have problems.

Verse 12: “Beware, brethren, lest perhaps there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in apostatizing from *the* living God.” So, this is a powerful warning here, brethren. I mean, it's something! I think the Apostle Paul was given the understanding by God what was coming. God inspired him to write this epistle this way, in a sermon form, so it would get to everyone in

Jerusalem and all the Jews in the Diaspora who were believers, as well as all of the Gentiles.

Verse 13: “Rather, be encouraging one another each day, while it is called ‘today,’ so that none of you become hardened by *the* deceitfulness of sin.”

That’s why you’ve heard me say in the past many, many times: *Today is what counts!* Yesterday is already over. Whether you did good, or whether you did evil, *that’s yesterday*. If you did good, *wonderful*. If you sinned and did evil, *repent*. Today, make today a good day whatever day *today* is, because we are always living in the present. We never live in the past, because that’s over. And we cannot live in the future, because it hasn’t arrived—every day! That’s why we have the model daily prayer: ‘Give us this day our daily bread; forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.’ Daily, while it is today.

Hebrews 4:3: “For we who have believed, we ourselves are entering into the rest, as He has said, ‘So, I swore in My wrath, “If they shall enter into My rest—”’ although the works were finished from *the* foundation of *the* world. For He spoke in a certain place about the seventh *day* in this manner: ‘And God rested on the seventh day from all His works’; And again concerning this: ‘If they shall enter into My rest—’” (vs 3-5).

Verse 7: “Again, He marks out a certain day, ‘Today,’ saying in David after so long a time (exactly as it has been quoted *above*), ‘Today, if you will hear His voice, harden not your hearts.’” When we come to Heb. 4 we’ll go into a full detailed thing concerning the Sabbath.

Hebrews 5:11: “Concerning Whom we *have* much to say and hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing. For truly, by this time you ought to be teachers, *but instead* you need to have *someone* teach you again what *are* the beginning principles of the oracles of God, and have become those in need of milk, and not of solid food” (vs 11-12).

Has that happened in the Church of God today? *Yes, indeed!* I mean, even if you give them some milk with just a few big hunks of meat in it, they almost choke. So, there’s the warning again.

Hebrews 6:1: “Therefore, advancing beyond the beginning principles of the doctrines of Christ, we should go on to perfection...” That’s what God wants to do today with the saints. He wants to perfect them.

Why does He want to perfect them? *Because God is the only one Who can qualify you for the Kingdom of God!* You have your part to do, but you must be yielded into the hands of God and the Spirit

of God to let Him work the work in you to be perfected. You can’t just stick with the basics. You will never get a college education by staying in the third grade!

Verse 10: “For God *is* not unrighteous to forget your work, and the labor of love *by* which you have showed *honor* to His name, *in that* you have served the saints and are *continuing* to serve *them*. But we earnestly desire that every one of you be demonstrating the same diligence, unto the full assurance of the hope until *the* end” (vs 10-11).

God has impressed upon my mind, brethren, while we have peace, while we have safety, while we have security:

- grow
- study
- learn
- overcome

It’s going to be just like back then. *The day is coming when you’re not going to be able to!* Remember the parable of the ten virgins? *Five wise/ five foolish!* The five wise prepared; the foolish didn’t. The foolish came to the wise and said, ‘Give us of your oil.’ And they said, ‘We can’t. You go to them that sell and buy.’ You can’t take what God has given to you through the process of conversion and developing Godly character in you and transfer it to someone, just like you jump-start batteries. *Never happen!* That parable is showing, you’ve got to do the things you need to do. Paul is saying the same thing here.

Verse 12: “So that you do not become lazy, but *that you be* imitators of those who through faith and steadfast endurance inherit the promises.”

Admonishing them to improve their faith; admonishing them to not slip away; and giving some very strong warnings.

Hebrews 10:21 “And *having* a great High Priest over the house of God.” Not the temple in Jerusalem on the earth, but over the house of God in heaven above.

Verse 22: “Let us approach *God* with a true heart, with full conviction of faith, our hearts having been purified from a wicked conscience...”

There are a lot of people out there who are weak today. If they have to face tough times and martyrdom, they better start getting strong right now, because coming upon *the temptation of the whole world* is the *mark of the beast*. If you are lazy, if you are sluggish, if you do not have a relationship with God, and you are concerned about the physical things when they tell you, ‘Well look, it’s really just a simple thing. If you love your family and want to provide for them, then go ahead and get this little

chip in your right hand or in your forehead, and everything will be fine. You can take care of them.' It will be so tempting. And if they have a weak conscience, I fear for them.

Verse 23: "Let us hold fast without wavering *to the hope that we profess*, for He Who promised *is faithful*; and let us be concerned about one another, and *be stirring up one another* unto love and good works; not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, even as some *are* accustomed to do; but rather, encouraging *one another*, and all *the more* as you see the day drawing near. **For if we willfully go on sinning after receiving the knowledge of the Truth, there is no longer any sacrifice for sins**, but a terrifying expectation of inevitable judgment and of fierce fire, which will devour the adversaries *of God*" (vs 23-27).

That's strong language! Those out there who are pure Laodiceans, you better listen! You can say all you want to; you can accuse me or others of being harsh and hard-hearted; you can accuse God of being not a God of love. But let me say this: ***If you turn down what God has given you, you have no recourse!*** So, you better think it through, and you better turn to God, and you better not be looking to men to justify your lukewarm behavior, because *men don't please you!*

I'll tell you one thing, the Apostle Paul said 'If I please men, I would not yet please God.' And that's the same thing that I'm going to do, brethren. God is no respecter of persons, and we are not going to have a respecter of persons and politics, and play little mickey-mouse religion, nicey-nicey, patsy-hands. This is it *for real*, and if you don't understand that at this point, then you better get busy because you have need of milk. You better at least find yourself some good spiritual Gerber's ground-up food that you may be able to slurp down without choking so you can get enough strength to understand what Christ is doing.

Heb. 11 is all about faith, what every one of them had to do; how he is preparing them for the coming martyrdom, to stand strong.

Hebrews 11:33: "Who by faith were victorious over kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, shut *the* mouths of lions, quenched *the* fury of fire... [like Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego] ...escaped *the* edge of the sword, were strengthened from weakness, became mighty in war, *and* turned back the armies of foreigners. Women received their dead restored to life; and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a superior resurrection; and others endured *the* trial of *cruel* mocking and scourging; yes, and moreover, of chains and imprisonment. They were stoned to

death, they were sawed in two, they were *brutally* interrogated, *and* slaughtered by *the* sword. They went about in sheepskins *and* in goatskins, being destitute, oppressed, *and* ill-treated..." (vs 33-37).

Verse 38: "Of whom the world was not worthy; they wandered in deserts and in mountains, *living* in caves and in holes in the earth. But these all, *though* they had received a good report through faith, did not obtain the promise, *because* God had determined in advance to provide something superior for us so that without us they would not be made perfect" (38-40).

Hebrews 12:1: "Therefore, *since* we are surrounded by such a great throng of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin that so easily entraps *us*; *and* let us run the race set before us with endurance, having *our minds* fixed on Jesus, the Beginner and Finisher of *our* faith... [there's the solution] ...Who for the joy that lay ahead of Him endured *the* cross, *although* He despised *the* shame, and has sat down at *the* right hand of the throne of God. Now meditate deeply on Him Who endured such great hostility of sinners against Himself so that you do not become weary and faint in your minds" (vs 1-3).

There are a lot of people out there who are weary and discouraged because they just look to themselves, and they just look to their little ole problems, and then they begin accusing God, and saying, 'O God, why are these things happening to me?' ***They're happening because you're not looking to Christ, and you are not drawing close to God!***

Verse 4: "You have not yet resisted to the point of *losing* blood in your struggle against sin." Then it talks a good deal about correction.

Verse 26: "Whose voice then shook the earth, but now He has promised, saying, 'Yet, once more I will shake not only the earth, but heaven also.'"

Remember, there's a time coming on this earth that is called the Great Tribulation, which is going to be so awful that there has never been a time like it from the beginning of the world. I don't know how we can better prepare ourselves than to stay close to God the Father and Jesus Christ, and—*while we have the time*—to really get about, as Jesus said, 'My Father's business.'

Verse 27: "Now the *words* 'once more' signify the removing of the *things* being shaken, as of things that were made, so that those *things*, which cannot be shaken may remain. Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us have grace, through which we may serve God in a

pleasing *manner* with reverence and awe; for our God *is* indeed a consuming fire” (vs 27-29).

Hebrews 13:5: “*Do not allow the love of money to influence your behavior, but be satisfied with what you have; for He has said, ‘In no way will I ever leave you; no—I will never forsake you in any way.’*” He is saying this because he knew that they had tough times ahead. But he’s also saying this because some of them were slipping away and figuring that Christ was forsaking them, rather than they were forsaking Christ.

Verse 6: “So then, let us boldly say, ‘*The Lord is my Helper, and I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?*’”

Verse 22—here’s how serious the situation was: “Now I admonish you, brethren, to **patiently listen to this message of exhortation**, for I have written to you in only a few words.”

I like that. And this has to reflect the Apostle Paul, because remember how many times he was speaking for hours and hours, especially in Acts 20, where he talked all day and all night, and this poor guy was up on the third loft, and he finally went to sleep and fell down. Then after Paul was sure that he was alive, he got back up, had something to eat, and continued until sunrise. That’s why he is saying, ‘Look, this is just a few words.’ For indeed, yes, it is just a few words.

Look at the style in which this was written. We’ll just look at Heb. 1. We’re just going to look at style. We’ll come back to it and we’ll go through it in detail.

Hebrews 1:1: “God...” He starts out there. He wants to get their attention, that they have to look to God. And this is the whole thing that goes through the whole book.

“...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 ages; 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*; having been made so much greater than *any of the angels*, inasmuch as He has inherited a name exceedingly superior to them. For to which of the angels did He ever say...” (vs 1-5).

Now notice the *quoting of the Scripture* here. This is the thing we want to pick up, *the style of the quoting of the Scriptures*. Then we will go back to Acts 13 and we will analyze Paul’s sermon that he gave in Acts 13, and you will see the style is

exactly the same.

Verse 5: “For to which of the angels did He ever say, ‘You are My Son; this day I have begotten You’? And again, ‘**I will be a Father to Him, and He will be a Son to Me**’? And again, when He brought the Firstborn into the world, He said, ‘**Let all the angels of God worship Him.**’ Now on the one hand, of the angels He says, ‘**Who makes His angels spirits, and His ministers a flame of fire.**’.... [Psa. 104:4] ...But on the other hand, of the Son *He says*, ‘Your throne, O God....’” (vs 5-8).

Is Jesus Christ God? *Yes!* But again, you see all of these are Scriptural quotes. Does this give us a clue as to how God inspires the kind of preaching that He wants? *Yes!* What is Paul doing here? *He is preaching from the Scriptures!* He is not quoting the Scripture, and then telling a nice little bedtime story not too much different than a Little Red Riding Hood.

“...‘Your throne, O God, *is* into the ages of eternity; a scepter of righteousness *is* the scepter of Your kingdom. You loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; because of this, God, *even* Your God, has anointed You with *the* oil of gladness above Your companions.’” (vs 8-9). That’s quoted right there in the Psalms.

Verse 10: “And, ‘You, Lord, in the beginning did lay the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are *the* works of Your hands. They will perish, but You remain *forever*; and *they* will all grow old like a garment, and You will roll them up like a covering, and they shall be changed; but You are the same, and Your years will not end’” (vs 8-12). Again, Scripture!

Verse 13: “But unto which of the angels did He ever say, ‘Sit at My right hand, until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet’?” You can come to Heb. 2, and we will see the same pattern. You come to Heb. 3 and you see the same pattern—quoting Scripture.

Remember that Luke recorded this sermon of the Apostle Paul. I want you to go back and re-study it after we cover it here, because you will see exactly the same style of preaching and writing; which then also helps to confirm that Paul is the author of Hebrews, dictated to Luke, who wrote it, and was delivered by Timothy.

Acts 13:14: “Now, after passing through from Perga, they came to Antioch of Pisidia; and they went into the synagogue on the Sabbath Day *and* sat down. And after the reading of the Law and the Prophets, the rulers of the synagogue said to them, ‘Men, brethren, if you have a word of exhortation for the people, speak’” (vs 14-15).

This is why God also called Paul, because he was a Pharisee before his conversion. He used that as entrance into the synagogues. None of the other apostles could have done that. Why? *They were never Pharisees!* Paul could go into the synagogue of Jews and be well received. Barnabas also, because he was a Levite. That's why they said, "...Men, brethren, if you have a word of exhortation for the people, speak."

Verse 16: "Then Paul stood up and, after beckoning with his hand, said, 'Men, Israelites, and those who fear God... [the Gentiles] ...listen to me.'" Notice how he starts his sermon. Almost identical to the way that Hebrews starts off.

Verse 17: "**The God**... [In the Greek in Heb. 1:1, it is 'ho Theos' as here] ...of this people Israel chose our fathers..." What is he doing? *He is reviewing the history of the people of God!*

"...and exalted the people when they were sojourning in the land of Egypt, and with a high arm brought them out of it. And for a period of about forty years, He put up with their manners in the desert.... [that ties in with Heb. 3] ...And after destroying seven nations in the land of Canaan, He gave their land to them by lot. And after these things, He gave *them* judges for about four hundred and fifty years, until Samuel the prophet. And then they asked for a king, and God gave them Saul..." (vs 17-21).

Now remember, these are the notes of Luke. I am sure that he spent a whole lot longer going into much more detail. Just like those of you who are taking notes, you're taking notes of what I say, but you cannot possibly get every word. Paul did not have a cassette recorder to do it. So, this is summarized. Then he talks about giving them Saul.

Verse 22: "And after removing him, He raised up David to be their king; to whom He also gave testimony, saying, 'I have found David, the son of Jesse, a man after My own heart, who will perform all My will.' Of this man's seed has God according to His promise raised up to Israel a Savior, Jesus, After John had first preached, before His coming, the baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel. And as John was fulfilling his course, he said, 'Who do you suppose *that* I am? I am not *He*; but behold, *there is* One Who comes after me, of Whom I am not worthy to loose the sandals of His feet'" (vs 22-25).

This also shows that the book of Matthew was probably written at that time, and available. He talks about the baptism of John.

Verse 26: "Men, brethren, sons of the race of Abraham, and those among you who fear God, to

you the message of this salvation was sent; for those who were dwelling in Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they knew Him not, nor the voices of the prophets who are read every Sabbath, have themselves fulfilled *them* in condemning *Him*. And though no one found any cause *worthy* of death, they begged Pilate to execute Him" (vs. 26-28).

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*

Scriptural References:

- 1) Ephesians 1:1-2
- 2) Hebrews 1:1
- 3) Galatians 6:11
- 4) Hebrews 13:23-25
- 5) Hebrews 11:32
- 6) Hebrews 13:19
- 7) 2 Timothy 1:12-15
- 8) Acts 21:17-40
- 9) Acts 22:21-23
- 10) Hebrews 8:6-10
- 11) Hebrews 10:16-17
- 12) Hebrews 13:8-14
- 13) Hebrews 2:1
- 14) Hebrews 3:7-13
- 15) Hebrews 4:3-5, 7
- 16) Hebrews 5:11-12
- 17) Hebrews 6:1, 10-12
- 18) Hebrews 10:21-27
- 19) Hebrews 11:33-40
- 20) Hebrews 12:1-4, 26-29
- 21) Hebrews 13:5-6, 22
- 22) Hebrews 1:1-13
- 23) Acts 13:14-28

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Romans 2
- Acts 20
- Psalm 104:4

Also referenced:

Booklet: *The Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews, A Precise Translation* by Fred R. Coulter

Books:

- *Interlinear Greek-English New Testament* by George Ricker Berry
- *Seven General Epistles* by Fred R. Coulter
- *A Harmony of the Gospels* by Fred R. Coulter

Sermons Series:

- *Epistle of Paul to the Romans*
- *Epistle of Paul to the Galatians*
- *Circumcision Wars*

Sermon: *The Stages of Apostasy*

FRC: MDS/cis
Transcribed: 07/27/2003
Reformatted/Corrected: bo—January/2017

The Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews II Hear, Listen and Pay Attention to *GOD!*

(Chapter 1)
Fred R. Coulter

I want to pick up where we left off last time, and I want to go back and just review a little bit, so let's go to Acts 13. Then we can see the style of how Paul preached. Hebrews is not an epistle; it is a sermon. Now, in scholarly terms they call it a homily, but it is a sermon. What we want to do is see exactly how Paul used the Scriptures, and we will see that's the exact same pattern that is used all the way through the book of Hebrews.

I think that the book of Hebrews was a written sermon that he had given over and over again. That's why it is so perfected. I just might mention that the only commentary I ever use is the *Word Biblical Commentary*. What that does, it just analyzes the words. The comment that was made in that commentary was that Hebrews has the best Greek of all the New Testament. It also mentions something very interesting, that a good number of the verbs are in the infinitive form; meaning that instead of saying, for example: *said*—he said, they said—it's put in the form, *to say*. Now, Greek for *I say* is 'lego.' The infinitive form is 'legin.' That is a distinctive thing, which is very similar to what Luke has, the way that Luke writes.

I also noticed in going through and translating Hebrews that there are a good number of what are called *articular infinitives*, which is a very sophisticated way in Greek of saying something. We have nothing like it in English; except, if you would say, 'the going to town,' which is very awkward. But that's what you have in Greek. For example, if you go back and look at the booklet *The True Meaning of Acts 2:1* {truthofgod.org} you will see that the whole problem there, or the whole understanding lies in what is called an *articular infinitive*. This is another sign that it is Paul's words, written and refined, and perfected by Luke; and Luke was always with Paul. He would not get it even in the door of Jerusalem if it had his name on it.

Let's see how Paul uses the Scriptures. Not only does he quote the Scriptures, but he *uses* the Scriptures in a way to tell the whole story in a summary without necessarily going to a direct verse, in this particular case in Acts 13:17: "The God of this people Israel..." That starts out very familiar, similar to Heb. 1:1, where the very first word is *God*.

Verse 25: "And as John was fulfilling *his* course, he said, 'Who do you suppose *that* I am? I am not *He*; but behold, *there is* One Who comes

after me, of Whom I am not worthy to loose the sandals of His feet.'"

Now where did he get this, except out of Matthew? *Because Matthew was written very shortly after the resurrection!* This whole thing of saying that nothing was written down for years and years, and was passed by word of mouth from generation-to-generation until we come to the beginning of the fourth century, about 310 A.D.; then the disciples, out of the imagination of their minds, began to write down the things that they learned, and it was passed on; so therefore, there are many, many errors in what is called the New Testament. *That is a satanic lie!* It is not true!

Matthew 3:3^[transcriber's correction]: "For this is he who was spoken of by Isaiah the prophet, saying... [he is saying that he is *not* the Christ] ... 'The voice of one crying in the wilderness, "Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight His paths.'"

Verse 11: "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance; but the One Who *is* coming after me is mightier than I, of Whom I am not fit to carry His sandals; He shall baptize you with *the* Holy Spirit, and with fire."

What also makes sense is—since Luke wrote Acts—that part of the book of Luke was already written. He says in the book of Acts that he had already written the book of Luke.

Acts 1:1: "The first account I indeed have written, O Theophilus..." is a beginning part of the book of Acts.

Luke 3:15: "But as the people were *filled* with expectation, and they were all reasoning in their hearts about John, whether or not he might be the Christ, John answered all *of them*, saying, 'I indeed baptize you with water; but He is coming Who *is* mightier than I, of Whom I am not fit to loose the thong of His sandals. He shall baptize you with *the* Holy Spirit, and with fire'" (vs 15-16).

What Paul does is summarize Acts 13 that, at least the summary of the sermon that Luke wrote, summarizes the answer of John. This shows that they were totally familiar with what John had preached, what he had done, and that it was written down.

Acts 13:26, Paul says: "Men, brethren, sons of *the* race of Abraham, and those among you who

fear God, to you the message of this salvation was sent... [this is also referring to the things here] ... for those who were dwelling in Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they knew Him not, nor the voices of the prophets who are read every Sabbath, have themselves fulfilled *them* in condemning *Him*" (vs 26-27). You also have that where? *In Matthew, Mark and Luke*, 'Thus it was fulfilled by the prophets.' So, he's summarizing that.

Again, he shows the use of Scripture while he's speaking, v 40: "Take heed, therefore, lest that which is spoken in the Prophets come upon you: 'Behold, you despisers, and wonder and perish; for I work a work in your days, a work that you will in no way believe... [this is cited from Hab. 1:5] ...even if one declares it to you'" (vs 40-41).

I missed the one where he quotes Ps. 2; v 33: "As it is also written in the second Psalm, 'You are My Son; today have I begotten you.'"

Quoting Ps. 16; v 35 "Accordingly, he also says in another *place*, 'You will not allow Your Holy One to see corruption.'" Then he repeats the same thing in v 36 that Peter did on the Day of Pentecost, that David is both buried and dead, and in the grave to this day.

I want you to see how the Scriptures are used. One quote, after another quote, after another quote. This becomes important:

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."

Then he explains about Him being superior to the angels, v 5: "For to which of the angels did He ever say, 'You are My Son; this day I have begotten You'? And again, 'I will be a Father to Him, and He will be a Son to Me'?"—quoting from Ps. 2:7.

Verse 6: "And again, when He brought the Firstborn into the world, He said, 'Let all *the* angels of God worship Him.' Now, on the one hand, of the angels He says, 'Who makes His angels spirits, and His ministers a flame of fire.' But on the other hand, of the Son *He* says, 'Your throne, O God, *is* into the ages of eternity; a scepter of righteousness *is* the scepter of Your kingdom'" (vs 6-8)—quoting from Ps. 45:6-7.

Verse 9: "You loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; because of this, God, *even* Your God, has anointed You with *the* oil of gladness above Your companions.' And, 'You, Lord, in the beginning did lay the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are *the* works of Your hands'" (vs 9-10)—quoting from Ps. 102. And he quotes that for another couple of verses.

Verse 13 (quotes Ps. 110): "But unto which of the angels did He ever say, 'Sit at My right hand, until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet'?" And we'll see this all the way through. Almost every chapter is that way: chapters 2-8, all the way through. This is the only book of the New Testament, by the way, that clearly defines the special things of Christ in the New Covenant.

Now, one other thing I want to cover; this is another hint of Paul; Hebrews 10:33: "On the one part, you were made a public spectacle by both insults and severe trials..." Who caused those? *Paul did, when he was Saul!*

"...and on the other part, you became companions of those who were enduring the same things. For you not only showed compassion to me in my bonds... [that has to be referring to Paul] ...but also gladly endured the plunder of your possessions, knowing within yourselves that you have a greater and more enduring possession in *the* heavens" (vs 33-34).

Then as we covered in part one in chapter 13, it talks about Timothy, and Timothy was always with Paul. So, those are all evidences that this is from the Apostle Paul. We have the use of Scriptures; and also, the same way of preaching that Paul did of a chain of Scriptures.

Now then, we're going come to something very important here. Understand that one of the things that Hebrews is telling us: How to view, use and understand the Word of God.

Hebrews 1:1: "God Who spoke to the fathers at different times in the past and in many ways by the prophets..." Who's doing the speaking? *God!* You go back and you go through the first part of Genesis, and Who's doing the talking in the first person? *God is!* All the way through His dealings with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, God is dealing with them either in person, as He did with Abraham, or in person and dreams as He did with Isaac and Jacob. Then when you come to Moses He dealt with him face-to-face.

We will see that as the book of Hebrews unfolds, he is showing the superiority of the Son. In other words, what we're going to find in the book of Hebrews is this:

- Christ is the *ultimate* Word of God
- Christ is the *ultimate* Son of God
- Christ is the *ultimate* Sacrifice of God
- Christ is the *ultimate* High Priest of God

Why is this necessary? *Because He was paving the way for the time when there would be no temple and no priesthood in Jerusalem!*

We also need to understand that when God sent His Son, you had to have:

- a greater revelation
- a greater sacrifice
- a greater priesthood
- a greater covenant

That's why Paul starts out this way, referring to the prophets. All of the prophets prophesied that, as we will see when we get into the book of Hebrews here. So, the thing to understand is that God is speaking through **His Word**. And since His Word is still here, when you read it God is speaking to everyone who reads it—to you, to me, whoever it may be—whether they are converted or unconverted. For the unconverted it's a witness against them because if they read it and don't believe, it's a witness against them. God expects this, which is very important to realize: ***Since this is the Word of God, this is the same as if God:***

- is personally telling you
- is personally telling me
- is personally telling anyone who reads the Scriptures

That's why when you read of Christ, He's called ***the Word of God!*** There's a reason for it.

Hebrews 1:1: "...has spoken to us in these last days by *His Son*." Then Paul immediately begins to point out the superiority, or the ultimate reality of Christ, Who is the ultimate Son.

Verse 2: "Whom He has appointed heir of all things... [which means *the universe!* Note Rom. 8, that we're co-heirs with Christ.] ...by Whom also He made the ages."

He brings this out in a very powerful way so that they will know and understand that there is no human being, there is no prophet, no, not even Moses can compare to the Son.

Verse 3: "...Who, being *the* brightness of *His* glory..." Moses sure enough absorbed temporarily some of the glory of God when he spent the forty days and forty nights on the mount. But that glory faded away, as a prophetic type of showing that the covenant through Moses was going to fade away for the covenant with the Son.

Verse 3: "Who, being *the* brightness of *His* glory and *the* exact image of His person..." No prophet was ever like this. Then he is going to show no angel was ever like this.

"...and upholding all things by the Word of His own power..." Now that's something! Christ upholds the universe "...by the word of His own power..." But notice what He did:

"...when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at *the* right hand of the Majesty on high" (v 3). Now you know why John said, 'No man has ascended to heaven but the Son'; no man has seen the Father but the Son.'

Verse 4: "Having been made so much greater than *any of* the angels, inasmuch as He has inherited a name exceedingly superior to them."

That's the whole theme of Hebrews: *the New Covenant is exceedingly superior to anything that has gone on in the past*, save the swearing to Abraham; that comes in second. But this is superior to anything. He never said this to the angels. This one knocks in a 'cocked hat' all of Mormonism. They say that Jesus was a created being, and He became an angelic being; He became Michael the archangel, and joined Moroni who is the angel of the Mormon Church.

Notice what the Scripture says, v 5: "For to which of the angels did He ever say, 'You are My Son; this day I have begotten You'? And again, 'I will be a Father to Him, and He will be a Son to Me'? And again, when He brought the Firstborn into the world, He said, 'Let all *the* angels of God worship Him'" (vs 5-6).

Then he goes on to show ***how much greater*** that He is than the angels. That's important to understand!

John 1:1: "In *the* beginning **was the Word...**"—*Christ!* It is absolutely amazing to me how some people can say that Jesus Christ was a created being, when it clearly tells us here that *He created everything*. If He created everything, He had to create Himself.

Verse 1: "**In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.**" He had to be as much God as He could be in the flesh, but He could not be 100% God and 100% man, in the same body; they cannot exist together, because they are two separate kinds of existences. So, when He became the Son of God He had to take on the flesh of man.

By the way, the Jehovah Witnesses' translation was translated by a Jesuit Catholic priest, Did you know that? Their version is called *The New World Translation*. What's another word for 'world'? *Age!* It's almost identical to the *NIV*. Now they do something here with the phrase: *and the Word was God*. When you look at it in the Greek there is no definite article. If it had the definite article it would read 'ho Theos.' But it doesn't have 'ho'—it just has '*Theos*'—and reads this way: 'Kai [*and*] Theos [*God*] en [*was*] ho logos [*the Word*].' Why, in the Greek, did they not put the definite

article *the* there? *To show that Christ was everything that God is; the whole, same characteristic as God!*

This is almost telling us, like we have back here in Hebrews 1:3: “Who, being *the* brightness of *His* glory and *the* exact image of *His* person...” That’s another way of saying the same thing to define it. Without the definite article here, it is not *a God*, it is the whole of what God is. So, when Christ came to the earth it was a profound thing. Like I said, God’s ultimate Son, God’s ultimate Word.

John 1:2: “He was in *the* beginning with God. All things...” (vs 2-3).

We have in Hebrews 1:3?: “...and upholding all things...” Notice how that closely parallels with John’s Gospel as compared to the book of Hebrews. Starting out the same way. The same message is brought with greater clarity for one meaning in John, and greater clarity for another meaning in Hebrews. Put together, you have the whole picture.

John 1:3: “All things came into being through Him, and not even one *thing* that was created came into being without Him.”

Why is that put that way? *To exclude the possibility that He was a created being! To exclude the possibility that He could have created Himself!*

Verse 4: “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 4-5). The world is deceived. That’s why it doesn’t comprehend the Light, because

- ***The Light is Truth!***
- The light *penetrates!*
- The light *exposes!*

Men cannot handle that!

Verse 14: “And the Word became flesh and tabernacled among us...”—the whole theme of the Feast of Tabernacles, *God dwelling with us!*

“...(and we ourselves beheld His glory, *the* glory as of *the* only begotten with *the* Father), full of grace and truth” (v 14). ***Christ was the only begotten of the Father and came directly from the Father.***

This is what is so important concerning the Word of God, *Christ!* The Gospels show without a doubt—confirmed beyond any shadow of question—that ***before He became a human being He was God!*** Now that’s why in the book of Hebrews Paul is spending so much time on it. Because he is establishing that everything in the rest of the book of Hebrews is going to be contingent on vs 1-4. Everything else!

Comment was just made from someone who studied with the Seventh-Day Adventists, that there are some of them who believe that Christ is Michael. So, you’ve got Jehovah Witnesses, Mormons, and some Seventh-Day Adventists who believe that. That’s one of Satan’s tactics, to come in and to degrade Christ. Why is it an important tactic of Satan the devil to degrade Christ? *So that he will pry open your mind to bring in error and lies!* I’m sure it was happening there, because we’re going to see that in this sermon of Paul’s, in Heb. 1 and the first part of Heb. 2, he spends a great deal of time showing the difference between Christ and the angels; and the angels in this world and the angels in the world to come.

Philippians 2:5: “Let this mind be in you, which *was* also in Christ Jesus...” Now why does he say let it be in you? *Because:*

- you have to *choose* to let the mind of Christ be in you through the power of the Holy Spirit
- you have to *seek it* from God the Father
- you have to *grow in grace and knowledge*
- you have to *study the Word of God* so that you begin to have the mind of Christ
- you have to *let it...*
in order to let it, then
- you have to ***fight the carnal mind***

That you ‘bring every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ (2-Cor. 10). When you let the mind of Christ come in you, then you also have the humility that comes from God, the same type of humility that Christ had when He became a human being.

Verse 6: “Who although He existed in *the* form of God... [existing as God—‘hup arkon’ in the Greek means *to exist*] ...did not consider it robbery to be equal with God... [if you are equal with God, you are *God*] ...**but emptied Himself...**” (vs 6-7).

In *The Christian Passover* book—read *The Nature of God and The Nature of Man*. That will be a good one to review for this.

Verse 7: “But emptied Himself, *and* was made in *the* likeness of men, *and* took the form of a servant; and being found in *the* manner of man ...” (vs 7-8).

We’ll see that again when we come to Heb. 2. Being made exactly like a man. All of His bodily functions were the same as a human being’s. Everything that your body does to function, He had the same. Now that’s very important so that we understand, ***no one is going to ever say to God:***

God, You never understood what it was like to be a human. God, You made us of flesh and blood, and You put us on this earth, and You turned Satan loose against us. You're way up there in heaven. Why don't you come on down to this earth and share this with us?

God did! We'll see that the very reason for Christ coming was for that purpose; and also to answer the complaint of the Israelites. We'll see that in just a little bit.

Verse 8: "...He humbled Himself..." You talk about humbling yourself. Has anyone ever humbled himself so much as Christ did? to divest Himself of being God, all of His glory and power and being? to put His complete trust and faith in the One Who became God the Father?

And the covenant that They had {note series: *Prophecies of Jesus in the Old Testament*} The last one is the covenant that God made with Christ, where He made a covenant with God the Father. The Father said, 'I will become the Father'; and Christ said, 'I will become the Son. Since You gave Me authority to create all of these things, and the whole creation is subject to what I have put it through, then I will take it upon Myself to become as My creation so I can be the perfect sacrifice.' *They agreed!* So, the One of Elohim Who became the Son humbled Himself to become a pinprick of life to be begotten in the womb of the virgin Mary. And it had to be a virgin, because God could not have His Son born of a woman who ever had contact with a man. Now, that's not Catholic doctrine. *That's just Truth!*

Was He really at our level? *Yes, with the exception that He had the Holy Spirit from conception!* He was at our level. Obviously, being the Son of God, it had to be special. But as far as His human existence, it wasn't any different than ours. He had to eat, He had to sleep, He had to breathe; He had all the bodily processes; and He was subject to death. So, why don't you go back and review *The Nature of God* and *The Nature of Man* in *The Christian Passover* book. That will go through it in great detail.

Verse 8: "And being found in *the* manner of man, He humbled Himself, *and* became obedient unto death, even *the* death of *the* cross." Wasn't it fitting that He died such an ignominious death, rather than die to the praise of men? Even His own disciples didn't believe it. And that had to be, because it was so profound in what He did.

John 3:13—this ties right in with the first part of Heb. 1: "(And no one has ascended into

heaven, except He Who came down from heaven, *even* the Son of man, Who is in heaven.)"—meaning at the time he wrote it He's in heaven.

John 1:16: "And of His fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace." The same as Paul wrote; and we will see all through all of the epistles in the New Testament that they preached the same message. They used many of the same comparisons.

Verse 17: "For the Law was given through Moses..."—which up to that point, the Law and the Prophets were the greatest thing that God had done.

"...and the grace and the Truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, Who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared *Him*" (vs 17-18).

Now at the time John wrote this, Christ was in the bosom of the Father. That is explaining their close, personal, relationship as Father and Son. Let's understand why Christ is the ultimate Word of God.

(go to the next track)

This is why it becomes so important to understand the way that Hebrews has been written, and the very things that are brought out in the New Testament. {see sermon *That Prophet*} I can guarantee you it's not a minister who's living in the flesh today, who's supposedly a head of a church—***'that Prophet' is Christ!*** You find that very clearly explained in Acts 3 by Peter. Even John said that he [John] wasn't 'that Prophet'.

Deuteronomy 18:15: "The LORD your God will raise up unto you a Prophet from the midst of you, of your brethren, One like me. To Him you shall hearken." We're going to pick up on this about *obeying the words of God*. But what I want to do is to bring to you the reason why Jesus is the ultimate Son, this is the ultimate Word of God, and that in the Scriptures God speaks *today!* You need to understand that. Whenever you're reading the Scriptures, ***God is speaking to you!*** That's why sometimes when you've sinned you don't like it.

There's was 'big flap' because a Seventh-Day Adventist rented a billboard right along Hwy 5, going up out of Northern California into Oregon, which said, 'The Pope Is the Antichrist!'—which is true! That man received death threats. It shows Catholics are not concerned with Truth. They're not concerned, to say, 'Well, if that's true, I've been deceived.' *No!* They want to kill the man. How's that for Christian love? *No!*

They don't want the Truth! Rather than saying, 'Boy, I ought to check out the Scriptures.' I do believe that even in the *Douay Version* of the

Bible that Rev. 17 is still Rev. 17, though they deny it. I do believe that in their Bible, Exo. 20:4 still says, 'You shall not make any graven image of any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, on the earth beneath, or in the water under the earth, and you shall not bow yourself down to it'. They don't read the Bible, but *the Bible witnesses against them!*

I think we need to understand that *God means business!* They need to realize that.

- We're not dealing with a 'religion,' *we're dealing with God!*
- We're not dealing with personal interpretations; *we're dealing with the Truth of God!*

Verse 15: "...To Him you shall hearken... [listen] ...according to all that you desired of the LORD your God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying... [that's when they received the Ten Commandments] ...'Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God, neither let me see this great fire any more, so that I do not die'" (vs 15-16).

What did they tell God? This is important. What is it that human beings want? *They want another human being to talk to!* Today it's put this way; let's just use the example of the pope as the antichrist: 'I don't want to find out whether that is true or not. I'm going to go ask my priest whether it's true or not: 'father, is the pope the antichrist?' *Why, no, my son. Those are just the heretics, the enemies!* Rather than checking the truth.

We have the similar thing here. The people were right in the presence of God: Exodus 20:18: "And all the people saw the thunderings, and the lightnings..." If there's one thing that really sends it through a person's being is to hear thunder crashing and rolling, and lightning sparking and flying back and forth; especially if it's close to you. How do you think that sounded when they were as close to Mt. Sinai as they were? Have you ever been close to a real cracking, sparking lightning storm? and the thunder just right over your head? *It about blows you away!*

"...and the sound of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking. And when the people saw, they trembled..." (v 18). No question about running up on the mountain to go up, 'Let me run up and see God!' *No, indeed!* They backed away!

"...and stood afar off. And they said to Moses, 'You speak with us, and we will hear. But let not God speak with us, lest we die'" (18-19).

What is it that humans want? They want a human being to talk to them: 'I'll talk to a man, not to God.' But did they listen to Moses? *No!* They

said, 'Moses said...' And isn't that the way that human nature is? What is the favorite trick of Satan and other human beings when you don't want to listen to someone? *You make them out a bad guy! You demonize them!* Does that not sound familiar? *Yes, indeed!* That's what happened.

God in the person of Christ took the children of Israel up on their proposition *to let a man speak to them.* With *this Man*, as we're going to see, it's going to be entirely different than a regular man because this one is going to be the only begotten of the Father.

Deuteronomy 18:17: "And the LORD said to me, "They have spoken well what they have spoken.... [He said 'I'm going to take them up on it.']. ...will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, *One like you...*" (vs 17-18). Moses was a *lawgiver! a priest!* What was Christ? *In the flesh He was Lawgiver! When He was resurrected He was High Priest!*

"...and will put My words in His mouth.... [remember, everything that Jesus spoke came from the Father; that's what we need to understand] ...And He shall speak to them all that I shall command Him" (v 18). God is saying, 'Since I am going to do it...'—and we can put it today, past tense: 'Since *I have done it...*'

Verse 19: "And it shall come to pass, whatever man will not hearken to My words, which He shall speak in My name, I will require *it* of him." That's anyone who will not listen.

For preachers and prophets, all pay attention, v 20: "But the prophet **who shall presume** to speak a word in My name..." {Note sermon series *The Epistles of Peter* where I cover this quite a bit more in depth}.

"...which I have not commanded him to speak or who shall speak in the name of other gods, even **that prophet shall die**" (v 20). That's pretty profound! So, every minister who picks up the Bible and says, 'My interpretation is...'—if it is not God's, you're in *deep trouble!*

Referring to Christ; here is the way that it has to be. John 3:33: "The one who has received His testimony... [anyone who receives the testimony of Christ, the Word of God] ...has set his seal that God is true; for He Whom God has sent speaks the words of God..." (vs 33-34). What did it say back there in Deut. 18? 'He shall speak all that I command Him. All My words!' What did Jesus speak? *Words of the Father!*

"...and God gives not the Spirit by measure *unto Him.* The Father loves the Son and has given all things into His hand. The one who believes in the

Son has everlasting life; but the one who does not obey the Son shall not see life, for the wrath of God remains on him” (vs 34-36). That’s a summary of all of the book of Hebrews; *no question about it!*

John 5:30 “I have no power to do anything of Myself; but as I hear, I judge; and My judgment is just because I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father Who sent Me.” Never did Christ at any time do anything other than the will of God.

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” (vs 45-46).

We just read what he wrote of Him. What does that do with the licentious grace of the Protestants, that you don’t have to keep the commandments? *Wipes it out!*

Verse 47: “And if you do not believe his writings, how shall you believe My words?”

John 14:23: “Jesus answered and said to him, ‘If anyone loves Me, **he will keep My Word...**’” It’s very important, because we’re going to do a study here, we may begin part of it in just a little bit, concerning **obeying the voice of God**. As a matter of fact, that’s really the whole story of the Bible: **to obey or not obey the voice of God!**

“...‘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’” (v 23). Everyone wants God to love them—don’t they? But they want it in their own way. However, **it’s going to be God’s way or no way!** Because so many say, ‘Well, God knows my heart, and I’m good. So therefore, before God, I’m good.’ *Not so!* It has to be God’s way!

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.” That agrees 100% with Deut. 18.

The book of Hebrews clearly defines the New Testament worship, clearly defines:

- the ultimate Son of God
- the ultimate sacrifice
- the ultimate High Priest
- the ultimate Word of God

If Christ has said it, that’s what the Father commanded Him to say.

John 12:42—we’ll show the problems that people have: “But even so, many among the rulers believed in Him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess Him...”

In other words, as he said in another place, they loved the praises of men more than the praises of God. They are political and seek to do *their* will in the name of God, if I could put it that way.

“...so that they would not be put out of the synagogue” (v 42). They should have said, ‘Hey, we believe on Him since He’s the Son of God; Hooray! I’m put out of the synagogue. Let me leave the synagogue.’ But what would they lose?

- their power
- their control
- their prestige

They would have no hierarchical position.

Verse 43: “They loved the glory of men more than the glory of God. Then Jesus called out and said, ‘The one who believes in Me does not believe in Me, but in Him Who sent Me. And **the one who sees Me sees Him Who sent Me**. I have come *as* a light into the world so that everyone who believes in Me may not remain in darkness. But if anyone hears My words and does not believe, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world, but to save the world. **The one who rejects Me and does not receive My words has one who judges him; the word which I have spoken, that shall judge him in the last day**’” (vs 43-48). Now that’s why it is so important.

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... [which He did not do to Moses, which He did not do to the angels] ...by Whom also He made the ages; Who, being *the* brightness of *His* glory... [‘If you’ve seen Me, you’ve seen the Father’] ...and *the* exact image of His person... [having the same character as God the Father] ...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...” (vs 1-3).

In other words, Paul is saying through this sermon, ***‘Wake up, pay attention! This is the ultimate Word of God.’***

John 12:49: “For I have not spoken from Myself; but the Father, Who sent Me, gave Me commandment Himself... [Does that not agree with Deut. 18? *Absolutely!*] ...what I should say and what I should speak. And I know that His commandment is eternal life. Therefore, whatever I speak, I speak exactly as the Father has told Me” (vs 49-50).

Let’s see why Paul wanted all of the Hebrews to know that when God speaks, and He speaks through His Son in particularly, ***you better pay attention!***

2-Timothy 3:15: “And that from a child you have known the Holy Writings...” That’s all the Old Testament, and how much ever of the New Testament was that was written up to that point.

“...which are able to make you wise unto salvation through faith, which *is* in Christ Jesus. All Scripture *is* God-breathed...” (vs 15-16). If it is God-breathed, that means *God said it!* So, if you read it, ***God is speaking to you!***

Verse 16: “All Scripture *is* God-breathed and *is* profitable for doctrine, for conviction, for correction, for instruction in righteousness so that the man of God may be complete, fully equipped for every good work” (vs 16-17).

When you really want to summarize the whole Bible, let’s understand that ***it boils down to obeying the voice of God.*** So, let’s just do a little survey. We’ll go through the Old Testament and New Testament, and we will back up and we will see that everything in relationship to God and human beings has to do with whether you ***obey the voice of God***, or whether ***you do not obey*** the voice of God. If you don’t believe the words of Christ, then you don’t believe God the Father.

What gets you in trouble with God? *When you listen to another human being instead of God!* In this case, the only other human being was Eve, his wife. With a whole lot more people, there are other human beings that you can listen to; and if you listen to them instead of God, you’re going to get into the same trouble that Adam and Eve got in when they both listened to the devil.

Genesis 3:17: “And to Adam He said, ‘Because you have hearkened to the voice of your wife...’—*instead of Me.*

Adam saw Him face-to-face. God appeared to them in a form that they could see, they could talk to, they could understand. How many people have said, ‘Well, if God would come down and tell me, I’ll do it.’ *God was right there! He just created them!* They still did not.

“...‘Because you have hearkened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree—of which I commanded you, saying, “You shall not eat of it!”—...” (v 17). Whenever we put anyone else’s words—regardless of who it is, how important they may be—above God, ***we don’t believe God***; we’re not listening to Him. We’ll look at some of the places where it is *to obey*.

Genesis 22:15: “And the angel of the LORD called to Abraham out of heaven the second time, and said, ‘By Myself have I sworn,’ says the LORD,

‘because you have done this thing, and have not withheld your son, your only son; that in blessing I will bless you, and in multiplying I will multiply your seed like the stars of the heavens... [that’s the spiritual seed through the resurrection] ...and as the sand, which is upon the seashore...’ (vs 15-17).

All the physical seed first; because in order to be the sons born of the resurrection, you have to *first* be a human being.

“...And your seed shall possess the gate of his enemies. And in your seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, **because you have obeyed My voice**” (vs 17-18).

If we are Christ’s, we are *Abraham’s seed*, and heirs according to the promise! What makes us the children of Abraham? *That we do the works of Abraham: we believe and we obey!*

We’ve gone to this one many, many times. But I tell you what, it’s very important that we go back and review these things and we understand them.

Genesis 26:5: “Because that Abraham **obeyed My voice**...” That’s the first key thing. Since we have the words of God, and God has spoken them, if you obey what’s in the Bible, you’re ***obeying the voice of God!*** If you do not obey, then you are not obeying the voice of God.

It’s very important to remember John 12, ***if you won’t listen to the Son, there’s no eternal life.*** What does that tell you about the coming one-world religion where everything is amalgamated in? *The first thing they have to do to come to common ground is reject Christ, to lower Him to the status of another human being!* That has happened in many so-called Christian-professing religions already; we’ve covered three of them.

Verse 5: “***Because that Abraham obeyed My voice, and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws***”—which are same ones that He gave to Israel.

God did the same thing to Israel. That’s the first thing that God told the Israelites, the very first thing. That’s why when we first come to the knowledge of the Truth, this is the most important thing for us to realize. It’s just like with what happened when God brought the children of Israel to Mount Sinai. He wanted to know first—before He began to speak—***would they obey His voice?***

Exodus 19:4: “You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and *how* I bore you on eagles’ wings and brought you unto Myself. Now, therefore, if you will obey My voice indeed, and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all

people; for all the earth *is* Mine” (vs 4-5).

Exodus 24:3: “And Moses came and told the people **all** the words of the LORD, and all the judgments. And all the people answered with one voice and said, **‘All the words which the LORD has said, we will do.’**”

God does something every time it’s required to obey the words of God—when God is not going to be there in person holding your hand—He has it written down by human instrumentality, and recorded and preserved so you will have it, so you will have no excuse.

Verse 4: “And Moses wrote all the words of the LORD, and rose up early in the morning, and built an altar at the base of the mountain and twelve pillars according to the twelve tribes of Israel. And he sent young men of the children of Israel who offered burnt offerings, and sacrificed peace offerings of bullocks to the LORD. And Moses took half of the blood, and put *it* in basins, and half of the blood he sprinkled on the altar. And he took the Book of the Covenant... [our covenant is the New Testament] ...and read in the ears of the people. And they said, ‘All that the LORD has said we will do, and be obedient’” (vs 3-7).

When we get to the book of Hebrews we’re going to see that the Son is so much greater. That’s why He said, ‘If you don’t believe Me, you have no life.’ But there’s the agreement ***to obey the voice of God.***

Deut. 5—where Moses reiterates it again just before they go into the ‘promised land.’ It’s kind of like what parents do when their kids go out. They sit them down and they talk to them ‘I want you to remember this; I want you to remember that.’ Why? *Because Mommy and Daddy ‘ain’t’ coming with you this time!* ‘Now, you’re on your own, and you have to be responsible for yourself. What is it you are to do?’ At this point, *the presence of God was no longer going to be there with them* in the same way that it was in the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night. It wasn’t going to be with them to be giving them manna everyday, give them the food to eat. Now they were going to be on their own with God’s blessing and protection, ***if they obeyed!***

Comment was made concerning the Jewish tradition of ‘oral law.’ That is absolutely no different than the Catholic traditions of the ‘fathers.’ It was added to, never was from God, never given as *oral* commandments. God would not leave it to word of mouth in spite of what men would say. That is their excuse so they can change the Word of God when they have an oral tradition that contradicts the Word of God; they must have some authority, so they

dream up the authority. Just like the pope has dreamed up the authority of perverting the interpretation of:

Matthew 16:18: “...upon this Rock I will build My Church, and *the* gates of the grave shall not prevail against it. And I will give to you the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven...” (vs 18-19). So, the pope says, ‘That’s me!’ *No, it’s not!* When we get done you will understand why the pope can *never* be the ‘Vicar of Christ.’

Deuteronomy 5:24—after giving the Ten Commandments: “And you said, ‘Behold, the LORD our God has revealed His glory and His greatness, and we have heard His voice out of the midst of the fire. We have seen today that God talks with man yet he *still* lives. Now, therefore, why should we die? For this great fire will consume us. If we hear the voice of the LORD our God any more, then we shall die’” (vs 24-25). That’s is why He took them up on the proposition (Deut. 18).

Verse 26: “‘For who of all flesh has heard the voice of the living God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as we *have*, and lived? You go near and hear all that the LORD our God shall say. And you speak to us all that the LORD our God shall speak to you, and we will hear *it*, and do *it*.’ And the LORD heard the voice of your words when you spoke to me. And the LORD said to me, ‘I have heard the voice of the words of this people...’” (vs 26-28). This tells you what? *Be careful what you say!* God is going to take you up on it!

“...which they have spoken to you. They have well *said* all that they have spoken” (v 28). In other words, they are well-intentioned in all that they have said, but there’s one thing lacking.

Verse 29: “Oh, that there were such a heart in them that they would fear Me and keep all My commandments always so that it might be well with them and with their children forever!”

Deuteronomy 6:3: “**Hear**... What are the last three letters of that word? *Ear!* That means, *listen!*] ...O Israel, and be diligent to *observe* it, so that it may be well with you...” All human, carnal beings, and hate God say, ‘Why does God treat human-kind so miserable, rotten, and let all these things come upon them?’ The answer is that:

- you won’t hear the Word of God
- you won’t keep His commandments
- you reject Jesus Christ
- you trample Him underfoot
- you desecrate His Holy Days
- you desecrate His Sabbath
- you desecrate His Word

- you ministers out there stand up and use His Word for your own benefit and your own merchandise
- you ask why God brings these things upon you

Be thankful that lightning bolts do not fall from heaven for those who disobey God as it did when they made the golden calf, and Moses came down and Moses said, ‘All of those on the Lord’s side come over here, and all the rest that are not...’ God created a new thing and opened up the earth and killed them! God holds us responsible ***if we hear***, we have the words of God written right here. It tells us ***to hear, to listen and to hearken!***

What are we to do? And the job of any elder and minister is to say, ‘Here, this is the Word of God. God says to do it, you do it.’

Verse 3: “...so that it may be well with you, and that you may greatly multiply, as the LORD God of our fathers has promised you, in the land that flows with milk and honey. **Hear**, O Israel. Our one God is *the LORD, the LORD*” (vs 3-4).

- *Hear!*
- *Listen!*
- *Pay attention!*

That’s what the whole book of Hebrews is about. The whole book of Hebrews says ***listen to Christ!***

Deuteronomy 11:26: “Behold, I set before you today a blessing and a curse: **A blessing, if you obey the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you this day;** and a curse, if you will not obey the commandments of the LORD your God, but will turn aside out of the way, which I command you this day to go after other gods which you have not known” (vs 26-28).

Deuteronomy 27:9: “And Moses and the priests the Levites spoke to all Israel, saying, **‘Take heed and hearken...** [listen attentively to obey] ...O Israel. Today you have become the people of the LORD your God. You shall therefore **obey the voice of the LORD your God and do His commandments** and His statutes which I command you today.” (vs 9-10).

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*

Scriptural References

- 1) Acts 13:17, 25
- 2) Matthew 3:3, 11
- 3) Acts 1:1
- 4) Luke 3:15-16
- 5) Acts 13:26-27, 40-41, 33, 35
- 6) Hebrews 1:1, 5-10, 13

- 7) Hebrews 10:33-34
- 8) Hebrews 1:1-6
- 9) John 1:1
- 10) Hebrews 1:3
- 11) John 1:2-3
- 12) Hebrews 1:3
- 13) John 1:3-5, 14
- 14) Philippians 2:5-8
- 15) John 3:13
- 16) John 1:16-18
- 17) Deuteronomy 18:15-16
- 18) Exodus 20:18-19
- 19) Deuteronomy 18:17-20
- 20) John 3:33-36
- 21) John 5:30, 45-47
- 22) John 14:23-24
- 23) John 12:42-48
- 24) Hebrews 1:1-3
- 25) John 12:49-50
- 26) 2 Timothy 3:15-17
- 27) Genesis 3:17
- 28) Genesis 22:15-18
- 29) Genesis 26:5
- 30) Exodus 19:4-5
- 31) Exodus 24:3-7
- 32) Matthew 16:18-19
- 33) Deuteronomy 5:24-29
- 34) Deuteronomy 6:3-4
- 35) Deuteronomy 11:26-28
- 36) Deuteronomy 27:9-10

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Habakkuk 1:5
- Psalms 16
- Acts 13:36
- Psalms 2:7; 45:6-7; 102; 110
- Romans 8
- 2 Corinthians 10
- Hebrews 2
- Acts 3
- Revelation 17
- Exodus 20:4

Also referenced:

Books:

- *Word Biblical Commentary*
- *The Christian Passover* by Fred R. Coulter

Booklet: *The True Meaning of Acts 2:1*

Sermons/Series:

- *Prophecy of Jesus in the Old Testament*
- *That Prophet*
- *Epistles of Peter*

FRC:MDS/cis/cis
Transcribed: 08/23/2003
Reformatted/Corrected: bo—January/2017

The Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews III Having Ears to Hear!

(Chapters 1-2)

Fred R. Coulter

Before we get back into the book of Hebrews, what I want to do is again show the style of writing and preaching which connects the authorship of Hebrews to the Apostle Paul. Many people do not believe that Paul wrote it. As I pointed out, these are the words of Paul, undoubtedly written by Luke. Because the style is very, very similar to the way that Luke writes. Especially the Greek and 2-Cor., because you read at the end of 2 Cor., it says 'by Luke.'

Luke was the one who traveled with Paul, and I'm sure that he did a lot of the recording and the writing and taking notes. Hebrews is not an epistle as a regular epistle is, which is a letter that was sent out like the other ones, but it is a written-out sermon, and probably one that was given many, many times, well refined, and, therefore, Hebrews turns out to be one of the best written books of the New Testament.

Let's come to Romans 9, and I want to show how Paul quotes Scripture and then gives some instruction from that Scripture, just like we saw in Heb. 1 & 2.

Romans 9:6: "However, this does not mean that the Word of God has failed because not all of those who *descend* from Israel *are* Israel, nor because they are Abraham's seed does it mean that they *are* all children of the promise. But, 'In Isaac shall your seed be called'" (vs 6-7). So then, Ishmael and Esau *had no part* of the promises that were given.

Verse 9: "Because this *is the* word of promise... [O.T. quote]: ...'According to this set time I will come, and Sarah shall have a son.'.... [then he also refers to Rebecca]: ...And not only *that*, but Rebecca also having conceived by one, Isaac our father, but before *the children* had been born, or had done anything good or evil (in order that the purpose of God according to His own selection might stand—not of works, but of Him Who calls). It was said to her, 'The elder shall serve the younger.' Accordingly, it is written, 'Jacob I loved, and Esau I hated'" (vs. 9-13).

Notice the Scripture quotes right there, just coming, *boom, boom, boom*, one right after another.

Verse 15: "For He said to Moses, 'I will show mercy to whomever I show mercy, and I will have compassion on whomever I have compassion.'

So then, *it is* not of the one who wills, nor of the one who runs; rather, *it is* of God, Who shows mercy. For the Scripture said to Pharaoh, 'For this very purpose I raised you up in order that I might show in you My power, so that My name may be declared in all the earth.' So then, He shows mercy to whom He will, and He hardens whom He will" (vs 15-18).

Verse 25: "Accordingly, He also said in Hosea, 'I will call those who *are* not My people, "My people," and those who *were* not beloved, "Beloved." And it shall be, in the place where it was said to them, "You *are* not My people," there they shall be called *the sons of the living God*.' But Isaiah cried out concerning Israel, 'Although the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved. For *He* is accomplishing and limiting *the* matter in righteousness; because *the* Lord will limit *the* matter *He is doing* upon the earth.' Accordingly, Isaiah also said before, 'Unless *the* Lord of hosts had left us a seed, we would have become as Sodom, and we would have been made like Gomorrah'" (vs 25-29).

Notice the same exact style that we found in Acts 13—quoting Scripture—as we found in Heb. 1 & 2; where then he said, he quoted the Scripture, 'and then again...'; 'and again...'; 'and again...'; and we we'll see that all the way through the book of Hebrews.

Hebrews 11:2: "God did not repudiate His people whom He foreknew. Don't you know what the Scripture says in *the account of Elijah*? How he was pleading with God against Israel, saying, 'Lord, they have killed your prophets, and they have torn down your altars; and I alone am left, and they are seeking my life.' But what did the answer from God say to him? 'I have reserved for Myself seven thousand men who have not bowed a knee to Baal'" (vs 2-4).

Verse 8: "(According as it is written, 'God gave them a spirit of slumber, eyes that are not able to see, and ears that are not able to hear,') unto this day. David also says, 'Let their table be for a snare and for a trap, and for a stumbling block, and for a recompense to them; let their eyes be darkened so that they are not able to see, and bow down their backs continually'" (vs 8-10).

We have the same kind of pattern all the way through, especially when it comes to dealing with those things concerning Israel, because Rom. 9

& 11 concern Israel. The whole book of Hebrews concerns the children of Israel and the Greek-speaking converts, and all the Jews. The book of Hebrews has to do with:

- the ultimate Word of God
- the ultimate Son of God
- the ultimate sacrifice
- the ultimate High Priest

So, the message of the book of Hebrews is this: **hearing God!** and **obey My voice!** This becomes the whole key, the whole important thing. In other words, since God manifest Himself in the flesh—there were the two of Elohim: *one became the Father the other became the Son*—and the One Who became the Son was God manifest in the flesh to bring the Message of God the Father to mankind, first through the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to fulfill His promise. The whole story of the book of Hebrews is:

- Will you *listen* to God?
- Will you *obey* His voice?

All the Scriptures have come from the *voice of God!*

After it talks about the importance of Christ and the difference between Him and angels, Hebrews 2:1: “For this reason, **it is imperative that we give much greater attention to the things, which we have heard**, lest at any time we should slip away.” If you don’t pay attention to it, you slip away, because the Words of God never slip away. They are always there. They are always true.

Verse 2: “For if the word spoken by angels was *enforced* without fail, and every transgression and disobedience received just recompense, how shall we escape, *if we* have neglected so great a salvation; which was first received when it was spoken by the Lord...” (vs 2-3).

And that’s the whole thing: spoken by the Lord. And I was just kind of struck at the coincidence of it. When we started Hebrews, that was the same time that the third edition of *A Harmony of the Gospels* went out. What is a *harmony* of the Gospels? *The words and teachings of Christ!*

“...and was confirmed to us by those who heard *Him*; God also bearing witness with *them* by both signs and wonders, and various miracles and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to His own will?” (vs 3-4).

Hebrews 6:1: “Therefore, advancing beyond the beginning principles of the doctrines of Christ...” When I first read it in the *King James*—*let us leave the beginning oracles of Christ*—“Therefore leaving

the principles of the doctrines of Christ...”; I thought: How can that statement be right? Why would they want to leave the principles of Christ? For someone who is not acquainted with the Scriptures when they first read that, they may think they don’t have to pay any attention to what Christ says. *No!* It’s the other way around.

Verse 1: “Therefore, advancing beyond the beginning principles of the doctrines of Christ, we should go on to perfection; not laying again *the* foundation of repentance from dead works, and *of* faith in God...” (v 1) and so forth.

Verse 6: “If they have fallen away... [it is impossible] ...to renew *them* again unto repentance; *seeing that* they are crucifying the Son of God for themselves, and are publicly holding *Him* in contempt.” That ties in with Heb. 2, that *they were slipping away!*

The whole thing is very imperative, that *anyone*... That’s why it says in another place, ‘anyone that names the name of Christ let Him depart from evil.’ In other words, since one of the Godhead of Elohim became the Son, God manifest in the flesh, and spoke the Word. That’s what John calls Him: *the Word!* It’s not a thing to be taken lightly, and it’s not something that you can just go ahead and interpret any way you want to, to make it say what you desire.

Hebrews 10:22: “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). He is saying that regardless of the circumstances, He is faithful. If there is any difficulty in the problem, it’s our own lack of understanding.

Romans 14:7 becomes the important thing in our lives: “For no one among us lives to himself, and no one dies to himself. For if we live, we should live unto the Lord; and if we die, we should die unto the Lord. So then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord’s. *It is* for this very purpose *that* Christ both died and rose and is living again, so that He might be Lord over both *the* dead and *the* living” (vs 7-9).

One of the things we need to understand concerning the book of Hebrews and the apostles: When they went out to preach, one of the last things they said to Christ just before He ascended into heaven on the 40th day, recorded there in Acts 1? They said, ‘Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?’ They were expecting Christ to

return in their lifetimes.

So, we go on down through all the way through the 30^{S.A.D.}, the 40^{S.A.D.}, the 50^{S.A.D.}, we're coming into the first part of the 60^{S.A.D.}, and they are seeing the droughts, the famine, the wars, and all of these things. James then is martyred. The book of Hebrews is written, because now the Jews, especially at Jerusalem, and, of course, all those in the churches and the synagogues, were beginning to get very restless because Christ was not coming. 'He may not fulfill His promise. If He doesn't fulfill His promise, that is—in our lifetime—then we best go back to Judaism.' This is what they were doing. They were on the verge of leaving Christ—Who was God manifest in the flesh—and go back to Judaism and the claim of Moses alone. That's why there's so much comparison between:

- the Old Covenant and the New Covenant
- Christ and Moses
- Christ and the angels

—all the way through the book of Hebrews.

Verse 10: "Now then, why do you judge your brother? Or why do you despise your brother? For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ because it is written, "For *as I live*," says the Lord, "every knee shall bow to Me, and every tongue shall confess to God." So then, each one of us shall give account of himself to God" (vs 10-12).

This is what it is talking about here in Hebrews 10:23: "Let us hold fast without wavering to the hope *that* we profess, for He Who promised is faithful... [regardless of the circumstances around you] ...and let us be concerned about one another, and *be* stirring up *one another* unto love and good works; not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, even as some *are* accustomed to do..." (vs 23-25).

What they were doing, they were beginning to not assemble together in the churches, and it became habitual. Has that not happened with Laodiceans? *Yes, indeed!* So, you have the same thing of the wearing out of human nature. Instead of relying on God, they relied on themselves, and then they just start slacking off, and you know what happens when you slack off. A little more slack *leaves a little more slack, leaves a little more slack!*

I know what that's like. I'll apply it to exercise. I have to exercise. If I don't exercise—say I lay off two or three days—my hip gets real stiff on me. I remember I laid off for two weeks because I took a trip. I tell you, my body and every thought had every reason not to exercise after that two weeks. I would start exercising and I would do a few

repetitions of the exercise and think: Oh well, maybe you can get by with a few less. I know none of you ever have these arguments in your own mind. There I am, doing my exercise—no, I don't need to do 800 of these, just 300 will be good enough, and if I do pretty good today, then I don't need to do anything tomorrow.

This happens with people. They become accustomed to not going to church, or assembling together. Then you add into the mix the preaching that becomes lukewarm and watered down, and so you go to church and you're bored; therefore you don't want to go. Then you pray and say, 'O God, give me a good attitude so I can go to church and get something out of it.' Between praying from Monday through Friday, you are ready for the Sabbath and you hope you'll have a good Sabbath this week, and you're all prayed up and you're all ready to go, and you go to Sabbath services and it's another dud. Then someone offends you, or a false doctrine is preached. Well, in the case of false doctrine you have good cause to leave. But ***don't give up on God!*** Here they were going through it. So that's why I said in the beginning, the book of Hebrews was written for the Laodiceans today. They are getting tired; they're getting weary, and when you get tired and you get weary then *you are ripe for false doctrine*. That's what's happened.

Verse 25: "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, even as some *are* accustomed to do; but rather, encouraging *one another*, and all *the* more as you see the day drawing near." This was not only a warning to them, but a prophecy for today. We all see two days drawing close.

1. the ***Day of the Lord***, being the end of the life, if we die in the flesh, that day is drawing close
2. the ***return of Christ***, and that day is drawing close

even as it says there in Rom. 13, because it's closer than when it was when we first believed.

Verse 26—notice the end result; notice this warning again: "For if we willfully go on sinning after receiving the knowledge of the Truth, there is no longer any sacrifice for sins, but a terrifying expectation of inevitable judgment and of fierce fire, which will devour the adversaries *of God*." (vs 26-27).

This is why this is a warning. In other words, Christ's Word is the *ultimate word*, and everybody better

- pay attention
- hear
- obey

- repent
- love and serve God

because that is it!

Verse 28: “Consider this: anyone who rejects *the* Law of Moses... [which some of them were going back to] ...dies without mercy under *the* testimony of two or three witnesses. How much worse punishment do you think he will deserve who has trampled underfoot the Son of God, and has regarded the blood of the covenant, with which he was sanctified, *as* an unholy thing, and has scorned the Spirit of grace? For we know Him Who has said, “Vengeance *belongs* to Me. I will recompense!” says *the* Lord.’ And again, ‘*The* Lord will judge His people.’ *It is* a fearful thing to fall into *the* hands of *the* living God” (vs 28-31). Then he goes on trying to encourage them to really pay attention and listen to what they were to do.

Hebrews 12:25: “Beware that you do not refuse to *hear* Him Who is speaking! For if they did not escape *judgment*, who refused to *hear* the One Who was on the earth Divinely instructing *them*... [Jesus Christ] ... how much more *severely will we be judged*, if we ourselves apostatize from Him Who speaks from heaven.” Those are some pretty powerful words.

Now let’s go back and let’s continue our survey of:

- to *hear* God
- to *obey* His voice
- to *hearken* to His Word

Remember the word ‘hear’ is the same thing as ‘ear’ only with an ‘H.’ And hearken has ‘ear’ in it, and hearken means **to hear to obey!** At one place we’ll see Jesus said, ‘Let this sink deep in your ears.’ In other words, *put it in your memory and don’t forget it.* That’s the whole story of the book of Hebrews.

There’ll be quite a few Scriptures we will look to here. What we need to understand in Jer. 7 is that the Jews and the Israelites would go to the temple God, they would offer offerings and incense to other gods right there at the temple of God. So, the whole system of burnt offerings, rather than being a thing to draw them close to God, became a thing where they used it for their own means and ends. That’s why He said here:

Jeremiah 7:21: “Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, ‘Add your burnt offerings to your sacrifices, and eat flesh. For I did not speak to your fathers, or command them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt offerings or sacrifices’” (vs 21-22).

However, that doesn’t mean that God didn’t

intend to give them to them, nor that He didn’t have the whole system ready with the burnt offerings. He did, but to put them to the use that they were doing. Burnt offerings without the rest of it, which we find in v 23, do you no good.

Verse 23: “‘But this thing I commanded them, saying, ‘**Obey My voice...**’” Going through this I want you to remember that Christ is the:

- ultimate Word
- the ultimate Son
- with the ultimate message

“...‘Obey My voice, and I will be your God, and you shall be My people; and walk in all the ways that I have commanded you, so that it may be well with you.’ But they did not obey, nor bow their ear, but walked in *their own* counsels, in the imagination of their evil heart, and went backward and not forward. Since the day that your fathers came out of the land of Egypt until this day, I have even sent to you all My servants the prophets, daily rising up early and sending them” (vs 23-25).

Let’s go back and read the first part of Heb.

1. Notice that the first thing he does, he wants to impress upon them that **God has spoken to us by His Son**, that **God spoke to the fathers by the prophets**, but now **He is speaking to us directly by His Son!**

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 ages” (vs 1-2). So, this is a greater message.

And yet, look what God did back in Jer. 7. God always sent the prophets. God always sent someone to warn them:

Jeremiah 7:26: “Yet, they did not hearken to Me, nor bow down their ear, but hardened their neck. They did worse than their fathers.”

Now then, the words spoken by Jeremiah become a witness and a warning and a testimony against them. If you want an interesting study go through, read and survey the whole book of Jeremiah. As you go through you’re going to see how profoundly it fits this nation today, in everything!

So, what is said needs to be *a warning, a witness, a testimony* whether they will hear or whether they will not hear. That’s why Jeremiah said when he started out, ‘Ah, Lord, I am just a child!’ God said, ‘Don’t worry. I have known you before I formed you in the womb. I will make your forehead like flint.’ Jeremiah had to *stand alone* against every

one of them. Did that make God's Word of any less effect because only one man spoke it? *No!*

Today, in the age of committee that we live in, you've got to have three or four opinions. The design of that is never to come to the truth, but to only come to a predetermined consensus. Now you watch the news on Sunday, and you go from channel-to-channel, every one of the programs are a panel of two or three people. Listen carefully; analyze what they are saying. None of them want truth. They either want a consensus or a political position. So, if it's the Truth of God, only one needs to say it, and it is so; in this case, Jeremiah; in the case of Christ, the Son of God.

Verse 27: "Thus you shall speak all these words to them, but they will not hearken to you... [even if they won't listen, God says, '*Speak!*'] ...you shall also call to them, but they will not answer you."

What does this tell us brethren? This shows us the mercy of God, that in spite of the fact that they won't listen, in spite of the fact that they won't answer, *God still gives them a witness and a warning.* Isn't that amazing? So, you can go through and you can read all of the death and destruction, which is in here—and there's plenty of it, but nevertheless, God is merciful to give them a warning.

Verse 28: "But you shall say to them, 'This is a nation which does not obey the voice of the LORD their God, nor receives correction; Truth has perished, and is cut off from their mouth.'"

Is that not true? When you read the book *Vatican Assassins*, you are going to understand that there is virtually no truth in anything that you hear or read. *It is all a deception! Everything!* Now that may sound a little radical, but that's the plain truth of it.

Jeremiah 11:1: "The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD saying..." Isn't that interesting? *Did the same thing as Moses!* What did God say to Moses all the time? *Moses, you say unto the children of Israel, 'Thus says the Lord.'*

Verse 2: "**Hear the words of this covenant...**" What did we see last time? *Yes, all that the Lord has said, all that He has spoken, we will do.*

So, He says: ...**'Hear the words of this covenant,** and speak to the men of Judah and to the people of Jerusalem. And say to them, "Thus says the LORD God of Israel, **'Cursed is the man who does not obey the words of this covenant'**" (2-3).

Think about that in relationship to the New Covenant, in relationship to Jesus Christ. That's what the book of Hebrews is telling us.

"...**'Cursed is the man who does not obey the words of this covenant,** which I commanded your fathers in the day *that* I brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, from the iron furnace, saying, "Obey My voice and do according to all that I command you; so you shall be My people, and I will be your God"" (vs 3-4). That's exactly the same thing as it is with Christ.

Verse 5: "So that I may fulfill the oath which I have sworn to your fathers, to give them 'a land flowing with milk and honey,' as *it is* this day...." Then I answered and said, 'Amen, O LORD.' Then the LORD said to me, 'Declare all these words in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem, saying, "**Hear the words of this covenant, and do them,** for I earnestly forewarned your fathers in the day I brought them up out of the land of Egypt, even to this day, rising early and warning persistently, saying, '**Obey My voice.**' Yet, **they did not obey** nor bow down their ear, but walked each one in the imagination of his evil heart. So, I will bring on them all the words of this covenant, which I commanded *them* to do; but they did not do them'" (vs 5-8).

Notice what he was up against! We're up against the same thing today! Verse 9: "And the LORD said to me, 'A conspiracy is found among the men of Judah, and among the people of Jerusalem.'"

Are we facing a conspiracy today of a grander scale? So we see here that God said again, v 7: "...**'Obey My voice.'**.... [that's what God wants] ...Yet, they did not obey nor bow down their ear, but walked each one in the imagination of his evil heart. So I will bring on them all the words of this covenant, which I commanded *them* to do; but they did not do them" (vs 7-8). Here's the conspiracy.

We have a conspiracy today that is so humongous, and is so perfect, that when people are told there is a conspiracy they don't believe it. Now, that's a perfect conspiracy. When you can lay out the Truth right before them and they say, 'You're a nut; you're a radical; that couldn't be.' My answer is, look at all the 'honest' politicians in Washington, D.C. Why do you think that nothing turns out the way that they say when they campaign? *Because they are not in control of their own decisions!* They're told what to do.

Verse 9: "And the LORD said to me, 'A conspiracy is found among the men of Judah, and among the people of Jerusalem. They have turned back to the iniquities of their forefathers...' (vs 9-10).

- Did this not happen in the Churches of God?
- Did they not turn back to Sunday worship, and Christmas, and Easter, and all of that?
- *Yes!*

Verse 10: “‘They have turned back to the iniquities of their forefathers, who refused to hear My words. And they went after other gods to serve them. The house of Israel and the house of Judah have broken My covenant which I made with their fathers.’ Thus says the LORD, ‘Behold, I will bring evil on them, which they shall not be able to escape; and though they shall cry to Me, I will not hear them’” (vs 9-11). ***There comes a point that if you don’t listen to God, God won’t listen to you!***

Verse 14: “And you, do not pray for this people, nor lift up a cry or prayer for them. For I will not hear *them* when they call to Me in the time of their distress.”

(go to the next track)

Jeremiah 12:16: “And it shall come to pass if they will diligently learn the ways of My people, to swear by My name, ‘As the LORD lives’... [the Gentiles] ...as they taught the people to swear by Baal; then they shall be built in the midst of My people. But **if they will not obey...**” (vs 16-17).

This is to the Gentiles. Please understand, that’s why I had this here, to the Gentiles that live within Israel. He’s saying, ‘If they will do with the same diligence to Me as they did to Baal, then I will build them.’

Verse 17: “‘But if they will not obey, I will utterly uproot and destroy that nation,’ says the LORD.”

If there’s any one thing we need to understand, when God says He means business, *He means business!* Is anyone going to turn back God? I mean, Job had to learn quite a hard lesson, and he was one who was in good standing with God.

We will see the whole message of all of the prophets was simple: ***hear the Words of God and obey His voice!*** That’s the same message all the way through the whole Bible: ***hear the Words of God, and obey the voice of God!***

Jeremiah 2:4: “Hear the Word of the LORD, O house of Jacob, and all the families of the house of Israel. Thus says the LORD, ‘What injustice have your fathers found in Me, that they have gone far from Me and have walked after vanity, and have become vain?’” (vs 4-5). You might say:

- What did you find wrong with God after you accepted Christ for your Savior to blot

out your sins, and were baptized?

- What fault have you found in God, that you should turn backwards and go back into this world?”

I want you to notice how this prophecy fits this society today to a ‘T’; —Jeremiah 6:13: “For everyone from the least of them even to the greatest of them is greedy for gain...” Even the poor buy lotto tickets in hopes of making it. Those who are rich and powerful take and take, buy and take, and buy and take. That’s why you have the various cycles, planned and determined by the Federal Reserve to take money. Now remember when we said, when the market was way high, ‘Someone’s got the money, and they’re going to take it down.’ So, if you had money in the stock market, and you rode it down, it’s nobody’s fault but your own—*given to covetousness.*

“...and from the prophet even unto the priest everyone deals falsely” (13). Everyone who follows Sunday, Christmas and Easter are dealing falsely.

- Do they not handle the Word of God deceitfully?
- Do they not make it lie, when it doesn’t?
- Do they not twist the Truth so it justifies their perversion, and their ungodly understanding of the Scriptures?

That’s quite a thing!

Verse 14: “They have also healed the hurt of *the daughter* of My people slightly...” That’s what Protestantism does. It heals sin slightly. It may modify behavior, but it doesn’t change the overall results.

Verse 15: “Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination?...” Now we’ve got a whole generation being raised on Harry Potter; being raised on witchcraft! By the way, Fox Family Channel was bought by *Disney, the witchcraft station of the world!* They can’t let anything good stay good for long. From an evil point of view, that’s the beauty of publicly owned corporations. That sooner or later, someone with enough money can come and buy the whole lock, stock, and barrel and do with it what they want.

“...‘No, they were not at all ashamed, nor could they blush... [watch some of these stupid soap operas etc.] ...therefore, they shall fall among those who fall. At the time *that* I punish them, they shall be cast down,’ says the LORD.”

So, there’s a time when God visits. That time is not too far down the road. The time of visitation is going to come. We have seen it in the Churches of God. Those Churches of God that have

not returned to God, the time of visitation is coming. It's already come on several of them.

Verse 16: "Thus says the LORD, 'Stand in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths where the good way *is* and walk in it, and you shall find rest for your souls. But they said, "We will not walk *in it*." Also, I set watchmen over you, *saying*, "Hearken to the sound of the ram's horn." But they said, "We will not hearken." Therefore, hear, you nations, and know, O congregation, what *will happen* to them'" (vs 16-18). ***That's us!*** That's a prophecy for today. Remember what Jesus said, 'Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words shall not pass away'

Verse 19: "**Hear, O earth...**" Since the people aren't willing to listen, God is going to say it to the earth.

"...behold, I will bring evil on this people, even the fruit of their thoughts, **because they have not hearkened to My words, nor to My law, but have rejected it.**"

- Now what happened?
- Did Judah and Jerusalem fall and go into the Babylonian captivity?
- *Yes it did!*

Over approximately a 20-year period, from 605_{B.C.} to 585_{B.C.}—three waves of invasions and captivity. Did they listen? *No!*

Jeremiah 7:2: "Stand in the gate of the LORD's house..." Look at it this way: Picture today someone going to Rome and standing right there at St. Peter's Basilica, and on the day of the 'High Mass,' that he gets up on one of those statues and stands up there right along side it.

"...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.'"

Stand there in St. Peter's Basilica and say you are coming to worship Satan the devil. This is not the house of God.

How many people do you think would repent and get on their knees? They would run after you like they did Stephen, they would take you and pull you down and tear you from limb from to limb. Good loving Christians. Never turn the other cheek, but ready to kill at the slightest provocation. But *they didn't hear! They didn't listen!*

Let's see how he begins the book of Isaiah; very similar to what we read. Is God consistent? *Yes! He's always consistent! He never changes!*

Isaiah 1:2: "Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth; for the LORD has spoken, 'I have reared

and brought up children, but they have rebelled against Me.'" ***They didn't listen to God!***

Also a part of Heb. 3 is Psalm 95:6 "O come, let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the LORD our Maker, for He is our God, and we are the people of His pasture, and the sheep of His hand. **Today, if you would but hearken to His voice...** [Why is it 'today'? ***You have to hear God's voice everyday!***] ...'Harden not your heart as in the rebellion, as in the day of temptation in the wilderness when your fathers tempted Me, tried Me, even though they saw My work. For forty years I was grieved with that generation, and said, "It is a people who go astray in their hearts, and they have not known My ways"; to whom I swore in My wrath that they should not enter into My rest.'" (vs 6-11).

In the light of everything that we have read, let's read Matt. 7 and see where all the false doctrine comes from. This follows all the way through with the thoughts. These are the teachings of Christ as recorded by Matthew, who was a Levite, and wrote all these things down. As a matter of fact, it's very clear that most of the book of Matthew was finished by 35-37_{A.D.}—many parts of them were already circulating.

Matthew 7:13: "Enter in through the narrow gate; for wide *is* the gate and broad *is* the way that leads to destruction, and many are those who enter through it." They're going to go in that gate, that's the majority of people.

What does this tell you about all these polls? The majority think this; the majority think that. Did you know that those polls are lies anyway? They never count the people that hang up on them because they don't want to answer the poll. That makes the poll all skewed. Those that want to answer will give the political answer that they want. So, they come up with the answer that they want, and they only poll 1,083 people for a statistical whatever. Then they apply this to the whole nation.

So, next time you see these polls, watch them, and ask: What are they trying to manipulate by putting this poll this way? What is the outcome they desire from taking this poll? Then you've got your answer for why the poll. That's the broad way. That's the way the world is.

It takes absolutely no faith to keep Sunday. Just go to any church. Takes no faith. You just walk in the door. ***It takes faith to keep the Sabbath!*** It takes no faith to lie, cheat, steal and commit adultery. ***But it takes faith if you're honest before God,*** and don't do those things.

Verse 14: "For narrow *is* the gate and

difficult *is* the way that leads to life, and few are those who find it. But beware of false prophets...” (vs 14-15).

I tell you, Christ spoke over and over again, ‘Beware of false prophets. Beware that people don’t deceive you.’ And, lo and behold, what happens? *Someone will come along and they will quote Truth* for a long time until they get to the point that they want you to do a right or left turn. *Then they got you!*

“...beware of false prophets who come to you in sheep’s clothing...” (v 15). I still have never seen a false prophet coming with a placard hanging on his neck, saying, ‘Watch out for me, I’m a false prophet.’ But if they did, I’m sure CNN would go and find out what he has to say.

“...for within *they* are ravening wolves” (v 15). You’ll understand that when you read *Rome’s Challenge to the Protestants* {Appendix N: *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order*}. You will understand that!

Verse 16: “You shall know them by their fruits. They do not gather grapes from thorns, or figs from thistles, do they? In the same way, every good tree produces good fruit, but a corrupt tree produces evil fruit. A good tree cannot produce evil fruit, nor can a corrupt tree produce good fruit. Every tree *that is* not producing good fruit **is cut down and is cast into the fire**” (vs 15-19).

Sometimes God lets it grow, and grow, and grow. It makes a bigger fire, but it’s still going to be cut down. Satan and the religious forces of this world are going to think they have total victory when they have extinguished every Christian on earth. Then look out! *God is going to answer!* They shall be “...cut down and is cast into the fire.” You read about all the things in the book of Revelation, what’s going to happen. Is that not being cut down? *Yes!* Where are the *beast* and *false prophet* thrown immediately? What is the first thing Christ does? *The Lake of Fire!*

Verse 20: “Therefore, you shall assuredly know them by their fruits. Not everyone who says to Me ‘Lord, Lord’... [How many times have we read this?] ...shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; but the one who is doing... [practicing] ...the will of My Father Who *is* in heaven” (vs 20-21).

These are the words of Christ. Remember what we read in Heb., that if you refuse Him, there is no more forgiveness of sin.

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?...’” Whether good speaker or bad

speaker, it doesn’t make any difference. If they don’t speak the words of Christ, He didn’t send them.

“...‘And *did we not* perform many works of power through Your name?’ And then I will confess to them, “I never knew you.’...” (vs 22-23).

‘But Lord, You spoke to me!’ How many times have you heard Pat Robertson say, ‘The Lord said to me...’? Or Jimmy Baker? Remember when he was in his heyday? With his weeping, streaking mascara wife Tammy? ‘The Lord spoke to me.’ *God never spoke to them!*

“...**I never knew you.**...” (v 23). What does it mean to know God? ‘And hereby we know that we know Him *if* we keep His commandments.’ The test is: Do they keep the commandments of God? *Not just some of them, but all of them!*

“...‘I never knew you. Depart from Me, you who work lawlessness’” (v 23). That’s what *iniquity* means in the Greek: *lawlessness*. Now, lawlessness is a very interesting thing. That is lawlessness against God. But it is so perverse that in their system of lawlessness they even incorporate some of the laws of God. They will denounce:

- adultery
- murder
- thievery

unless it benefits them, of course.

They will extol the virtues of Christ, but they won’t keep the Sabbath. They will try and put Christ in Sunday, but He’s refused to go in there, never has been in there. And every year when Christmas time comes around some self-righteous preacher who is tired of all the merchandising says, ‘Let’s put Christ back into Christmas.’ *He was never there! Workers of iniquity!* They are so adept at it, they use the name of Christ, and people believe them. *This is what Paul was fighting here in the book of Hebrews.*

Verse 24: “Therefore **everyone who hears...** [actively hearing] **...these words of Mine and practices them...**” There you go!

Matthew 4:4: “But He answered *and* said, ‘It is written, “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of *the* mouth of God.’”’ He’s called the Word of God. And we’re going to be judged by what Christ says.

“...and practices them, I will compare him to a wise man, who built his house upon the rock; and the rain came down, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house...” (vs 24-25). There will be some times when your life will feel like that. But if you’re built on the Rock, you’ll

survive.

“...but it did not fall, for it was founded upon the rock” (v 25).

You wait and see, when rain time and flood time come again this year, you’re going to see *houses going down the river, being torn apart as they go, because of the floodwaters!* Now remember this Scripture when you see that:

Verse 26: “And **everyone who hears these words of Mine and does not practice them...**” The *hearing must result in doing*, or practicing. The hearing without action is null and void.

“...shall be compared to a foolish man, who built his house upon the sand” (v 26). Now, that’s nice and smooth. I mean, if you go out and you find some nice, good, level land that has compacted sand, I tell you, it’s easy digging. I mean, to dig the foundation, all you have to do is just kind of soak it down good, and it’s all nice and firm. You just get your trencher in there and it slices through it like soft butter. You got your foundation, you have your trench all ready to go, and you put everything up there, and that compacted sand is a good thing to build upon. But watch out! The dam upstream may break.

Watch Discovery Channel if you have it, because they did a good series on dams. They actually have pictures as to what happened when a dam broke. I used to drive by that dam every couple of months. It was in my territory when I was pastoring up in Salt Lake City. I would go up through eastern Idaho and on into Wyoming. As you go into Wyoming you follow along the Snake River. Just right as you come into Wyoming, just right after you get over the border, there is a little narrow gorge, which the road crosses over a little bridge where the stream down below the dam is. And you go up this road, and you get to the top of the road, right at the top of the dam, and you look out and there’s a lake up there that goes for miles and miles.

Dolores and I went up there, and she said, ‘I wonder what would happen if that dam would break?’ *And sure enough, that very dam broke, and swept everything out of its way!* Everyone below the dam was secure for years. This dam was flood control, gave them water for irrigation, they had crops, they had things for cattle, and everything, and *then one day it broke!* That’s what it’s talking about. I want you to have this in mind:

Verse 26: “And everyone who hears these words of Mine and does not practice them...” Kind of like the old farmer that was up on the hill up over the gorge? He said, ‘I don’t think I’d right likely

build my house down there alongside the river.’ *Well, it hasn’t flooded here ever since they had the dam.* ‘I just don’t think that that’s a place one ought to build a house.’ How long could they go? *Sooner or later it’s going to happen!*

The story of this in life is: How long can you go and everything looks good when you’re not obeying God? *Maybe a long, long time!* Your own deception is that since God hasn’t done anything, it’s okay. But the reality is, the reason nothing has happened for a long, long time is **because God has given you a space of repentance**, and you haven’t used it. But it’s going to come. Just like we read in Jeremiah.

“...who built his house upon the sand; and the rain came down, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell, and great was the fall of it” (vs 26-27). That’s because **he heard the sayings and he didn’t do them**. That’s what it’s talking about here in the book of Hebrews.

Verse 28: “Now, it came to pass *that* when Jesus had finished these words, the multitudes were amazed at His teaching.” Hello? Is doctrine important? Doctrine means *teaching*.

Verse 29: “For He taught them as One Who had authority, and not as the scribes.”

A scribe could only say, look into the book of Moses, and say, ‘God said...’ That’s all a scribe could do. He could say, ‘That means this...’ But notice what Christ said. You go through and read Matthew 5-7. He said, ‘You have heard it said in old time, but **I** say to you...’ No scribe could do that. The scribes would always refer back to their teacher, be it Moses, or be it a chief rabbi such as Hillel, or Shemei, or Gamaliel. Christ didn’t do that. *He didn’t refer to any man!* As a matter of fact, when you go through here, He talks about ‘You have heard in old time...’—he didn’t even refer to Moses.

Comment was made that the oral law—which is no different than the Catholic traditional laws; it’s in the same category—came from the scribes and the Pharisees. Didn’t come from God. But they all claim it comes from God.

Matt. 17 answers the question: If I could talk to God, or if I heard God directly, what would He say to me? There are a lot of people who palm it off on men. Look at a preacher and say, ‘Well, you’re only a man.’ That’s true! ‘I don’t want to believe any man. The Bible says *trust no man*, so I don’t want to believe any man. I won’t believe anything you have to say.’ The truth is that if what you say is the Word of God, then *it’s the Word of God!* You’re

just a mouthpiece. If you have anyone who comes up to you and says, ‘Well, if I heard God speak, then I would do what God said to me to speak. What He spoke to me, I would do.’

Matthew 17:1: “And after six days, Jesus took with *Him* Peter and James and his brother John, and brought them up into a high mountain by themselves. And He was transfigured before them...” (vs 1-2)—so that the apostles understood that Christ was the same One Who appeared to Moses, transfigured. This shows *His* heavenly authority, not the authority of men.

“...and His face shined as the sun, and His garments became white as the light. Then behold, there appeared to them Moses and Elijah talking with Him” (vs 2-3). *This is a vision!* He says later, *‘Tell the vision to no man.’*

Verse 4: “And Peter answered *and* said to Jesus, ‘Lord, it is good for us to be here. If You desire, let us make three tabernacles here: one for You, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah.’ While he was speaking, a bright cloud suddenly overshadowed them; and behold, a voice out of the cloud said, ‘This is My Son, the Beloved, in Whom I delight. **Listen to Him!**’” (vs 4-5).

That’s all that was said. If God spoke to you from heaven today, what would He say? *This is My beloved Son in Whom I am well pleased—hear Him!* And this, brethren, is exactly what the book of Hebrews is saying: ***Listen to Christ! Obey My voice!*** I mean, this is profound. We need to understand that.

Peter recalls this on a couple occasions, so let’s look at one of those occasions he recalls it. 2-Peter 1:15: “But I will make every effort *that*, after my departure, you may always have a written remembrance of these things *in order* to practice *them* for yourselves.” How are you going to have things always in remembrance? *Written down!* That’s why he wrote it.

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

When they were on the Mount of Transfiguration, when they heard God the Father’s message—which was an angel that spoke the message—***This is My beloved Son in Whom I am well pleased, hear Him!***

Verse 17: “Because He received glory and honor from God *the* Father when *the* voice came to Him from the Majestic Glory, **‘This is My Son, the Beloved, in Whom I am well pleased.’** And this *is*

the voice from heaven that we heard when we were with Him on the Holy mountain” (vs 17-18).

The basis of what we are to do is based on that. That’s what the apostles did. That’s what they wrote.

Verse 19: “We also possess the confirmed prophetic Word...” That is not prophetic sayings of the Old Testament. This is the more sure word of the preaching’s of Christ. This is what it’s referring to.

“...to which you do well to pay attention, as to a light shining in a dark place...” (v 19). What was Christ? *He was the Light!* And the darkness doesn’t comprehend the Light!

“...until the day dawns and *the* morning star arises in your hearts; knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture...” (vs 19-20). This does not refer only to the Old Testament, but this can refer also to the New Testament.

“...no prophecy of Scripture originated as anyone’s own *private* interpretation; because prophecy was not brought at any time by human will... [*by any time by the will of man*, not just necessarily *old* time] ...but the Holy men of God spoke as they were moved by *the* Holy Spirit” (vs 20-21).

There you have the whole lesson: ***hear the voice of Christ!***

We’ll have a little bit more to finish up on this next week, and then we’ll get a little more into the book of Hebrews. But I think it’s important for us to really have the foundation and grasp and understand that when you’re dealing with Jesus Christ, *you’re dealing with God manifest in the flesh. If you don’t listen to Him, you are in deep trouble!*

- you can’t ignore Him
- you can’t reject Him
- you can’t interpret Him any ole way you want to

—to make things your own religion, and your own things. No, you are to do it the way that God wants you to.

Today, if you will hear His voice, harden not your heart!

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*

Scriptural References:

- 1) Romans 9:6-7, 9-13, 15-18, 25-29
- 2) Romans 11:2-4, 8-10
- 3) Hebrews 2:1-4
- 4) Hebrews 6:1, 6
- 5) Hebrews 10:22-23
- 6) Romans 14:7-12
- 7) Hebrews 10:23-31
- 8) Hebrews 12:25
- 9) Jeremiah 7:21-25
- 10) Hebrews 1:1-2
- 11) Jeremiah 1:26-28
- 12) Jeremiah 11:1-9, 7-11, 14
- 13) Jeremiah 12:16-17
- 14) Jeremiah 2:4-5
- 15) Jeremiah 6:13-19
- 16) Jeremiah 7:2
- 17) Isaiah 1:2
- 18) Psalm 95:6-11
- 19) Matthew 7:13-24
- 20) Matthew 4:4
- 21) Matthew 7:24-29
- 22) Matthew 17:1-5
- 23) 2 Peter 1:15-21

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Acts 13; 1
- Romans 13
- Matthew 5-7

Also referenced:

Books:

- *A Harmony of the Gospels* by Fred R. Coulter
- *Vatican Assassins* by Eric John Phelps

FRC:MDS/cis
Transcribed: 10/04/2003
Reformatted/Corrected: January/2017

The Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews IV Hear, Listen, Do!

(Chapters 1-2)

Fred R. Coulter

One of the most important things that we find in the book of Hebrews is that it's telling us about Jesus Christ, the Son of God, Who was God, and is God, and Who brings the *ultimate message* from God the Father, because He is the *ultimate Son*. And how that what is stressed all the way through the book of Hebrews that:

- we are *to hear*
- we are *to listen*
- we are *to do* the will of God

So, let's finish up with just a few things that we did not cover last time in '*hearing, have ears to hear*.' Of course, we find that in the New Testament quite a bit. Let's see that one of the things that Jesus said many times over, and over, and over again was that *we are to hear!* This hearing means that we are *to listen and to do!* There is a saying of Jesus that we find in many places in the New Testament, and we'll look at quite a few of them. When you put them together back-to-back-to-back, it really brings an impact as to what He said.

After He gets done talking about the parable of the sower, Mark 4:9 "Then He said to them, '**The one who has ears to hear, let him hear.**'" That is an admonition, and also *a warning* that is given time and time again.

Verse 23: "**If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear.**" Jesus said of the Pharisees, *they could not hear* because they weren't of God. It's a very interesting thing. If you *hear* and then subsequently *do*, then you are going to want to listen again. If you *hear* and then *do*, you keep your spiritual ears open. But if you hear and do not do, then as we find that *you become like the foolish man* who built his house upon the sand (Matt. 7). As long as it doesn't rain, and as long as it is dry, it'll stand. But know for sure, the wind is going to blow, the rain is going to come, the waves are going to beat on it. If you're not founded on the rock—you're founded on sand—you're washed away.

Matthew 11:11: "Truly I say to you, there has not arisen among *those* born of women *anyone* greater than John the Baptist. But the one who is least in the Kingdom of Heaven is greater than he. For from the days of John the Baptist until now, the Kingdom of Heaven is taken with a *great* struggle... [taken by those who violently strive to achieve it] ...and *the zealous ones* lay hold on it" (vs 11-12).

That sounds like it's kind of conquered. It doesn't mean that. It means that *those who put forth the effort are able to enter into it*. You have to put forth the effort. It's not something that God is just going to kind of give to you, and you sort of bring it into your system by osmosis, just by being there.

Verse 14: "And if you are willing to receive it, he is Elijah who was to come. **The one who has ears to hear, let him hear**" (vs 14-15). In other words, *hear to understand!* What do you do when you come across a Scripture that you don't understand immediately? *Well what you do, you just set it on the side for the time being*; and you go through and you study the things that you can understand, that you know and that you learn from. Then you can come back to it, and you will understand it, or we can find a parallel of it in the Scriptures.

This has perplexed a lot of people, and the first time you read it, it sounds like that from the time of John the Baptist, the Law and the Prophets are no longer applicable. Therefore you, can ignore the whole of the Old Testament entirely, which is a false interpretation of it. Sometimes when you come to a verse that's hard to understand, you just set it aside for the time being, do some more study, and then come back to it.

Luke 16:16: "The Law and the Prophets were until John; from that time the Kingdom of God is preached, and everyone zealously strives to enter it." Now then, taking that one verse alone you could say, 'Well, it does look like that the Law and Prophets only were applicable until John.' But what it is really saying is that the Law and the Prophets were the *authority* until John; from the time of John, who preached the Kingdom of God—the Kingdom of God is the higher authority of the Word of God—which is Christ and His message all brought together.

Notice how Luke clarifies it, v 17: "But it is easier *for* heaven and earth to pass away than *for* one tittle of the Law to fail." That explains it. This means that the message of the Kingdom does not do away with the Law and Prophets, but it has a higher authority because it comes from God through the persons of John the Baptist and Jesus Christ. And John the Baptist was the messenger to come to prepare the way for Christ. This is what it's saying.

Again, we have the parables that are given, the parable of the sower. All the way through Jesus says, *He that has an ear, let him hear.*

Matthew 13:9: “The one who has ears to hear, let him hear.”

Verse 43: “Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. The one who has ears to hear, let him hear.”

Verse 18: “Therefore, hear the parable of the sower... [*to hear, to listen, to understand*] ...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 18-19).

Luke 10:16: “The one who hears you hears Me; and the one who rejects you rejects Me; and the one who rejects Me rejects Him Who sent Me.” It also then comes down to when you hear the Truth of God preached, if you don’t hear, then you’re held accountable for it.

Luke 14:34: “Salt *is* good; but if the salt becomes tasteless...” Who is the salt? *You are the salt of the earth!* That is those who have the Spirit of God are the salt of the earth.

“...with what shall it be seasoned?” (v 34). Think of this in relationship to apathy, about turning back on God’s Word. Those who do so have lost their savor.

Verse 35: “It is fit neither for the land, nor for the manure; *but* they cast it out. The one who has ears to hear, let him hear.” That ties directly in with the message of Hebrews.

There are quite a few places in Revelation where it says, *He that has ears to hear.* I think it’s very important, because somehow when people are baptized in the Church of God they get into a comfortable routine, and they get into a situation where they’re going to Sabbath services, and Holy Days—all of these things are involved—that they reach a comfort level. When you reach a comfort level, then you begin to reinforce that with a social level. Then when you to reinforce that with a social level, and you’re not growing in grace and knowledge spiritually, that social level begins to have more hold for you than the Word of God.

Then your Christianity is not based upon Christ. Your Christianity is based on *church socialism*. Then when it comes time *to hear*, too many people won’t hear because they get into the comfortable position that they won’t take any correction. That’s why the messages to the seven churches are very important and profound; and

especially the way that Christ ends the message to every church. We won’t go through the message to all the churches, but we’ll just look at the ones where He says, *He that has an ear.*

Revelation 2:7: “The one who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches...” What it is that is heard is *admonition and correction*, as well as recognition for what has been done. God is not going to forget the good things that we do. But we cannot rest on the good things that we do and say that we have accomplished.

Always remember that what you do today is fine; that’s for today. What you did yesterday, whether good or bad, if it’s good be thankful; if it’s bad, repent. *Never drag yesterday’s problems into today, and never drag today’s problems into tomorrow.* When you do, you’re never going to come to the point of overcoming where you can put it behind you. If you’re always fighting the *past* battle, *you’re never able to overcome to fight the future battles* and go ahead. So hence, you stop overcoming.

That’s why He tells them the good things that they have done, He tells them how they have endured; He tells them that they also have left their first love. Now He says, ‘Listen to what the Spirit is saying.’

Verse 11: “The one who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches....”

Verse 17: “*The one who has an ear, let him hear* what the Spirit says to the churches....”

I find Pergamos very interesting. Pergamos was so wound up in crossbreeding Satan’s doctrines, and hierarchy, and government into the Church that God gave the warning that unless they repented Christ Himself would fight against His Church.

I think that when you look at all the misplaced authority that we’ve seen in the various Churches of God, if I were one of them I would be very afraid at this point, having seen what has happened to Worldwide Church of God. Did not Christ fight against it? *Yes!* How did He do it? *He sent the enemy in to become part of them to take them down!* That’s a tremendous lesson!

The wrong authority has caused so many problems. The long and short of Pergamos is that any church that has an overbearing hierarchical authority to where the authority of the minister is called ‘the government of God’—which it is not—look out! Christ is going to fight against you; and the end is not going to be very pleasant. So, he that *has an ear to hear, let him hear!*

Now we come over here to Thyatira, v 29: **“The one who has an ear, let him hear** what the Spirit says to the churches.”

To Sardis—almost dead—I have nicknamed Sardis a ‘corpse with a pulse.’ Revelation 3:6: **“The one who has an ear, let him hear** what the Spirit says to the churches.” It’s very interesting about the things that are coming out concerning the conspiracies, the synagogue of Satan—the Illuminati, the Bilderbergers, the Trilateralists, the Federal Reserve, the Catholic Church, the Jesuits, the Jews—all of it all mixed in together is the synagogue of Satan. Christ tells those who love Him and hold fast to His Word in spite of all of it. Of course, there’s a lot of opposition against us.

Today we have so many things to garner our attention. Plus, we’ve got peace and prosperity so there’s no urgency. When you have no urgency it’s very tough to be zealous. That’s why it is so critical. Everything of Satan is out there to come and take you away:

- leisure
- pleasure
- sports
- false religion
- false education
- your own carnal nature

All of those things are pulling at you. Then you’ve got to face the conspiracy out there, and everything that is going on. When you get done reading the book *Vatican Assassins*, believe me, you’re never going to view the world the same way. You will see the hand of the Jesuits and the Catholic Church and all of their accomplices because they use second parties, third parties, and fourth parties to carry out their work. That’s why the admonition is given to *stay faithful to the Word of God*.

Verse 11: “Behold, I am coming quickly; hold fast that which you have so that no one may take away your crown.” There’s a lot of crown-stealing going along today! It’s a man that can take it away from you. God is not going to take it away from you. ***If you don’t listen to God, if you don’t listen to Christ, you’re going to lose your crown!***

Verse 12: “The one who overcomes will I make a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall not go out anymore; and I will write upon him the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which will come down out of heaven from My God; and *I will write upon him My new name.* **The one who has an ear, let him hear** what the Spirit says to the churches” (vs 12-13).

Since we beat up on the Laodiceans plenty

enough, and we’re all Laodiceans, we better be repenting. We won’t beat up on us any more today.

Verse 22: **“The one who has an ear, let him hear** what the Spirit says to the churches.”

Rev. 13 shows we are going to come to a time when it’s going to be either/or. It’s not going to be either this one or that one. It’s going to be ***either your name is written in the Lamb’s Book of Life and you’re going to receive salvation, or it’s not!*** The time is going to come!

Revelation 13:8: “And all who dwell on the earth shall worship him... [*the beast* who received the deadly wound and was healed] ...whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from *the foundation of the world.* **If anyone has an ear, let him hear**” (vs 8-9).

It’s interesting that you have the little word *if*. Because it shows it’s a conditional choice that you must make. *Everyone who hears must choose to hear*, which also means, *those who do not hear choose not to hear*.

I thought it was absolutely amazing what was written in *Rome’s Challenge to the Protestants*, where they gave the solution of triumph over the Catholic Church; that if you follow Christ and follow the Word of God, and keep the Sabbath of God, you will have the victory over the apostate church. You will stand on the Sea of Glass and have the harps of God and sing the song of Moses.

Revelation 16:15: “Behold, I come as a thief....” You can rest assured if a thief is coming in your house he’s not going to wear a placard and walk up and down in front of your house at the sidewalk and say, ‘I’m a thief, I’m coming in at 2:30_{a.m.}’ *No!* You don’t know. This tells us that the circumstances are going to be such that before it happens it’s going to look so great that it’s going to be almost unbelievable that the events are unleashed that come. That’s why He says,

“I come as a thief....” also understand there’s something else that is in this verse: We are to be faithful unto *the end!* The end of what? *There are two ends:*

1. to the end of your life
2. to the end of the age

For those who don’t come to the end of the age, this warning is for all of us at the end of our lives.

Verse 15: “Behold, I come as a thief....” There are occasions when someone dies just like that. You just *gasp*, you’re struck; the person is gone. In a sense it comes upon you like a thief, that you weren’t expecting it; totally unexpected. This is what it’s saying.

“...**Blessed is the one who is watching...**”
(v 15).

1. you’ve got to read and watch the Word of God
2. you’ve got to watch yourself and your carnal nature
3. you’ve got to watch against the attacks of Satan the devil
4. you’ve got to watch that no man take your crown

“...and is keeping his garments...” (v 15). Remember what it said of the Laodiceans? *They are naked; they don’t have garments!* So, Christ says:

“...so that he may not walk naked and they may not see his shame” (v 15). The garments are what?

Revelation 19:8: “And it was granted to her that she should be clothed in fine linen, pure and bright; for the fine linen is the righteousness of the saints.”

How do you keep your garments from being spotted? *By not letting sin take over your life!* That’s how it is. If and when you do sin, *repent!* Christ is there as a *propitiation continually* that we come to Him. He knows we’re going to sin. He knows that we have difficulties. He knows that we have problems, because we have His Spirit in us, and if we have His Spirit in us, then He is in us! *He knows!* The way you *keep your garments and not walk naked* is that you are always going to God.

Now then, all of these things apply to the book of Hebrews. Let me just mention that we’ve covered quite a few things in the book of Jeremiah last time, so we’ll cover just a couple of things here. But let’s understand how important this is. In the book of Jeremiah it says:

- 7 times that **they will not hear**
- 15 times that the children of Israel **have not heard**
- several times that they **will not obey**

Jer. 25 contains a summary, as well as a warning. I tell you, if you want something to help sort of perk up your spiritual juice a little bit, just set aside time to read a couple of chapters of Jeremiah every night just before you go to bed. Just think of it from the point of view of how much is in there that is directed to you personally? *Take it personally for correction* and I think you’ll be amazed.

As you go through and read the book of Jeremiah, let me just encourage you to do this: There are many conversations between Jeremiah and God. Jeremiah was the only one who was speaking the

Truth, and he had to go in front of all of the people and condemned them, as they would view it.

- He pleaded with them *to repent*
- He pleaded with them *to do God’s way*
- He pleaded with them *to keep the Sabbath*

They wouldn’t listen!

Jeremiah 25:3: “From the thirteenth year of Josiah the son of Amon king of Judah, even to this day, that *is* the twenty-third year, the Word of the LORD has come to me, and I have spoken to you, speaking again and again. But **you have not hearkened**. And the LORD has sent to you all His servants the prophets, again and again and sending them again and again; **but you have not hearkened nor bowed down your ear to hear**” (vs 1-4 What does it take to get through to some people?

Verse 5: “They *all* said... [the prophets] ...‘Turn again now, each one from his evil way, and from the evil of your doings, and dwell in the land that the LORD has given to you and to your fathers forever and ever. And do not go after other gods to serve them, and to worship them, and do not provoke Me to anger with the works of your hands; and I will do you no harm’” (vs 5-6).

Just think of today, how they’re going after all these other religions, amalgamating them all in. When I drove on California Avenue, here was a Universal Church. This week they were specializing on having Understanding the American Indian Spirit. The next week they’re going to have something on Buddhism. The next week they’re going to have something on Hinduism. And then maybe the next week they’ll have little something on Christ. **That provokes God to anger!** Because after all, God *is* God, and God is the One Who is Creator, and God is the One Who should be worshipped. Every other god is either a demon or a figment of your imagination, which you have made with your hands and you bow down to it. God gets really angry over that. But He says, ‘Look, if you stop it, I won’t bring it upon you.’

Verse 8: “Therefore, thus says the LORD of hosts, ‘**Because you have not heard My words**, behold, I will send and take all the families of the north,’ says the LORD, ‘and Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, My servant...’” (vs 8-9).

You think about that! How far that the Jews had gone down that He would call the Babylonian King Nebuchadnezzar, “...**My servant...**”! Read the book of Daniel that God did deal with him rather directly. He did write a letter of repentance after his seven years of insanity!

“...and will bring them against this land, and

against its people, and against all these nations all around *you*. And I will completely destroy them, and make them a waste, and a hissing, and everlasting ruins” (v 9).

There’s nothing that describes the area of Palestine anymore than that. Maybe it’s a little better now that some of the Jews are back there, and they are irrigating and growing some crops and things like that. But I tell you, you look at some of those pictures of the so-called Holy Land. They are desolate, they are barren, they are forsaken, especially if you go into the Negev and south of there. It’s just absolutely something!

Verse 10: “And I will take *away* from them the voice of rejoicing and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the sound of the millstones and the light of the candle. And this whole land shall be a desolation *and* an astonishment. And these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years” (vs 10-11).

God did that! We have that recorded right in the history of the Bible, and God brought them back. What did they do as soon as they got back? Read the book of Ezra! Read the book of Nehemiah!

Notice Daniel’s repentance for Israel, Daniel 9:3: “And I set my face toward the LORD God, to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes. And I prayed to the LORD my God and made my confession, and said, ‘O LORD, the great and awesome God, keeping the covenant and mercy to those who love Him, and to those who keep His commandments, we have sinned and have committed iniquity, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled, and have turned aside from Your commandments and from Your ordinances’” (vs 3-5).

The reason that God allows these things to happen, and yes, brings them about—not because God delights in evil; not because God delights in death and things like that—is it’s the only way to bring them to repentance. When you come to the point that:

- you won’t *hear*
- that you won’t *see*
- that you won’t *do*
- that you won’t *listen*

then God has to do something in your life to bring you to the point that you are willing to do so. Daniel could see that. He admitted all of their sins.

Verse 6: “Neither have we hearkened unto Your servants the prophets, who spoke in Your name to our kings, our rulers, and our fathers, and to all the people of the land. O LORD, righteousness *belongs* to You, but to us confusion of face, as at this

day...” (vs 6-7).

How this fits right in with the Church of God today! Is the Church of God in confusion today? *Yes!* Over so many issues, it’s incredible.

“...to the men of Judah and to the people of Jerusalem, and to all Israel who are near and who are afar off, through all the countries where You have driven them because they dealt treacherously with You. O Lord, confusion of face belongs to us, to our kings, to our rulers, and to our fathers, because we have sinned against You. To the LORD our God belong mercies and forgivenesses even though we have rebelled against Him. **Neither have we obeyed the voice of the LORD our God...**” (vs 6-10).

So there it is; that ties right in with *obeying the voice of the Lord our God*. I’ll say it again, because this is the most profound thing of the Bible. The whole Bible is the recorded Words of God, either given by direct speaking or direct speaking from Moses or the prophets. In their examples in what they did, they were not self-willed to do their words. They were not self-willed to preach their preaching’s. They did what God said. Why? *They were called of God and put into a relationship with God that they always would honor God’s way!* That’s what it has to be with us.

Verse 10: “Neither have we obeyed the voice of the LORD our God to walk in His laws, which He set before us by His servants the prophets. Yea, all Israel has transgressed Your Law, and have turned aside, so that they might not obey Your voice...” (vs 10-11).

There’s another thing that happens when you won’t hear. When you won’t hear and turn off your ears from listening to obey, then what do you do? You get busy doing other things so your conscience doesn’t bother you. You get busy doing other things so you won’t have to think about what you really have to do. Tie that together with apathy and avoidance; what a recipe for disaster!

You’ve done that; I’ve done that. How many times have you said, ‘I’ll do this; I’ll do that...’? And then you always find something else that you need to do before you do that, and you never get around to it. Then they even make jokes and make a little teeny round doughnut, which says ‘round tu-it,’ and pass that out to people who say, ‘Well, I’ll get around to it.’ That’s what happened to Israel.

Another thing, *the greatest deception* that you can have, which is the excuse that the Protestants use for worshiping on Sunday: ‘God knows my heart, which is good, so therefore, I’m justified to worship on Sunday because my heart is

good.' *That is the nicest excuse for the worst rebellion possible!*

(go to the next track)

People don't have the gall to stand there and shake their fists at God and say, 'No, God, I won't do it!' However, they can say, 'My heart is right, God knows I'm doing this to Him, Sunday is just fine. And Christmas, I'm glad we can go back and have that. I really missed that all the years that I was in the Church of God.' They don't look upon that as **utter, rank rebellion** because they couch it in such good terms.

You talk to any Sunday-keeper and you start pinning them down on the Sabbath and the first thing they do is say, *God knows my heart!*

Doesn't God judge the heart? *Yes, He judges the heart!* What is His judgment on the heart? *Jer. 17:9—deceitful above all things!* Isn't that the greatest deceit? *You don't want to rebel in harsh words against God*, so you use pleasant, good-sounding words *so you are justified in your own mind*, because that sounds good to you, therefore it must be good to God.'

Daniel is repenting for all Israel, v 11: "Yea, all Israel has transgressed Your Law, and have turned aside, so that they might not obey Your voice. Therefore, the curse has been poured out upon us, and the oath that is written in the Law of Moses the servant of God, because we have sinned against Him." The problem was *they didn't listen to the voice of God*.

Let's look at Hebrews again, and let's understand:

- Heb. 1 is the *proof of the Divinity of Christ*
 - Heb. 2 is the *humanity of Christ*
 - Heb. 1:1-4—we've read them, so let's just analyze them a little bit more and let's understand some things here that are very important:
1. It tells us that **Christ is the heir**, the heir of all things. Hebrews 1:2: "Whom He has appointed heir of all things..." Verse 1 tells us that He is **the ultimate Son**; that He is speaking to us.
 2. **He sustains the creation**: "...By Whom also He made the ages" (v 2). Of course, we're living in the final age.
 3. **He is eternal and pre-existent**, and now in glory, v 3: "Who, being *the* brightness of *His* glory and *the* exact image of *His* person..."

Brethren, that's the whole goal of us. The Greek there is 'character' meaning ***we are to have the character of God with the mind of Christ*** through:

- the Spirit of God
- through the laws and commandments being written in our heart and our mind

Also it talks about the exultation: "...and upholding all things by the word of His own power... [sustaining the universe] ...When He had by Himself purged our sins..." (v 3). Showing that ***He is the ultimate sacrifice***.

These first four verses set the whole stage for everything through the book of Hebrews. And He had to do it alone. Why? *Because He created mankind!* He brought upon mankind the kind of nature that we have because of sin. So, only He could do it. Then He is exalted with the resurrection, exalted

"...sat down at *the* right hand of the Majesty on high, having been made so much greater than *any* of the angels, inasmuch as He has inherited a name exceedingly superior to them" (vs 3-4).

Verse 5 shows His appointment, by the virtue of what He is.

If God is going to send His own Son on this earth, then what He has to say and bring has got to be so much superior to what was given through Moses, to what was given through the angels. This is the whole purpose of showing it, that this is the ultimate of God's Word and expression to us and message to us.

Verses 5-13 show five things:

1. He is appointed as the Royal Son!

No angel was ever appointed to that.

2. He is God!

Is that not a higher authority than angels? Is that not a higher authority than a man? *Yes indeed!* He is God! He *was* God!

3. He is greater than any of the angels!

4. He is Eternal!

5. He is exalted and is told to sit at the right hand of God!

"...until I make Your enemies a footstool..." (v 13). Never said of that of any of the angels.

Verse 5: "For to which of the angels did He ever say, 'You are My Son; this day I have begotten You'? And again, 'I will be a Father to Him, and He will be a Son to Me'?.... [Psa. 2] ...And again, when He brought the Firstborn into the world, He said, 'Let all *the* angels of God worship Him'" (vs 5-6).

Firstborn! Let's focus on *firstborn* for a minute, because Jesus was firstborn twice: once *in*

the flesh, and once *from the dead*. The *King James* has ‘the first begotten.’ If it were begotten, it would read ‘protogene/protogenes.’ But it should be *firstborn*, because the Greek is ‘prototokos’:

- ‘protos’ means *first*
- ‘tokos’ means *born*

The verb of the noun ‘tokos’ is ‘tikto’—*to be born*.

Matthew 1:25: “But he did not have sexual relations *with* her until *after* she had given birth to her Son, the firstborn; and he called His name Jesus.” There is His physical birth—*firstborn*—counted from the mother. Christ, being ‘monogenes’—the *only begotten* of the Father—is counted from the Father. He is firstborn in the flesh. *And all the angels worshipped Him.*

There is another purpose in this, because all the way through the book of Hebrews, what are we going to see? *That we are connected with Christ!* Our destiny in God’s plan is connected with what Christ has already done. This is to give us:

- hope
- inspiration
- strength
- understanding
- spiritual tenacity

in the face of difficulties. Another way of putting it is **endurance**.

Rom. 8:28 fits in with it. This is what we need to know. Now many, many times have we all gone through experiences, and we wonder why is this happening? We don’t see anything but the trouble, and when you come to the point the only thing you see is the trouble, then what you need to do is look up and find God and see God in it. Here’s the place that you start, because it has to be done by faith. What you see is nothing but the problem, so you must have the faith to see beyond the problem.

Romans 8:28: “And we know...” This is something we need to come to know, to believe, and to believe with conviction.

“...that all things...” (v 28). Not some things, not part of the things, not most of the things, but ***all things***.

“...work together for good to those who love God...” (v 28). If you don’t love God, it’s not going to work together for good.

“...to those who are the called according to His purpose, because those whom He did foreknow, He also predestinated *to be* conformed to the image of His own Son...” (vs 28-29).

What was the image of Christ? *Christ was the image of the person of God the Father!* We are

to be conformed to the image of Christ. That’s why God wants us to really understand that. When you do, then you can have zeal in times of peace. You can have purpose in times of confusion. You can have endurance in times of trouble.

“...He also predestinated *to be* conformed to the image of His own Son, that He might be *the* Firstborn among many brethren” (v 29). That’s awesome! Whenever things get tough for you:

- remember Rom. 8:28-29
- remember your calling
- remember your destiny
- don’t let any man steal your crown

—from the point of view that if a man goes bad, not all good men always stay good; some good men go bad! So, if a good man goes bad, don’t let that disillusion you in your faith toward Christ, because ***if it does then he has stolen your crown!***

Rev. 1—the *King James* translates ‘prototokos’/firstborn *as begotten*. It would be ‘protogenes’ if it were the *first begotten*. Jesus is referred to as the *only begotten*!

Revelation 1:5: “And from Jesus Christ, the faithful Witness, the Firstborn from the dead...” showing that the resurrection is the new birth. Not some sort of ethereal spiritual thing that takes place when you open your heart and let the Lord in. It actually works the opposite way around. Christ opens your heart and He lets you in. It’s the opposite. “...The Firstborn from [among] the dead.”

We have this confirmed in Col. 1 twice. When you put all the Scriptures together, they really form a great and beautiful picture of:

- what Christ is
- what Christ has done
- what He is doing

and the whole plan and purpose of God! You couple that together and you put it on the framework of the Holy Days, and then you have the full plan and picture of God’s way. That’s why the Sabbath and Holy Days are so important.

Colossians 1:15: “Who is *the* image of the invisible God, *the* Firstborn of **all creation**” Those who believe in a ‘created’ Christ turn to this Scripture and say, ‘There it is, He’s the firstborn of every creature’ (*KJV*). Who was His mother? *No!* You couldn’t have that. It says He’s the Firstborn. It doesn’t say He’s the first ‘created.’ You would first have to have a mother for Him to be Firstborn.

Verse 18 clarifies it: “And He is the Head of the Body, the Church; Who is *the* Beginning, ***the Firstborn from among the dead...***” This means

that *He's the Firstborn among many brethren who are going to follow Him!*

- Are we going to be a new creation in Christ? *Yes, we're going to be a new creation in Christ through conversion and at the resurrection permanently as a spirit being. Yes!*
- Will we be a new creature? *Definitely!*

I don't want this old one to stick around very long. "...all creation..." refers to those who are going to be born of the resurrection.

Notice how this goes right along and shows why it was Paul who wrote Hebrews.

Verse 16: "Because by Him were all things created... [Sound a little bit like Heb. 1? *Yes!*] ...the things in heaven and the things on earth, the visible and the invisible, whether *they be* thrones, or lordships, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him and for Him. And **He is before all, and by Him all things subsist**" (vs 16-17).

Hebrews says He upholds the universe by *the Word of His power*. You've got to be wholly righteous in order to do that, to be trusted with that power. **Christ is!**

Verse 18: "And He is the Head of the Body, the Church; Who is *the Beginning, the Firstborn* from among the dead so that in all things He Himself might hold the preeminence. For it pleased *the Father* that in Him all the fullness should dwell" (vs 18-19). **We're going to share in that, brethren!**

Heb. 12 talks about the Church, and the Church is also viewed as the *firstborn*, as a group. Christ is the Firstborn as the individual, the first of the firstborn. We are called the Church of the Firstborn, as a group. Meaning that *we'll be in the first resurrection!* We'll be born from *the dead! Firstborn!*

Hebrews 12:22: "But you have come to Mount Zion, and to *the city of the living God*, heavenly Jerusalem; and to an innumerable company of angels; *to the joyous festival gathering*; and to **the Church of the firstborn, registered in the Book of Life in heaven**; and to God, *the Judge of all*; and to *the spirits of the just who have been perfected*; and to Jesus, *the Mediator of the New Covenant*; and to sprinkling of *the blood of ratification*, proclaiming superior things than *that of Abel*" (vs 22-24). There you have it. We're all part of that *firstborn*. That's quite a thing, brethren!

Remember that when you get kind of over-pressed with troubles and difficulties, and sort of downcast, always keep that in mind. Just go pray!

Get on your knees, get out the Bible, open it up, and just go through these verses again. Ask God:

- to help you
- to comfort you
- to show you the way
- to lead you
- to give you the thoughts that you need

I'll tell you what, God will deliver you out of that difficulty or predicament. **He will! Absolutely will!** Then all of a sudden you'll go along, and one day—BING!—you'll see that God delivered it.

This is why faith is so important; and also the love of God is so important. Remember this: You look at your old, physical, deteriorating, rusting-out, old body, getting old is not the problem, it's the *rust* that goes along with it. Remember that! At the resurrection God wants to fill you *with the fullness of God*. That is overwhelming! When that makes a spiritual impact upon your mind—which it will—there will come a day, I guarantee it, you'll be going along and you'll either be praying or you'll be studying, or you'll be thinking on God's way and you'll be thinking on God's plan, and it will come upon you in an overwhelming way that you—yes, **you—are going to be filled with the fullness of God!** That's amazing!

Now Paul ends that section here, Ephesians 3:20: "Now, to Him Who is able... [has the *power—'dunamis'*] ...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 God answered that thought? Maybe you didn't really even pray about it. You just, sort of a passing thought: 'God, You know that would be nice,' but not really demanding anything, not really in a prayer, but just kind of thinking. That's happened to me, and it's one of those things that you don't think about it until it's done, maybe already passed, and then you think, 'Thank You, God, You did that. You heard that thought.' He has the power, He has the ability to do it, and will do it.

"...above all that we ask or think, according to the power that is working in us, to Him *be* glory in the Church by Christ Jesus throughout all generations, *even* into the ages of eternity. Amen" (vs 20-21).

We have it tied in with Hebrews 1:2: "Whom He has appointed heir of all things, by Whom also He made the ages."

Verse 7: "Now, on the one hand, of the angels He says, 'Who makes His angels spirits, and His ministers a flame of fire.' But on the other hand,

of the Son *He* says, ‘Your throne, O God... [Is Christ God? *Yes!*] ...*is* into the ages of eternity; a scepter of righteousness *is* the scepter of Your kingdom’” (vs 7-8). This is quoted from Psalm 45:6-7.

The Jehovah’s Witnesses believe that Jesus was Michael the archangel. Even some Seventh-Day Adventists do. So, this knocks it into a ‘cocked hat.’

Titus 2:11: “For the grace of God, which brings salvation for all men, has appeared; teaching us that, having denied ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live moderately and righteously and Godly in this present world, looking for the blessed hope and *the* appearing of the glory of our Savior and great God, Jesus Christ” (vs 11-13).

It calls Him *God, Savior and God*. It’s not talking about two personages. It’s talking about our Savior Jesus Christ, Who is the great God.

Verse 14: “Who gave Himself for us, so that He might redeem us from all lawlessness, and might purify for Himself a unique people, zealous of good works.”

Titus 3:4: “But when the graciousness and the love of **God our Savior**... [we know that’s Christ] ...toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness, which we practiced, but according to His mercy He saved us, through *the* washing of regeneration and *the* renewing of *the* Holy Spirit, which He richly poured out upon us through **Jesus Christ our Savior**” (vs 4-6). So there it is, clear as can be:

- Christ is God!
- Christ is our Savior!

What he’s doing is showing that none of this can be said of any of the angels at any time.

Psalm 45:6: “Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; a scepter of justice is the scepter of Your kingdom... [a righteous scepter] ...You love righteousness and hate wickedness; therefore God, Your God...” (vs 6-7).

This is referring to God the Father. Is God the Father the God of Jesus Christ? *Yes!* {note booklets: *The Two Jehovah’s of the Psalms*, *The Two Jehovah’s of the Pentateuch*, *Defining the Oneness of God*, and *The Trinity*}

“...Your God, has anointed You with the oil of gladness above Your fellows” (v 7).

Hebrews 1:9—almost an identical quote; there is one thing you are to hate: “You loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; because of this,

God, *even* Your God, has anointed You with *the* oil of gladness above Your companions.”

We’re to do the same thing: *We are to love righteousness! We are to hate lawlessness!* And if there’s any one thing that’s lawlessness, that is Sunday-keeping. You think about that. You can read it in *A Harmony of the Gospels*.

Verse 10: “And, ‘You, Lord, in the beginning did lay the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are *the* works of Your hands.’”

That confirms 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. All things came into being through Him, and not even one *thing* that was created came into being without Him” (vs 1-3). He laid the foundations of the earth. I’ve often wondered what’s that like? You know, the earth is quite a phenomenal thing.

Oh, by the way, I have the solution for the Kyoto greenhouse thing. Perfect answer, **God’s answer**: Don’t be so stupid, little man. If you want to stop the greenhouse effect, then, God says, ‘I challenge you to stop every volcano I have created from blowing up. Because every time one of My volcanoes blows, it spews into the air carbon dioxide, carbon monoxide, sulfur and sulfuric acid many more times over than all the autos burning on the earth at the same instant.’ Foundations of the earth: **God laid that!**

They talk about the core of the earth being solid iron or whatever? But then you go down in the earth here is all of this molten magma just sloshing around under the surface of the earth. It serves a purpose: It keeps the earth at an even temperature; also with the oceans, and with the universe, and its place in the universe, and everything combined, the earth is always moving. All the land everywhere is always moving. It’s really amazing!

You watch on the Discovery Channel; every once in a while they will show you some of these deep-sea things. They will show you some these volcanic vents down at the bottom of the ocean. And clear down there, thousands of feet below the surface of the earth, are animals that God has created to live and thrive right there in an environment, that even other fish higher up in the elevation of the ocean could not survive. God has made so many strange, wonderful different creatures. We look at them and think they are weird, but they are not. God made them, and for a tremendous purpose.

I’ve often wondered about ‘the four corners’ of the earth. I’ve looked at the globe and I’ve tried to figure out where the ‘four corners’ are. Where are the four corners of a round sphere? The closest I can

come to it is this: the North Pole, the South Pole, then the area in the Atlantic called the Devil's Triangle, and the area in the Pacific where they have the equal thing on magnetism that they do at the so-called Devil's Triangle. Those are four points on the earth. Whether that is, I don't know.

- God made it!
- God designed it!
- God laid it!
- God put it together!

Notice the second part of this which is greatest yet, Hebrews 1:10: "...and the heavens are *the* works of Your hands." God has made that for His family. Imagine that! There's going to be a new heaven and a new earth.

Verse 11: "They will perish, but You remain *forever*; and *they* will all grow old like a garment, and You will roll them up like a covering... [just like you take a blanket and roll it up] ...and they shall be changed..." (vs 11-12).

So, just like God is using this physical body that we have now, it's going to be changed, *'in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye'*! Likewise with the heavens and the universe that is out there that we see. It is going to be changed. What is that new heaven is going to be like? *The only way we're going to find out is to be in the Kingdom of God* so we can travel out there and see it. I tell you one thing for sure, God must have something so great that He has in mind, so marvelous beyond what we can even think or dream that we can't handle it with this physical mind. But He is going to do it. *God is absolutely incredible!* His Son is absolutely incredible, that He is going to do that.

"...they shall be changed; but You are the same, and Your years will not end.'.... [imagine what it's going to be like to live forever, and no rust] ...But unto which of the angels did He ever say, 'Sit at My right hand, until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet'?.... [Never!] ...Are they not all ministering spirits, being sent forth to minister to those who are about to inherit salvation? (vs 12-14).

I want to go over the first four verses of Heb. 2 to end this section. We will see this all the way through the book of Hebrews. Paul will explain something very profound, give Scripture after Scripture, and then what is he going to do? *He is going to give a warning!* So, we have Heb. 1, all this inspiration of what Christ is, what God is doing, how much greater He is than the angels, our destiny with Him. Then he gives the warning,

Hebrews 2:1: "For this reason, it is imperative that we give much greater attention to the

things, *which* we have heard, lest at any time **we should slip away.**" It's not that we let the thing we heard slip away, but that *we slip away because we're not still listening.*

Verse 2: "For if the word spoken by angels was *enforced* without fail..." Remember Zacharias, John the Baptist's father? *Gabriel came and said, 'When you go home, Elizabeth is going to conceive.'* Instead of Zacharias saying, 'Well, thank you. I can hardly wait to get home,' he said, 'How's that going to happen?' The angel said, 'Because you didn't believe, you're not going to be able to speak until after the child is born.' Was that enforced without fail? *Yes!*

"...and every transgression and disobedience received just recompense, how shall we escape, *if* we have neglected so great a salvation; which was first received when it was spoken by the Lord, *and* was confirmed to us by those who heard *Him*; God also bearing witness with *them* by both signs and wonders, and various miracles and gifts of *the* Holy Spirit, according to His own will?" (vs 2-4).

So, if God has intervened in our lives, it puts a great responsibility on us. This book of Hebrews really, I think, is not only for them at that day when they grew weary of doing the things they should be doing, but it is also for us that we may get our eyes up and see Christ, ***that we may always be inspired with the Word of God and God's plan!***

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*

Scriptural References:

- 1) Mark 4:9, 23
- 2) Matthew 11:11-12, 14-15
- 3) Luke 16:16-17
- 4) Matthew 13:9, 43, 18-19
- 5) Luke 10:16
- 6) Luke 14:34-35
- 7) Revelation 2:7, 11, 17, 29
- 8) Revelation 3:6, 11-13, 22
- 9) Revelation 13:8-9
- 10) Revelation 16:15
- 11) Revelation 19:8
- 12) Jeremiah 25:3-6, 8-11
- 13) Daniel 9:3-11
- 14) Hebrews 1:2-4, 13, 5-6
- 15) Matthew 1:25
- 16) Romans 8:28-29
- 17) Revelation 1:5
- 18) Colossians 1:15, 18, 16-19
- 19) Hebrews 12:22-24
- 20) Ephesians 3:20-21
- 21) Hebrews 1:2, 7-8

- 22) Titus 2:11-14
- 23) Titus 3:4-6
- 24) Psalm 45:6-7
- 25) Hebrews 1:9-10
- 26) John 1:1-3
- 27) Hebrews 1:10-14
- 28) Hebrews 2:1-4

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Matthew 7
- Jeremiah 17:9
- Psalm 2
- Hebrews 1:5

Also referenced:

Books:

- *Vatican Assassins* by Eric Jon Phelps
- *A Harmony of the Gospels* by Fred R. Coulter

Booklets:

- *The Two Jehovah's of the Psalms* by Carl Franklin
- *The Two Jehovah's of the Pentateuch* by Carl Franklin
- *Defining the Oneness of God* by Carl Franklin
- *The Trinity* by Carl Franklin

Article: *Rome's Challenge to the Protestants* (*The Holy Bible in Its Original Order*, Appendix N)

FRC:MDS/cis

Transcribed: 02/10/2004

Reformatted/Corrected: bo—January/2017

The Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews V How to Recover from Laxity

(Chapter 2)
Fred R. Coulter

Hebrews 1 talks about:

- the Divinity of Christ
- the proof of His Divinity
- that He is special and unique
- He is greater than the angels
- He is greater than any human being
- the firstborn in the flesh
- the firstborn from among the dead

You'll see this is a pattern all the way through Hebrews. You set the stage, in this case the Divinity of Christ—the greatness of the salvation—that God personally came in the flesh and talked to mankind to answer the question: If God were a man, what would He say? And that's what most people would say of God. 'If God would come down here and talk to me as a man, then I would believe Him.' That's why Christ came. Have they believed Him? *No!* They find another excuse, because when you take away one excuse human nature *looks for another excuse*, rather than *believe God and obey Him!*

After he states the case very clearly—which he did in Heb. 1:1-4—now comes a warning. Then Heb. 2:6-18 are also stating the case for *the humanity of Christ*. If He is a human being—which He was... Read those sections in *The Christian Passover* book again: The Nature of God and The Nature of Man. Also the sermon series on *The Prophecies of Jesus in the Old Testament*. That will add a great deal to your understanding as we go through. By the time he gets done with Heb. 2:18, Paul compares Christ with Moses. What did the Jews say concerning Christ? *'Moses we know. God talked to him. As for this Man, we don't know.'* So, Paul has got to answer the question concerning Moses, which he does in the first part of Heb. 3.

Hebrews 3:7—here is another warning: "For this reason, even as the Holy Spirit says, 'Today, if you will hear His voice, harden not your heart, as in the rebellion, in the day of temptation in the wilderness'" (vs 7-8). Then all the rest of Heb. 3 and the first part of Heb. 4, all the way down to Hebrews 4:14 is a very strong warning. We will see that in the rest of the chapters again.

Hebrews 2:1: "For this reason, it is imperative that we give much greater attention to the things, *which* we have heard, lest at any time we should slip away."

The *King James* says, 'lest *they* should slip

away,' but that's not correct. It is: "...lest at any time *we* should slip away. For if the word spoken by angels was *enforced* without fail, and every transgression and disobedience received just recompense, how shall we escape, *if we* have neglected so great a salvation; which was first received when it was spoken by the Lord, *and* was confirmed to us by those who heard *Him*; God also bearing witness with *them* by both signs and wonders, and various miracles and gifts of *the* Holy Spirit, according to His own will?" (vs 1-4).

Verse 1: "For this reason, it is imperative... [that's the strongest that I could get in the English for the Greek 'obligatory'] ...that we give much greater attention to the things *which* we have heard, lest at any time we should slip away."

After Hebrews was written they slipped away even more, in spite of the warnings in the book of Hebrews about committing the unpardonable sin. Now we are living in the identical days today.

- Are people tired of hearing God?
- Are people tired of keeping the Sabbath?
- Are they tired of keeping the Holy Days?

For whatever reason! Now true enough, the ministers did not do much to inspire the brethren to keep the Holy Days, because they became disinterested and bored. So, the brethren would come to church and they would become disinterested and bored, and they weren't fed. They *slipped away* because they weren't paying attention to the things that they heard.

Let's see what we need to do when this occurs. It's for the Laodicean age, v 3: "How shall we escape, *if we have neglected* so great a salvation..." Why does he say that? What is *the salvation* that God is giving us?

- to be His sons
- to be spirit beings
- to live in glory with Christ with the same glory that He has

Is that not a great salvation? *Yes, it is!* What do people settle for when they give up on that? *They settle for comfort in the flesh!* When they give up on that they begin to compare themselves with other people.

Let's look at the process here of comparing yourself with other people first. Today this is even

more of a troubling problem then back when this Psalm was written. We can be almost guaranteed of that.

I used the *Word Biblical Commentary*, and it gives some very good things. I don't use any other commentary because very few of them really discuss the Greek in a way that is helpful. But here is part of the commentary that was written. And this, I think, is a very well-written paragraph from the perspective of Christology. Now unfortunately, they use these long words. What is Christology? *That is the study of Jesus Christ to know who He is.*

from Word Biblical Commentary:

Hebrews is an unusually important document because of the distinctiveness and the clarity of its witness to Jesus Christ. The key to that witness is the recognition that the Christology...

Or that is the presentation and understanding of Who Christ was, Who He is, and what He is doing now.

...in Hebrews is a pastoral response to a crisis.

What was the crisis? *They were neglecting! They were not paying attention! They were letting other things get in the way.*

The failure of nerve on the part of the community addressed, as evidenced by the parenetic warning sections, occurred because of an inadequate Christology... [understanding of Christ] ...an inadequacy the writer is endeavoring to address by the exponential sections of the discourse.

In other words, he's trying to correct them in certain sections, just like I pointed out in Hebrews.

The laxity against which this writer is striving... [spiritual laziness] ...in this series of exhortations he directs to his audience results at least partly from a deficiency he attempts to remedy, and the development of his theology.... [teaching about God] ...To be more precise...

This is in easy-to-understand English here:

...the reader's lethargy derives from their failure to grasp the full significance of Christ: that He was God, that He became flesh, was the Son of God, died for our sins, rose from the dead, and is now seated at the right hand of God as our High Priest after the order of Melchisedec.

They didn't grasp that!

They were prepared to abandon their confession because they had lost the realization of its significance.

Let me give you a good example of that: When the Spanish came over here and conquered Central America and South America, what was it they were after? *Gold and silver!* The Indians, especially the Incas, had so much gold that it had lost its value. They willingly gave it away. A lot of them gave it away so they could live a little longer in the flesh. The Spanish were there to run the spears through them and chop off their heads because, being Catholics, these heathen were heretics and deserving of death. But they could stave off death if they would profess Catholicism and give them the gold. In the face of death, gold didn't mean too much. *So, they willingly gave it!*

We have the same thing here. People did not appreciate—the brethren did not appreciate—what God had done, and they were prepared to abandon their confession, because they had lost the realization of its significance. And that is profound, because that is exactly what has happened in the world, in Protestant Christianity, and in the Church of God, with the true Christianity of Christ.

- How did they lose it? *They became lazy!*
- Lazy in what? *Listening to the Word of God!*
- How is it that you become lazy?
- What is the first neglect that people slack off on in their Christian growth? *Study! Less than that, even reading the Bible!*
- When you don't study, what is it that is really happening?
- What are you reading when you study, or when you just read the Bible? *You're reading the Word of God!*

Which is ***the voice of God! To obey the voice of God!***

- What happens when you don't study? ***God is not talking to you!***

God does not come down with an audible voice in your brain and say, DING! 'Hello, this is God. May I have five minutes of your attention please? I want to tell you something.' ***NO!*** Because

- *you have to choose* to open the Bible
- *you have to choose* to strive after God
- *you have to choose* to serve God and love God

God is the One Who is perfect; we're the ones who are imperfect. Therefore, in their laxity, if they don't study *they don't hear the voice of God.*

Hebrews 2:1: “For this reason, it is imperative that we give much greater attention to the things, *which* we have heard, lest at any time we should slip away.”

What happens when you don’t study the Bible for a long time? What is the first thing that happens when you don’t study? *The first thing that happens is you get a guilty conscience because you know you ought to!* Then somehow you justify your guilty conscience so it doesn’t stab you. But what the guilty conscience is, *is God’s Spirit* saying you better study. Then if you don’t, you begin to forget. What happens with forgetfulness?

- *you let it slip*
- *you deliberately avoid it*
because you don’t want to remember it
- *you give up on God!*

You don’t give up on God first, you give up on the Sabbath and the Holy Days, and you opt for a Sunday god. You still think you have God, but *you don’t have God!*

Now in this age, what’s another factor that comes into play that they didn’t have in other ages? *The things in the world, the ways of the world!* And it’s so easy. I mean, in your own home how many things are there to distract you if you let it? *Television, radio, movies, neighbors!* Then you assuage your conscience by saying, ‘Well, God wants me to do good.’ Then you make friends with your neighbors that you were enemies with, and you think, ‘I’ve really done a good deed.’

God could care less, because *you haven’t come back to Him*. Especially when your employer wants to work on the Sabbath or Holy Days, and he comes up and he says, ‘Now look, I’ll pay you double-time, but I really need you tomorrow, Saturday.’ If you are not strong in Christ, that could be very enticing. You don’t view that as coming from Satan, because, after all, he’s just your boss. But your boss is in the world. So, *it’s the world knocking on the door of your mind!* Who’s the ‘god of this world’? *Satan the devil!*

Here is the ultimate that happens, Psalm 36:1 “The wicked utters transgression in his heart. There is no fear of God before his eyes.” Let’s understand something:

- If you start slacking up on the Sabbath, what does that represent?
- If you do not keep the Sabbath, what does that represent?
- If you begin sinning, what does that represent?
- ***No fear of God!***

God expects you to keep the Sabbath the way He has defined it, from sundown to sundown. He wants you to keep it because you love Him so that you can get a great deal out of the Sabbath and God can fellowship with you, because God loves you. *This is an expression of your love to God!* But if you lose that love and come to the point that you no longer have any fear; in other words, *fear* is a last resort to keep you from sinning against God.

What about a man or a woman who is taken up with temptations of adultery? They get ready to fall into it? Then all of a sudden it comes to their mind and they run away and do not commit the act, because they’re afraid. *They are afraid of the penalty of God! That fear is the bottom line to keep you from going over and transgressing!*

That’s why it’s saying, v 1: “The wicked utters transgression in his heart. There is no fear of God before his eyes, for he flatters himself in his own eyes until his iniquity is found to be hateful. The words of his mouth are iniquity and deceit; he has stopped acting wise and doing good.... [slacking up, not doing any good] ... He plots iniquity upon his bed; he sets himself in a way that is not good; he does not hate evil” (vs 1-4). That’s the ultimate condition of falling away.

Let’s look at a more likely one that takes place with us, Psa. 37. It’s interesting how these come, one after the other. I’m going to write ‘Lot’ at the beginning of this—Psa. 37—because it says in 2-Peter that Lot was vexed, or frustrated because of the evildoers in Sodom. He could have moved out; he didn’t have to stay there.

It’s like a person living in the middle of San Francisco, coming to church every Sabbath and saying, ‘Oh, those wicked people! I see them on the street: men holding hands with men, and kissing men in public. I went by one of those gay bars the other day, and you wouldn’t believe what I saw!’ Well if that upsets you, move out of San Francisco. God had to send down an angel to deliver Lot and his two daughters, and his wife and his two sons, and their families didn’t even believe. They said, ‘No, this is craziness; we like Sodom. We know the problems of it, but we like all the benefits of it.’ Even his wife couldn’t stand to obey the angel and she looked back. Remember it says, ‘Every transgressor of an angel is just recompense.’ And hers was instant, *a pillar of salt!*

Here’s what happens, Psalm 37:1: “Do not fret yourself because of evildoers... [don’t be frustrated] ...and do not be envious against the workers of iniquity.” That is in their prosperity. Why does God let the wicked prosper? *And they do—don’t they?* There are two reasons:

1. in hopes that they will repent
2. so that when His judgment finally comes it will be completely just

He has given them space. That's why God sends the rain on the just and on the unjust.

Verse 2_[transcriber's correction]: "For they shall soon be cut down like the grass; and wither as the green herb."

Right now we're right at the tail end of the haying season. And as I go do my water therapy—and Rachelle said, one man thought that my water therapy was colonics; trust me, water therapy is not colonics, it's exercise in a pool—and I have to go by this place where their business is making hay. He's got these fields of alfalfa, and he does a really good job. He, so far, has had five cuttings, and he's working on his sixth cutting. This far north, that's a well-managed set of fields to do so. It's alfalfa that he cuts, so it grows fast. But as soon as it's cut, what happens? *It loses its life sap from the stem from the roots!* It begins to dry up. That's the whole purpose of hay, to dry up. That's what it's talking about here. Don't worry about it if they look green and prosperous. When they're cut they're going to dry up.

Verse 3: "Trust in the LORD and do good; dwell in the land... [or enter into the Kingdom of God at the resurrection] ...and cherish faithfulness. Delight yourself in the LORD..." (vs 3-4). This is how you overcome the neglect and laxity:

- don't fret because of the prosperity of the people out there
- don't be envious of the things that they have.

Just remember, there's going to be an economic downturn, and the repo-man is just around the corner. You will see it! Remember all those dot-coms a few years ago? *They had repossession sales!* You could buy nearly brand-new equipment for a few cents on the dollar. All those rich highfliers, where are they now? *In bankruptcy court!* Were they cut down? Were they shriveled up? Did it go away? *Yes!*

If you are faithful and continue with God, v 4: "Delight yourself in the LORD and He shall give you the desires of your heart"—which may not be physical things at all.

But a greater thing is—if you desire to know the Word of God and really love God—that's what He will give you, and that's what is more important and that is something that no money can buy. That's why, as we will see with the Laodiceans, it is so tragic that they say, 'We're rich and increased with

goods,'—what does that amount to? It's like they asked when the rich man died, 'How much did he leave?' *All of it!*

Verse 5: "Commit your way unto the LORD; trust also in Him, and He will bring it to pass. And He shall bring forth your righteousness like the light, and your judgment like the noonday" (vs 5-6). What I'm giving you is how to overcome the laxity.

Verse 7: "Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for Him; do not fret yourself because of him who prospers in his way, because of him who carries out wicked schemes. Cease from anger, and forsake wrath; do not fret yourself, it leads only to evil" (vs 7-8).

Isn't that what happens? *Carnal nature!* 'If they do it, I'll do it.' That's generally because you get frustrated and you feel deprived.

Verse 9: "For evildoers shall be cut off, but those who wait upon the LORD, they shall inherit the earth. It is but a little while, and the wicked shall be no more... [that's going to happen] ...yea, you shall diligently consider his place, *but* he shall not be *there*" (vs 9-10).

What does God say is going to happen to the wicked? *They're going to be burned up!* Where are their ashes going to be? *Under our feet (Mal. 4)!* Is that not a complete fulfillment of this? *Yes!* You don't even consider their place.

Verse 11: "But the meek shall inherit the earth and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace. The wicked plots against the righteous and gnashes against him with his teeth. The LORD laughs at him, for He sees that his day is coming" (vs 11-13).

The first way you overcome laxity is to *understand that the world and all of its prosperity out there is a deception!* Yes, for a little while you can enjoy some physical things. But it's going to come to an end.

Verse 14: "The wicked have drawn out the sword, and have bent their bow, to cast down the poor and needy, to kill those who walk uprightly. Their sword shall enter into their own heart, and their bows shall be broken. Better is the little that a righteous man has than the riches of many wicked" (vs 14-16). That's how we stir ourselves up.

Compare all of that, compare all the world, all the riches, everything that's here; Psalm 36:5. "Your loving kindness, O LORD, is in the heavens; Your faithfulness reaches to the skies. Your righteousness is like the great mountains; Your

judgments are like the great deep...” (vs 5-6). You think about that!

I was watching the other day something about the Himalayas. I tell you, those mountains go up as nearly vertical, it’s unreal. I never thought of it until just reading it now, that the righteousness of God is like the great mountains. Even at almost incomprehensible heights there is life. There are birds, there are animals, there are plants. I’m just glad I’m a valley, sea-level person.

“...O LORD, You preserve man and beast. How precious is Your loving kindness, O God!...” (vs 6-7). That’s what to focus on. That’s what to get your mind on, *the loving kindness of God*.

“...Therefore, the children of men take refuge under the shadow of Your wings. They shall be abundantly satisfied with the richness of Your house...” (vs 7-8). When will that be? *At the resurrection!*

“...and You shall make them drink of the river of Your pleasures, for with You is the fountain of life...” (vs 8-9). Doesn’t that sound a little bit like Rev. 22 and the Tree of Life that’s on either side of the river as the water flows out under the throne of God? *Yes it does!*

“...in Your light we shall see light. O continue Your loving kindness **to those who know You...**” (vs 9-10). That’s the key. You know God because you have His Spirit and because you keep His commandments. And don’t ever let that slip away.

“...and Your righteousness to the upright in heart. Do not let the foot of pride come against me, and do not let the hand of the wicked move me” (vs 10-11). In other words, this is saying, watch yourself, discipline yourself; don’t let pride, vanity and foolishness come up in you. Realize everything you have comes from God.

Verse 12: “There the evildoers have fallen; they are cast down, and cannot rise.”

Now let’s look at a couple of other things that we need to do. The first thing that you become lax in is *study*. What is the second thing you become lax in? *Prayer!* So therefore, in the first instance when you become lax in it, God is not talking to you because you’re not studying His Word. In the second instance you’re not talking to God because you are not praying. We could probably get a list ten feet long of all the excuses that everybody—including me—have used as to why we can’t pray when we know we need to. Isn’t that something? It’s an amazing thing! This human mind is tricky!

Peter is doing the same thing. He is dealing with those who have been slack. This was the

problem that Paul was addressing in Hebrews. This was a church-wide problem.

- John addresses the problem
- Peter addresses the problem
- Jude addresses the problem
- Revelation addresses the problem
- Hebrews addresses the problem

So, Peter, in being able to point out the solution to the problem, He wants to inspire them.

Today you hear the word *focus*. Almost anything that you hear about instruction to do this, or do that, or how to improve, or how to motivate employees, or how to be better in sports, or whatever it is, the key word is *focus*. *Focus* on this; *focus* on that. That’s not too bad of a word, but Peter is trying to get them to focus on *what God has done for them* so that he can stir them up. In other words, there is a stirring-up that comes through the power of God’s Spirit to help inspire and motivate people to change, to get them to come to the point that they say, ‘Enough is enough in my life, and I’m going to change’; whatever that may be.

2-Peter 1:3: “According as His Divine power has given to us all things that *pertain* to life and Godliness, through the knowledge of Him Who called us by *His own* glory and virtue.”

He is saying to *focus*, get your mind up on the glorified Christ and your calling to glory and everlasting virtue.

Verse 4: “Through which He has given to us the greatest and *most* precious promises, that through these you may become partakers of *the* Divine nature...”

There’s a promise! You’re going to get rid of the human nature. The older we get and the closer we come to putting our feet in the grave and laying our head down there, the more weak we become and the more fantastic having the Divine nature really becomes. We realize that as we get older, because of the weakness of the flesh you have the reverse of growing up. Growing up you get stronger and bigger, have more ability and skill. When you get older it reverses. You get weaker, you rust out, you have *senior moments*.

Verse 4: “...having escaped the corruption *that is in the world through lust*.” There is a big key to overcoming, which is this: *learn to recognize lust for what it is when it starts!* It’s easier to see in other people; somehow it is. It’s harder to see in yourself, because you don’t want to say, ‘you lustful old fool’—whatever it may be. I’m not just talking about sex lust; it can be lust after this or that or the other thing. So, we escape that. When you begin to

recognize it in yourself, as well as other people, then you know you are escaping the lust of the flesh. If you escape the lust of the flesh, that means that you're going to be minding the things of the Spirit, and ***minding the things of the Spirit leads to eternal life!***

Verse 5—here's how he is stirring them up: "And for this very reason also, having applied all diligence besides..." Then he gives the steps on spiritual growth. {note sermon series: *Epistles of Peter* and the book *The Seven General Epistles* }.

Notice the steps: "...having applied all **diligence** besides, add to your **faith, virtue**; and to **virtue, knowledge**; and to **knowledge, self-control**; and to **self-control, endurance**; and to **endurance, Godliness**; and to **Godliness, brotherly love**; and to **brotherly love, the love of God**" (vs 5-7)—'agape.'

This shows the building blocks of your Christian character. This shows you how you can look and evaluate yourself before God by looking at these things and see that you practice them.

Verse 8: "For *if* these things exist and abound in you..." That's what it needs to be. We are going to see that it is going to be, I am convinced, a dwindling number of people in whom it is in and is abounding; no question about it. That's what happened in the Church at that time, too.

"...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... [Sound a little Laodicean? *Yes!*] ...so short-sighted... [in other words, you are only looking at the present, up close] ...*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" (vs 8-10).

See how that ties in with Hebrews 2:1: "...lest at any time **we** should slip away." If you slip away, what happens? *You have failed! No doubt!*

2-Peter 1:11: "For in this way, you will be richly granted an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.... [if you do these things] ...Therefore, I will not neglect to make you always mindful of these things, although you *already* know them and have been established in the present Truth. For I consider it my duty, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by causing *you* to remember *these things*" (vs 11-13).

If you do that then you're not going to slip away. Here is the responsibility for everyone who is a teacher or a minister to stir up the brethren. We all

need to be stirred up! Aren't there times when you go along and you kind of feel *blah*? Well, ***go to Christ and let Him stir you up.*** If you do that, God will really intervene in your life; and there is going to be a spiritual experience that you will have either in studying, or in praying, or together where God's Spirit will be with you and inspire you and stir you up like you never have been before. That will happen if you apply yourself as Peter has said.

(go to the next track)

Let's notice here what was happening. Jude 3: "Beloved, when personally exerting all *my* diligence..." Jude the brother of Christ, was stirred up because of what was happening. What happens when you get all stirred up and you come against some laid-back, kind of just 'cool' Christians: 'Don't get excited. Don't rock the boat. There's no need for this. We're doing fine.' If you give them any correction at all, 'you're hateful; you're putting a guilt trip on me.' Isn't that what they say?

Notice why he had to write, v 3: "...when personally exerting all *my* diligence to write to you concerning the common salvation, I was compelled to write to you, exhorting *you* to fervently fight for the faith, which once for all *time* has been delivered to the saints."

Now you're losing it. They are *slipping away!* It's like as we brought up many times, when you're standing in the light, walking to the light, you are making progress.

John 3:19 is the trap and the snare that comes upon everyone that thinks he or she is secure: "And this is the judgment... [there has been a judgment on this world because Christ came] ...that the Light has come into the world..." That can be:

- a) the Truth of God
- b) Christ, the Son of God

...but men loved darkness rather than the Light because their works were evil" (v 19).

They don't like them exposed. If you try and expose them in the climate that we have today—let's say for example you're against homosexuality and you won't work with them—you can lose your job. They can't stand to have their deeds exposed because they're evil. So, what God does, He sends a little virus. God can take care of them with something that is so small they don't even know it.

Verse 20: "For everyone who practices evil hates the Light..." *Don't preach this Bible to me. I don't need the Bible.* Or if they're in the Church of God, 'Well, you are just hard-nosed. You are a bigot. You're radical.' ***Hates the light!*** 'Just keep it calm.'

“...and does not come to the Light... [doesn’t come to God or to Christ Himself] ...so that his works may not be exposed... [or corrected] ...but the one who practices the Truth comes to the Light, so that his works may be manifested, that they have been accomplished by *the power of God*” (vs 20-21). Here’s what happens:

- you’re coming to the Light
- you are walking to Christ
- you’re coming to the Word

and then there comes a time when laxity sets in. You’re still standing in the Light and you’re looking at the Light, but you don’t understand that the Light is moving on, because if you don’t move with Christ, it’s going to move beyond you. As long as you are standing in that Light, you think you are in good shape, even though you’re lax.

Now then, a day will come when that person will turn and start walking away from the Light. And it’s so deceptive when it happens because of this: you still see the Light as you are walking away from it. Have you ever done that at night, when, say, you’re at a place where, especially, if there’s any land or acreage around and there’s a big light on the back porch? And as you walk out from that, there is light that you can see. You can see where you are going.

But unless *spiritually* you understand that you are walking away from Christ you won’t realize that you’re going to walk off into the darkness. So that’s what happens when you become lax. It’s very, very imperative, this is not the first time it’s happened; it’s happened over and over again. The Church runs in cycles. We’re in the correction phase and the regrouping phase right now.

Jude 3: “...fervently fight for the faith, which once for all *time* has been delivered to the saints. For... [the reason you need to do it is] ...certain men have stealthily crept in...” (vs 3-4).

You’ve heard of the stealth bomber. You can’t detect it on radar, but did you know that now they can detect it with cell phones? You can get two or three or four cell phones, and they’re getting a beam down from satellite to the cell phone. And what happens, if you have a certain set of equipment you can see where in the air the beam comes down around the stealth. Radar going up is the beam going up, and it’s meant to bounce off of it, so you can’t see it. But when whatever kind of radio wave is coming down from the satellite down to the cell phone, it’s coming down on top of it and exposes it. You only need about six \$40 cell phones and you can detect a stealth plane coming in on you.

There’s a good analogy for us. If we know our Bible we can detect the stealth infiltrators into

the Churches of God so we won’t let them get a foothold. But it’s easy for them to come in where there has been laxity. It’s easy for them to come in and sit there and wait until the right moment to spring it. That’s what happened then! That’s what happened now!

“...those who long ago have been written about, condemning *them* to this judgment. *They are* ungodly men who are perverting the grace of our God, *turning it* into licentiousness, and are personally denying the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ” (v 4).

While at the same time, we can add, they use the name of Christ. Isn’t that a tremendous deception? *Yes, it is!* Next time you hear the pope speak, listen to how many times he may use the name of Christ. Just using the name of Christ proves nothing. You can hear it on the golf course, but that has nothing to do with worship. The worst is on a Sunday morning from the pulpits.

Audience question: What do you mean we’re in a regrouping stage? I meant revival stage. In other words, being scattered, and now we’re being revived. That would leave you hanging, regrouping. In a sense it’s regrouping into smaller groups according to how God scatters. But revival is more what it is.

Here’s how the infiltrators take advantage of *laxity*. They come in and they sow the seeds of discord, v 16: “These are complainers...” What does a *complainer* do? *Passes rumors, passes innuendos, criticisms, and false judgments!* ‘He’s just too hard. I wish we had something more pleasant. All he does is talk about sin,’ etc.

“...who are walking after their own personal lusts, *while* their mouths are speaking great swelling *words*, flattering persons for the sake of advantage” (v 16).

Go back and read about Absalom the son of David. What did he do? *He came and stood at the gate in said, ‘I’m David’s son!’* I know if you go to David you’re not going to get the judgment that you want. So, if you come to me I’ll be able to give you a better judgment.’ You go back and study it and see what happened to Absalom.

Verse 17: “But you, beloved, remember the words that were spoken before by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; because they said to you that in *the* last time there would be mockers, who would be selfishly walking according to their own ungodly lusts. These are the ones who cause division; *they are* psychic... [and the Greek there is ‘psuche’—psychic] ...not having *the Spirit of God*” (vs 17-19).

Meaning that they have a spiritual

something about them, which we call today 'psychic,' but it is not the Spirit of God. Or, you could say they have another word which comes from the Greek, which transliterated in English is 'charisma'—'He has charisma. You wait and see, the next pope is going to have lots of charisma; they'll talk all about it.

Verse 20: "But you, beloved, *be* building up yourselves on your most Holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, *so that* you keep yourselves in the love of God..." (vs 20-21). That's how you overcome all of this. That's why the love of God is so very important. The love of God comes two ways:

1. keeping of His commandments
2. loving Him on a spiritual and emotional basis because He is your Father

"...while you are personally awaiting the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. Now on the one hand, show mercy to those individuals who are doubting" (s 21-22).

This is talking about those who have been victimized by these men who crept in unawares and turned the grace of God into license. If you know other brethren who have been victimized by it, then what you do is send them *Rome's Challenge to the Protestants* {Appendix N, *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order*}

I tell you, if anybody who has ever kept the Sabbath and reads that with a clear mind, even though they have left keeping the Sabbath, they will quit going to Sunday, because that's profound. It blew me away, that here that's been out there. It was written 108 years ago and was never heard of it in the Church of God, whatever brand of Church of God you were in. But I tell you what, if someone were handed that to them when they first began keeping the Sabbath and they kept that in mind, they would *never* go back and keep Sunday.

Then here's how you can deal with brethren that you know. There are a lot of you out there who know, and that's why I have said to see the book: *A Harmony of the Gospels*.

What you do, v 22: "...show mercy to those individuals who are doubting."

- I know it was hard for you
- I know you've been duped
- I know that you trusted the men
- I know you believe what they said
- listen to this or read that

And if you can give them a copy of *Rome's Challenge* and say, 'Look, I know you're keeping Sunday, and I know you probably think that it has

been justified to do so. But do me a favor, would you, please? Here, read this and see if you want to keep Sunday. Now promise me that you will read every word of it.' *Maybe you can help someone.*

Verse 23: "But on the other hand, save others with fear, snatching *them* out of the fire, hating even the garment *that has been* defiled by the flesh."

In other words, they have come to the point that the last resort is fear of the Lake of Fire. If you don't have fear of the Lake of Fire, it's over with. If you don't have any fear of the Lake of Fire, watch a special on Discovery Channel about volcanoes. Just look down into this bubbling lava, and you are looking at a lake of fire. Just think about how you would want to be cast in there, and be burned up, and there is nothing left. All hope, everything of your existence is gone. Some people you have to do that with.

Verse 24: "Now, to Him Who is able to keep them from falling, and to bring *them* into the presence of His own glory, blameless in exceeding joy, to *the* only wise God our Savior, *be the* glory and greatness, *the* might and authority, even now, and into all the ages of eternity. Amen." (vs 23-25).

Dynamic little book; just 25 short verses, but WOW, what a real message that it has there. So sometimes that's what we have to do.

2-Tim. 1:6 shows what we need to do. There is something that each one of us needs to do. Whether we have begun slipping away or not, but just when we start getting lazy and start letting ourselves slack up, then here's what you need to do. Peter said he would stir them up. Now then, when that happens, you need to respond by *stirring yourself up!* How do you stir yourself up?

2-Timothy 1:6: "For this reason, I admonish you to stir up the gift of God that is in you by the laying on of my hands." You go to God and say:

- God, grant me Your Spirit
- help me to overcome
- give me the strength to put these things aside
- help me to see what I am doing that's not right
- help me to pull back from my laxity
- give me zeal and understanding to go ahead

We're told of the Laodiceans, 'Be zealous, therefore, and repent.' That's what it needs to be.

Verse 7: "For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power, and of love, and of sound-

mindedness.” That’s how to recover yourself out of it. **If** you have been slipping away, and **if** you have neglected so great a salvation, that’s how to get yourself back on track. God can help you do it. The only unfortunate part about it is that *those who really need to hear this are not here*. That’s why if you can give this to someone who needs it, you can help them. Maybe they will listen. Maybe they won’t. But at least you can say you have tried.

I think it’s very interesting, as one person commented, that this series on Hebrews came out about the same time as *A Harmony of the Gospels*. If you want a good, fresh study on that, remember that that gives us the fulfillment of:

Hebrews 2:4: “God also bearing witness with *them* by both signs and wonders... [through Christ and later the book of Acts] ...and various miracles and gifts of *the* Holy Spirit, according to His own will?... [maybe that can be something which will help inspire you, too] ...For *it is* not to *the* angels *that* He has placed in subjection the world that is to come, of which we are speaking” (vs 4-5). They are the ones who rule and control this world.

Let me just mention that when we are converted and receive the Spirit of God, we come into a different relationship with the angels because of our relationship with God the Father and Jesus Christ; meaning that in the world the angels rule—righteous and demons—angels war and fight, as we see in the book of Daniel.

When we are converted and brought into the Church and have the Holy Spirit of God, angels now become ministers to help and protect those that have been called. They don’t rule over us. Who rules over us? *Jesus Christ!* He is the Head of the Church. Therefore, Christ deals directly with us. If Christ deals directly with us, then an angel—but for helping us:

- can be a messenger
- can intervene to protect you
- can keep you from evil

But the relationship to God is direct through Jesus Christ, as we know in Heb. 10, that we have direct entrance into the Holy of Holies through the blood of Christ. That’s why he is emphasizing this.

He is going to make a comparison between the angels and Christ, and the angels and men, v 6: “But in a certain place one fully testified, saying, ‘What is man, that You are mindful of him, or *the* son of man, that You visit him?... [please put Psa. 8; we will need to add that] ...You did make him a little lower than *the* angels... [the Greek is ‘angelos’—*angels*] ... You did crown him with glory

and honor, and You did set him over the works of Your hands” (vs 6-7). What a fantastic thing it is. God made this whole world, created everything upon it.

- Who did He make it for? *For mankind!*
- What did He say? *Have dominion; you rule over the world!*
- Do men do that? *Yes, they do!*

The controlling factor is angels, because of sin now takes the place of God’s rulership over them. That’s the only difference.

Verse 7: “You did make him a little lower than *the* angels; You did crown him with glory and honor, and You did set him over the works of Your hands; You did put all things in subjection under his feet....” (vs 7-8). As we see the scientific things that men are doing now, that is *absolutely true!*

“...For in subjecting all things to him, He left nothing *that was* not subjected to him.... [in the earth, that is true, and even a little bit in space] ...But now we do not yet see all things subjected to him” (v 8). Why?

1. because of sin
2. because the ultimate destiny of man is to become a son of God

So therefore, until you become a son of God and have the character of God the Father and Jesus Christ, you are not capable of having everything put into your subjection that you will use it rightfully. Witness the world!

Are you fed up with when you dial a number to call, that you get a recording? If you want this, press #1. If you want this, press #2. If you want this, press #3. You ask, ‘Which one do I want?’ They didn’t answer my question. And if that doesn’t help, go ahead and press ‘0,’ and you’ll get the next available operator. So, it comes on, ‘Hello. All the operators are busy; it may be 20 minutes before we can talk to you.’ They say we have too many mechanical things that do not really relate to people. So, what we need to do is make human-like robots. In other words ‘we’re going to put cloning to a good purpose.’ Wouldn’t you like to have your own humanoid robot?

Now, that’s a good example of being able to do things without the character of God to do it correctly, or to do it righteously. You just do it because it’s convenient and it’s there, and because you want to satisfy your own lust. That’s why all things have not been put in subjection to him, because:

1. of sin
2. because he doesn’t have the character

3. he's not a spirit being yet

The rest of the story through the book of Hebrews is how to become a spirit being while you overcome in this life.

However, v 9: "But we see Jesus, Who *was* made a little lower than *the* angels... [which is true] ...crowned with glory and honor on account of suffering **the death**..." [His one particular death, *the* death of God manifest in the flesh] ...in order that by *the* grace of God He Himself might taste death for everyone... [who repents. It's not going to happen unless you repent] ...because it was fitting for Him..." (vs 9-10).

In other words, this is the fitting judgment of God that He Himself put upon Himself, being this: God said—two of God, two of Elohim—one Who became the Father, one Who became the Son. The One Who became the Son was the One Who was the Creator of all things. Being Creator, what is He? If you make something, what is your relationship compared to what you have made? *You are responsible*, are you not?

Just like in driving a car. If you drive a car and you kill somebody, you're responsible. Likewise, God created all these things, made it for man, created man, gave man choice. In giving men choice—just like with your own kids, you give them choice—there's a danger they may not choose the right thing. So, what happened? *There was sin!* Because God is righteous, He had to bring a penalty. Then came the curse. Then came death. But God is still responsible! He brought the curse, and He brought the death—did He not? So therefore, in order to redeem His creation and mankind, He said, 'I will become a human being,' which He did, born of the virgin Mary, lived in the flesh, lived a life without sin, though 'I have *the law of sin and death* in Me, so I overcome. Then, My death, because I made everything, is the perfect death for the forgiveness of sins.' ***No other death could do it!*** That's why it's fitting. That was His judgment.

Verse 10: "Because it was fitting for Him, for Whom all things *were created*, and by Whom all things *exist*, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Author of their salvation perfect through sufferings."

In other words, if God makes something, which He did, made mankind, which He did, and He looked upon them, and behold, everything was good (Gen. 1). If something goes wrong—though God loses none of His perfection as God—His creation is marred. Therefore, it's not perfect. He comes in the flesh, *He gives up His perfection as God* to become a human being, and in becoming a human being,

there is a perfection that happened to Christ because of His suffering, ***because He did not sin!***

How else can you explain, v 10: "...to make the Author of their salvation perfect through sufferings?" *By suffering the same thing that all human beings do, but not sinning once!* You talk about a perfection! Isn't that something? What Paul is doing here now, he is showing that now there is no excuse for you not coming back to Christ, because look what He has done.

Verse 11: "For both He Who is sanctifying and those who are sanctified *are* all of one... [note John 17—we are to become one as the Father and Christ are one] ...for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren." You think on that!

- God calls you '*My brother*'
- God calls you '*My friend*'

Jesus said to the disciples, '**You are My friends** if you do whatsoever I command you.'

Verse 12: "Saying, 'I will declare Your name to My brethren; in *the* midst of *the* Church I will sing praise to You.'" There are three ways this can apply:

1. Jesus declared the name of the Father, revealed Him to the disciples who were His brethren.
2. In the midst of the Church, all the other brethren who were called hearing the Word of God declared to them.
3. The great congregation, which takes place at the resurrection, and we are all standing on the Sea of Glass, and Christ proclaims the name of the Father to all the brethren who are there in the first resurrection.

You have those three applications of it.

Verse 13: "And again, 'I will be trusting in Him.'" Showing if you're lax, you're not trusting in Him. So he's trying to inspire them to trust in Him.

"...And again, 'Behold I and the children whom God has given Me'" (v 13). That's what Christ is going to say at the resurrection! I think He will literally say those words. When we're all there on the Sea of Glass, Christ is up there in front and God the Father is there, He will say, "...Behold, I and the children whom God has given Me.'" What a magnificent thing that's going to be!

Now then, back down to earth, v 14: "Therefore, since the children are partakers of flesh and blood, in like manner He also took part in the same, in order that through death He might annul him who has the power of death—that is, the devil;

and *that* He might deliver those who were subject to bondage all through their lives by *their* fear of death. For surely, He is not taking upon Himself to help *the* angels; but He is taking upon Himself to help *the* seed of Abraham. For this reason, it was obligatory for *Him* to be made like *His* brethren in everything that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest *in* things pertaining to God... [here's the first time we're told He's High Priest] ...in order to make propitiation for the sins of the people. For because He Himself has suffered, having been tempted *in like manner*, He is able to help those who are being tempted" (vs 14-18).

This last part shows us the humanity of Christ, and the purpose of that humanity, and what it is in relationship to our salvation.

Articles:

- *Rome's Challenge to the Protestants* (*The Holy Bible in Its Original Order*, Appendix N)
- *Nature of God* (*The Christian Passover*)
- *Nature of Man* (*The Christian Passover*)

FRC:MDS/ cis

Transcribed: 06/05/2004

Formatted/Corrected: bo—January/2017

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*

Scriptural References:

- 1) Hebrews 3:7-8
- 2) Hebrews 2:1-4, 1, 3, 1
- 3) Psalm 36:1-4
- 4) Psalm 37:1-16
- 5) Psalm 36:5-12
- 6) 2 Peter 1:3-10
- 7) Hebrews 2:1
- 8) 2 Peter 1:11-13
- 9) Jude 3
- 10) John 3:19-21
- 11) Jude 3-4, 16-25
- 12) 2 Timothy 1:6-7
- 13) Hebrews 2:4-18

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Malachi 4
- Revelation 22
- Hebrews 10
- Psalm 8
- Genesis 1
- John 17

Also referenced:

Books:

- *The Christians Passover* by Fred R. Coulter
- *Word Biblical Commentary*
- *The Seven General Epistles* by Fred R. Coulter
- *A Harmony of the Gospels* by Fred R. Coulter

Sermon Series:

- *The Prophecies of Jesus in the Old Testament*
- Epistles of Peter

The Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews VI

The Law of Sin and Death

(Chapter 2)
Fred R. Coulter

Last time we came down through Hebrews 2:5. We're just going to have a brief review.

- Heb. 1—tells us about Christ as the *spiritual* Son of God, coming in the flesh, and then now back at the right hand of God on the Majesty on high.
- Heb. 2:1-4—gives a warning

We'll see this all the way through the book of Hebrews. There will be instruction or exhortation, and then there will be a warning.

- Heb. 2:4-18—is instruction
- Heb. 3-4—we start with the warning again; a very long warning

Remember that the book of Hebrews was written to those who had been in the Church a long, long time, and they were beginning to *slip away*, as it says here:

Hebrews 2:1: "For this reason, it is imperative that we give much greater attention to the things *which* we have heard, lest at any time we should slip away."

Knowledge really doesn't slip away; knowledge is always there; *people slip away when they let the knowledge that they have slip away!* That's what happens, especially living in the Laodicean age that we live in today, it is so easy. As a matter of fact, the world and everything around us and the religious things of the world accommodates that to give you an excuse to apostatize and go back to Sunday-keeping, go back to worshiping a false Christ. That's what Catholicism and Protestantism have, a *false Christ*. Howbeit they do use the Bible so it makes it look like it's the authentic thing. We will see here that God's love is conditional all the way through.

Verse 2: "For *if* the word spoken by angels was *enforced* without fail, and every transgression and disobedience received just recompense, how shall we escape, *if* we have neglected so great a salvation..." (vs 2-3). So, what he is doing here, he is now leading up to the rest of Heb. 2 to show how great this salvation really is and what God did to make it possible.

"...which was first received when it was spoken by the Lord, *and* was confirmed to us by those who heard *Him*; God also bearing witness with *them* by both signs and wonders, and various miracles and gifts of *the* Holy Spirit, according to

His own will?" (vs 3-4). Isn't that interesting? People like to have and to see miracles. But remember, it's according to God's own will. There will be great miracles when God determines that He is going to do it. Even the Apostle Paul said of Epaphras—remember? And the Apostle Paul did a lot of miracles. You can read of it in his ministry in the book of Acts. But Epaphras, Paul said, was near unto death because he was serving the brethren and 'we prayed for him and God heard us at the last minute and raised him up.' Miracles are according to God's will and timing and what He's going to do. It is not a miracle upon demand that we go to God and demand it, and God is obligated to give it.

Here is the whole summation of this section from Heb. 1 down to Heb. 2:5: "For *it is* not to *the* angels *that* He has placed in subjection the world that is to come, of which we are speaking."

We are looking for the Kingdom of God, and the Kingdom of God is going to be given to the sons of God (Rom. 8). The whole world is waiting for the completion of that plan. It's also very interesting that those who are going to be in the Kingdom of God are going to be the firstfruits. And it's also very interesting that you come back to the Passover. When the Passover in Egypt took place, who did it protect? *The firstborn!* All the rest of Israel was blessed because the firstborn were spared. All of Israel came out of Egypt. But now you're looking at the Church, which is called the Church of the Firstborn. God is going to spare the world—though He's going to correct it—because of those who are going to be born in the Kingdom of God to rule with Christ.

That's why it's so great a salvation, and none of the others are going to participate in it. Concerning God's love is partial according to His calling: God is not unjust because He will give an opportunity to others later through what we know as the second resurrection; that way *God is no respecter of persons*. But there has to be someone who is first; there has to be someone who is last. We happen to be first. We're kind of what you would say the last of the first. The first started with the few through the Old Covenant, through David, the prophets, and so forth; and then a greater of the harvest beginning on the Day of Pentecost.

It's very interesting that the #8 is a new beginning. Day 50 is the eighth day after the seventh

week: *seventh week, fiftieth day is eight!* There was a new beginning at the temple, wasn't there, with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and being baptized and receiving the Holy Spirit and having the remission of sins. That was the beginning of the firstfruits within the Church of God. Now we're coming down, there are still firstfruits, and *we're the last of the firstfruits*. Not exactly the very, very last, because you have the 144,000 of Rev. 7 and the great innumerable multitude who will be the very last, and the two absolute last ones are going to be *the two witnesses*. When that harvest is finished, the world is going to be put in subjection to the sons of God, not to the angels.

Let's just review that in Rom. 8. It's important that we understand it. When you understand the greatness of what God is doing, and the greatness of your calling and how profound that it is, then even in times of prosperity and pleasure and leisure, as we have today—which is being taken away from us, by the way—you will still be able to maintain the love, the zeal, the enthusiasm because the goal is so high, and the calling is so great, that you understand that there is **nothing** that is going to separate you from the love of God.

- no man
- no person
- nothing concerning your own life
 - ✓whether it be a problem in overcoming sin
 - ✓whether it be weakness because of old age
 - ✓whether it be because when you're getting old your memory is slipping

But remember, it is all still there in the brain and the only difficulty is your recall. So, if you hear it, it is there.

Romans 8:14: "For as many as are led..." We're going to see when Christ is going to bring many sons unto glory. That also can mean leading.

"...by the Spirit of God, these are the sons of God. Now, you have not received a spirit of bondage again unto fear, but you have received the Spirit of sonship, whereby we call out, 'Abba, Father'" (vs 14-15).

Romans 8 makes it very clear here—especially v 15—that we have a Father/son relationship with God the Father that was opened to us by Jesus Christ. That's why it's so important that we maintain that relationship through the proper fellowship with God the Father and Jesus Christ, which includes:

- worship
- prayer

- service
- study
- growing
- keeping the Sabbath and Holy Days

All of those combined form a complete salvation for us, a complete way of life for us. When all those are combined together it excludes the religions of the world, because all the religions of the world are a *satanic substitute* to take people away from God the Father and Jesus Christ. If that sounds exclusivist, then you take it up with God because God is the One Who has devised it. If we read what is in the Bible and believe what is in the Bible, and that's what the Bible tells us, then that's what God has done.

Verse 16: "The Spirit itself bears witness conjointly with our own spirit, *testifying* that we are the children of God. Now if we are children, we are also heirs—truly, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ—..." (vs 16-17). *The world to come is going to be put in subjection to us under Christ*. That's something to really contemplate.

Now notice, there's something else that has to happen with it: **IF**. There are 1,200 **IF**s throughout the Bible. If you get bored in Bible study, just get out a concordance and look up every place where the word **IF** is, and make yourself a little list. **IF** means *there is a condition!* Jesus said, '**IF** you love Me, keep My commandments.' The condition is commandment-keeping and loving. {note sermon series: *IF Statements of the Bible*}

"...if indeed we suffer together with Him, so that we may also be glorified together with Him. For I reckon that **the sufferings of the present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us**" (vs 17-18). Never forget that!

In the ultimate of suffering, the worst you can do is die. *If that happens and you die in the faith, you've got it made*. Does not God take pleasure in the death of the saints? Why? *Because they have attained to the purpose of God in their life!* Then the glory will be revealed in us.

Verse 19: "For the earnest expectation of the creation itself is awaiting the manifestation of the sons of God." The Apostle John said that when He appears 'we shall see Him, for we shall be *like* Him.' It's waiting for us. This also tells us that everything that is being done in the world will not work. There may be temporary successes here and there for various things. But the truth of the matter is, *it's all going to fail!* God wants us to understand that, but have hope in Him.

“...awaiting the manifestation of the sons of God... [here’s why it’s going to fail]: ...because the creation was subjected to vanity, not willingly...” (vs 19-20). No one went up to God and said, ‘Oh, God, fill me with vanity.’ *No!* God ***gave*** the *law of sin and death* within us. *Yes, He did!* You inherit it. You have no choice over it. That’s why there’s the grace of God, to help you in salvation.

“...not willingly, but by reason of Him who subjected *it* in hope, in order that the creation itself might be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God” (vs 20-21). That’s when the world will be subjected to us. That’s why he’s making it very, very clear in Heb. 2.

Verse 22: “For we know that all the creation is groaning together and travailing together until now. And not only *that*, but even we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, also groan within ourselves, awaiting the sonship—the redemption of our bodies” (22-23)—by the resurrection.

If this body we have sort of wears out and fades away, don’t worry. You’ve got a spiritual body coming, and God’s going to give it to you. You won’t have to fight all the battles of the flesh any longer.

As we are reading Heb. 2:6-18—we’ll come back and we’ll go through each verse, verse-by-verse—what we’re going to see is that God is showing what He *has done* through Jesus Christ, what He *is now doing*, and what He *will do*. But first of all, we have to see what He has done.

Hebrews 2:6: “But in a certain place one fully testified, saying, ‘What is man, that You are mindful of him, or *the* son of man, that You visit him? You did make him a little lower than the angels; You did crown him with glory and honor, and You did set him over the works of Your hands; You did put all things in subjection under his feet.’ For in subjecting all things to him, He left nothing *that was* not subjected to him. But now we do not yet see all things subjected to him. But we see Jesus, Who *was* made a little lower than *the* angels, crowned with glory and honor on account of suffering the death, in order **that by the grace of God He Himself might taste death for everyone**; because it was fitting for Him, for Whom all things *were created*, and by Whom all things *exist*, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Author of their salvation perfect through sufferings” (vs 6-10). We just read that in Rom. 8.

Verse 11: “For both He Who is sanctifying and those who are sanctified *are* all of one; for which cause He is not ashamed to call them

brethren, saying, ‘I will declare Your name to My brethren; in *the* midst of *the* Church I will sing praise to You.’ And again, ‘I will be trusting in Him.’ And again, ‘Behold, I and the children whom God has given Me.’ Therefore, since the children are partakers of flesh and blood, in like manner He also took part in the same, in order that through death He might annul him who has the power of death—that is, the devil; and *that* He might deliver those who were subject to bondage all through their lives by *their* fear of death. For surely, He is not taking upon Himself to help *the* angels; but He is taking upon Himself to help *the* seed of Abraham. For this reason, **it was obligatory for Him to be made like His brethren in everything** that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest *in* things pertaining to God, in order to make propitiation for the sins of the people. For because He Himself has suffered, having been tempted *in like manner*, He is able to help those who are being tempted” (vs 11-18).

Verses 6-8, are quoted from Ps. 8. We are going to see four things concerning Christ:

1. v 7: “You did make Him a little lower than *the* angels...”

When was He made a little lower than the angels? *When He divested Himself to become the pinpoint of life and to be impregnated in the virgin Mary!* Angels, on the other hand were created, by God, as completed beings. Christ gave up all of that and was made lower than the angels.

2. “...You did crown Him with glory and honor....”

And when did that happen, referring to Christ? That happened when He was resurrected.

3. “...You did set Him over the works of Your hands.”

Christ rules all, because ‘*by Whom and through Whom are all things made and created!*’

4. v 8: “You did put all things in subjection under His feet....”

That’s going to happen! Let’s see when that happens.

We’ll go back and we’ll apply this to human beings, but first I want to apply it to Christ. This gives us a timeframe when all of this is going to happen.

1-Corinthians 15:20: “But now Christ has been raised from *the* dead... [when He received glory and honor] ...He has become the first-fruit of those who have fallen asleep. For since by man *came* death, by man also *came the* resurrection of *the* dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall

all be made alive. But each in his own order... [and we understand that with the resurrections] ...Christ *the* Firstfruit; then those who are Christ's at His coming. Afterwards the end *comes*, when He shall have delivered up the kingdom to Him Who *is* God and Father, when He shall have put an end to all rule and all authority and power. For it is ordained that He reign until He has put all enemies under His feet. *The last enemy to be destroyed is death.* For He has put all things in subjection under His feet. But when it is said that all things have been put in subjection, *it is* clearly evident that *it does* not include Him Who put all things in subjection under Him. But when He has put all things in subjection to Him, then shall the Son Himself also be subject to Him Who put all things in subjection to Him, so that God may be all in all" (vs 20-28).

That's what it's talking about here, Hebrews 2:8: "'You did put all things in subjection under his feet.' For in subjecting all things to him, He left nothing *that was* not subjected to him. But now we do not yet see all things subjected to him. But we see Jesus..." (vs 8-9). Here we have an application to Christ in all of these things, and we have an application to mankind.

Let's see this application to mankind. This goes back to the very creation of God. We will see some of the things that He gave to crown us with honor and glory, and why it talks about that we are crowned with honor and glory; *yet we are not glorified as spirit beings!* But mankind has an honor and glory that the rest of the creation of God does not have. We will see what that is.

Psalm 8:3: "When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, the moon and the stars, which You have ordained." That's the way you feel when you go out, and it's a really clear night and you can look up into the heavens and see all the stars, if you're in an area that really makes the stars look a whole lot closer: no smog, no city lights, and you can look up and you can see the vastness of the heavens up there. You're standing out there all alone, you feel just like that. You feel like just a little pinprick of something.

You get the same feeling when you're on any vessel and you're out on the ocean. You look out on the ocean and you see all around you for as far as you can see nothing but water. Even if you're on a pretty good-sized ship, that ship is nothing but a little speck in that ocean. That's why God has created the things the way He has:

- to glorify Himself
- to humble man
 - ✓so man will seek God
 - ✓so man will come to Him

✓realizing that this is so great

Verse 4: "What is man that You are mindful of him..." You know how it is with human beings. If you are a big important 'mucky-muck,' you don't care about the underlings, any down there, because you have the power, you have the authority, and you're on top. *God is not that way!*

We've already seen here in the book of Romans that we can call God 'our Father.' That's a tremendous thing!

Verse 4: "What is man that You are mindful of him, and the son of man that You care for him?" *And God has!* Started right out with Adam and Eve. Didn't the beginning of the book of Hebrews say that:

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.*" **God Himself!** *God* visited man, visited him in the flesh!

Concerning mankind, Psalm 8:5: "For You have made him a little lower than God and have crowned him with glory and honor. You made him to have dominion over the works of Your hands; You have put all things under his feet.... [that is sure true; look at what man is able to do, absolutely amazing]

Verse 7: "All sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field; the birds of heaven, the fish of the sea, and all that pass through the paths of the seas. O LORD, our Lord, how excellent is Your name in all the earth!" (vs 5-9).

How is it that man has been crowned with glory and honor above all the rest of the creation? Gen. 1 reveals part of the plan of God in a way that this is a prophecy of what He is going to do. It's really an amazing thing! There are many, many things that are revealed about God, which we won't go into {note booklets: *Defining the Oneness of God* and *The Nature of God*, and sermon series: *The Names of God*}

Genesis 1:26: "And God said, Let Us..." We know the word *God* 'Elohim' means *more than one*. The Bible reveals there were two beings, one Who became the Father, one Who became the Son, that are included in the term *Elohim*.

"...Let Us make man in Our image, after Our likeness..." (v 26). That is the glory and honor that is given to mankind, made in the likeness of God, after His image.

The unspoken story of the rest of the Bible "...after Our likeness..." (v 26) *after His kind*. That's

quite a thing, really! Now you know why Paul was so emphatic there, writing that we shouldn't let these things slip away. We shouldn't slip away ourselves.

Now notice what else He did: "...and let them have dominion..." (v 26). So, He subjected the earth! Now, granted, with the fall of Adam and Eve it's subjected to angels. Originally, God was there with Adam and Eve. After that, God put the angels in charge. So, the angels were over men from that time forward.

But even with that, He still says of man: "...let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the fowl of heaven and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that crawls upon the earth.' And God created man in His *own* image, in the image of God He created him. He created them male and female. And God blessed them. And God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the fowl of heaven and over every living thing that moves upon the earth'" (vs 26-28). ***That's the honor and glory that God has given man!***

Since God has given it, He also requires responsibility. That's why we have the account of Adam and Eve, and how that God expects a response back from those that have been crowned with that kind of glory and honor. When man puts it to use in a wrong way, God has to intervene. We see that in the case of the Flood of Noah, and after the Flood, at the Tower of Babel and the building of those things that they were doing.

We will see that this verifies when it says that God left nothing that was not in subjection to man. Yet, not all things are in subjection to him, because he doesn't have the spiritual character to do it. That's the long and the short of it. But nevertheless, God has given that to man, and He only intervenes when man comes to the point of doing great evil. I think that we're rapidly approaching that time again, because remember, Jesus said: 'As it was in the days of Noah so shall be in the days of the coming of the Son of man.' At this time the Tower of Babel is still in the days of Noah.

Genesis 11:1: "And the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech." We're getting there again through English, through the computers.

Sidebar: What is going to happen in that area of the world of Afghanistan, Uzbekistan, and Kazakhstan, and all of those? The English language is going to be imported in there in a way that has never been in the past. Which is also a way of paving the way so that the Gospel can be preached so they will understand the Truth. Even in that, God is going to use that to lay the foundation and

groundwork so that those people will be able to hear the Word of God.

Verse 2: "And it came to pass, as they traveled from the east, they found a plain in the land of Shinar. And they settled there. And they said to one another, 'Come, let us make bricks and burn them thoroughly.'.... [because they wanted to waterproof them] ...And they had brick for stone, and they had asphalt for mortar" (vs 2-3).

This is more like asbestos ooze that was coming out of the ground in what we call Saudi Arabia, Iraq, or Kuwait today. Someone got all mad because I said that *Josephus* records that they were going to build a tower and make it waterproof just in case God was going to flood the earth again, that they could all flee into it and escape the flood. Well, I'm just reporting what *Josephus* said; so if that makes you upset, well then go be upset.

Verse 4: "And they said, 'Come, let us build us a city and a tower, *with* its top reaching into the heavens. And let us establish a name for ourselves, lest we be scattered upon the face of the whole earth.'"

Of course, it was God's decision to put them in their inheritance. God created the nations. Now that we are trying to amalgamate everything in Babylon the Great, you see the difficulties that we have when you begin putting a superstructure over the nations and taking away the sovereignty that God gave them. They didn't want to do it.

Verse 5: "And the LORD came down to see the city and the tower which the children of men had built. And the LORD said, 'Behold, the people *are* one and they all have one language. And this *is only the beginning of* what they will do—now nothing which they have imagined to do..." (vs 5-6). That is part of the glory and honor that God has given man.

I mean, right while we're sitting here today, out there in the heavens, the next planet out—Mars—they have successfully put in orbit a spacecraft which is going to photograph all about Mars, it's going to create a whole new map of Mars. They have detection equipment in there; they're going to find out: Is there water? Was there water? Of course, the mystery is, if there was water, where did it go? It will become a greater mystery if they can't detect water underground, or if they can only detect a very little water underground. But that's quite amazing that men can sit down to computers at the Jet Propulsion Lab in Pasadena, California, and direct that satellite circling and orbiting around Mars and gathering all of this data and everything.

They're doing this, because man wants to go to Mars. Man has gone to the moon. They found out,

there's not much you can do with the moon. So, they figure they're going to go to Mars. *There is nothing that they can't do* "...which they have imagined to do..." Look at all the different devices and gadgets that we have today. There are so many of them it is absolutely incredible. We even have machines that can make machines. It is phenomenal! We have computers that compute computers. All this came out of the *imagination* of man.

So, God confounded the languages and scattered them and took them to their inheritance where God originally intended that they go. When it says that 'man is crowned with glory and with honor,' that means that. When it says that 'He subjected all things under him,' He means that. But He hasn't let man have, yet, *all* things. *He hasn't!* Mankind is not ready to have all things subjected under him. There must be a change of nature. There must be a change of your existence from flesh to spirit before that will happen. So, there's the reason for all of this in Psalms 8.

Now then, Paul applies it to Jesus again, 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***..."—and the definite article is in there in the Greek: 'tho thanatos' means *the one death*, which had a particular significance for all of mankind.

In *The Christian Passover* book—***The Nature of God*** and ***The Nature of Man***—will explain in great detail, much more than we're going to do in the study, about how God accomplished that. But it is suffering ***the death***. That is a special one-of-a-kind death. That God, manifest in the flesh, would come to this earth and die for those that He created to bring them salvation.

Notice, here's why it is ***the death***, v 9: "...in order that by *the* grace of God He Himself might taste death for everyone." There's just a little caveat here with this, which is that *everyone*—and the rest of the Bible shows us *who repents*—who does not repent, the death of Christ is not applied to you as a sacrifice for the propitiation of your sins. Your death will take care of your sins and they shall no longer exist.

We need to look at a couple of Scriptures that are really important, because for God to manifest Himself in the flesh, and to become a human being just like we are for the purpose of dying, that's quite profound. In this God has done a tremendous thing. This is something that very few of the religions of this world even have a clue to understand. They cannot conceive, or they cannot picture that God would do this, *this particular death*.

When Adam and Eve sinned, God pronounced upon them, as His judgment, that they would die, which is in full accord of Old Testament and New Testament doctrine, which is that ***the wages of sin is death!***

(go to the next track)

I need to mention just a couple of things in line with this. Christ was 'slain from the foundation of the world' (Rev. 13:8)—meaning that God had in His plan to save His creation, because He knew that in giving the power of free moral agency Adam and Eve would sin. He didn't make them sin, but He knew that in giving free moral agency, they *would* sin. So therefore, it wasn't any surprise to God that they did sin. Remember that after they had sinned and God was pronouncing the judgment upon them. He also gave the prophecy of His coming future death right there in Gen. 3:15 [transcriber's correction].

God showed—beginning with Adam and Eve—that there was coming a time when He was going to solve the problem of sin. But in the meantime He passed the sentence of death onto all human beings. That's why in Adam we all die. We are subject to death because God gave that sentence of judgment because of sin, and we didn't receive it willingly; it's inherent within our very being. How is God going to save His creation after He judged mankind in such a way?

Romans 5:12: "Therefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and by means of sin *came* death..." So, death passed upon *all* men; we're all subject to death. The sentence is so universal that no one has escaped death. Satan has a counterfeit plan to try and make it look like human beings don't die, because he has the false doctrine of the immortality of the soul and you go to heaven.

And pray tell, if that's the case, why the resurrection? You don't need a resurrection, your spirit is already there; you are already in heaven looking down at your corpse while everyone is out there weeping and wailing that you have died. ***No! That's a counterfeit!*** When you're dead, you're dead all over. When you're dead, you know nothing. In the day that man dies his thoughts perish.

Death passed unto all men, and this made us even more imperfect than we were when we were originally created, if I could use *we* in the sense of Adam and Eve. God made them perfect physically. But ***they didn't have the character of God***; that's what was the missing ingredient. So therefore, He created them to be neutral; that is, when there were first created they were neither subject to death, nor were they subject to receiving eternal life, because it was going to be *based upon the condition of whether*

they would believe God and obey Him. That's the whole story of mankind:

- Do you believe God?
- Are you willing to obey Him?

Since God passed death unto all mankind, now man has a nature whereby he sins automatically.

"...and by means of sin *came* death; and in this way, death passed into all mankind; **and it is for this reason that all have sinned**" (v 12). In other words, some people misconstrue it to mean that little babies, when they are born, are not subject to death because they haven't sinned, yet. Well, you have already lost your premise, because do babies die having never sinned? *Yes!* Those who are successful in growing up—which is the greater portion of humanity, and God worked it out that way—we sin because we have an imperfect nature, because we have a nature which is subject to death. That's why all sin!

How is God going to solve this? How is God going to redeem man? *He solves it!* If you entered into a court of law and you hauled God before the court of law and someone there is sitting, judging God—which men judge God all the time, but God survives all the judgment of men—what would the judgment of men be concerning God doing this to mankind? '*God, You're unfair!* All of these innocent people down through the centuries, You have given the sentence of death and they have done nothing. You're unfair!' That's what a lot of people say!

No! God is not unfair! He has a way and a plan that He is going to do it. But He is not going to accomplish it until there are a sufficient number of human beings, according to the plan of God, that are going to eventually be in the Kingdom of God. There is the whole universe to take care of. That's going to require a lot sons of God, don't you think?

So then, rather than being judged by man, being condemned by man, and being accused by man that He is unfair, that He is not reasonable, why would He make man subject to death because of what Adam and Eve had done? After all, we weren't there, we didn't eat of the fruit, we didn't disobey God. We knew nothing about it. Furthermore, we didn't know anything about it until we read it in the Bible, or we heard a preacher preach it some time, and we often wonder: Why would God do that? After all, down deep inside of every one of us is *the desire to live forever!* So, God's judgment is this: **The same judgment He put on His creation, He took upon Himself.** Now, in order to do that, **He had to be made like every other human being.**

Let's see what comes with death. There is another law that is working within your members.

It's automatic, called the pull of the flesh. The pull of the flesh is called here in Rom. 7 *the law of sin and death.*

Romans 7:14: "For we know that the law is spiritual; but I am carnal, having been sold *as a slave* under sin."

- Who sold you under sin? *God did!*
- Who gave you a nature of death? *God did!*
- Who alone can rescue you from that? *God alone!*

That's why all the religions in the world are vain, empty and foolish. They cannot solve the problem of sin and death. They may be able to sublimate sin—by having discipline and rigor; by having a moral standard to live by—but they never are able to sublimate death because they all die. They never overcome it. That's why Paul said, 'sold under sin.'

Then he explains about the nature that human beings have, v 15: "Because what I am working out myself, I do not know..." In other words, he really doesn't want to do what he's doing. Have you ever done something that you really didn't want to do, but you went ahead and did it anyway? *Yeah, lots of times, many things!*

"...For what I do not desire to do, this I do..." (v 15). Everybody has good intentions. What's the old cliché in the world? *The road to hell is paved with good intentions!*

"...moreover, what I hate, this *is what* I do. But if I am doing what I do not desire to do, I agree with the law that *it is good*" (vs 15-16). The Law defines right and wrong, good and evil.

Verse 17: "So then, I am no longer working it out myself; rather, it is sin *that is dwelling within me*"—meaning, it's part of your being. That's why even as Christians, in overcoming, we still have the *law of sin and death* still working in us; though we have God's Spirit to overcome it, it is still there. God put it in there. You inherit that very nature from your mother and father, and going all the way back to Adam and Eve.

So, Paul says, v 18: "Because I fully understand that there is not dwelling within me—that is, within my fleshly being—*any good...*" That's a very profound statement, meaning that ***even the very, very best that a human being can do can never be perfect to the standard of God's perfection***, because something as imperfect as a human being can never make himself perfect. Even at your very best, you're still going to sin. That's why there's the grace of God. That's why Christ came.

“...For the desire to do good is present within me... [all human beings are that way ‘I desire to do good’] ...but how to work out that which is good, I do not find” (v 18).

In other words, you really don’t find a way to do it. Have you ever tried to do something really wonderful, fine, nice and lovely, and try and help somebody, have it just totally collapse on you and you then be accused of doing something evil, wrong, and something that was just absolutely despised by that person? *Yes! We all have!* That’s the operation of human nature.

Verse 19: “For the good that I desire to do, I am not doing; but the evil that I do not desire to do, this I am doing. But if I do what I do not desire to do, I am no longer working it out myself, but sin *that is dwelling within me*” (vs 19-20). He says it twice: “...sin *is dwelling in me.*”

- Did he have God’s Spirit? *Yes!*
- Was he an apostle? *Yes!*
- Was he headed toward eternal life? *Yes!*
- Was he teaching the Gentiles and the Israelites? *Yes!*

But his nature has to be changed, and the final change of the nature cannot come until the resurrection.

Verse 21: “Consequently, I find this law *in my members*, that when I desire to do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the Law of God according to the inward man; but I see another law within my own members, warring against the law of my mind, and leading me captive to the **law of sin** that is within my own members” (vs 21-23). So, you have in your members *the law of sin*.

Romans 8:2, he puts them together: “Because the **law of the Spirit of life** in Christ Jesus has delivered me from **the law of sin and death.**” You are not released from it; you still have it. That is the law that every person has within him, which we define as human nature or the downward pull of the flesh. That’s *the law of sin and death!* Because death has passed on to all men, so it’s *the law of sin and death*. The law of sin is within our members.

- How is God going to change that?
- How is He going to rescue mankind from that?

That’s what Heb. 2 gives us, more understanding concerning.

Romans 5:6: “For even when we were without strength... [without the Spirit of God we are totally without strength] ...at the appointed time...” The Greek means *in the set time*, the very set time

that God had determined, which is the Passover Day, Nisan 14, 30_{A.D.}

“...Christ died for *the* ungodly” (v 6). That’s quite a statement. That’s why it says that ***He tasted death for everyone***, because everyone is *ungodly!* Regardless of how good you may think you are, your very basic nature is ungodly. That’s just the way that it is. God made it that way.

When we really understand that and really understand that salvation only comes from God, then we don’t need to pull our bootstraps up over our head, and make ourselves stand so tall and have all the vanity and arrogance and authority of how great we are. Also, it shows you this: ***In order to die for the ungodly He had to be made lower than the angels.*** He had to be made in every respect like a human being, which means:

- *if* Christ came as a human being
- *if* Christ came to remove the judgment that He put upon mankind of *the law and sin and death* within them
- *if Christ* was made in every respect like unto them
- *if* Christ came and did not have *the law of sin and death* within Him

then His sacrifice could not cover the sins of all human beings!

There will be some people who *theologically* would fight against that. But God gave Himself this task into solving the judgment He gave to human beings, which is this: ***‘Since I put the law of sin and death in all human beings, I will take it upon Myself and not sin, and live a perfect life, be tempted in every way.*** He would have to have *the law of sin and death* in Him to be tempted in every way, *otherwise He couldn’t be tempted!* If He did not take on the fullness of human nature where He would be subject to sin, if He so chose to do so, then His sacrifice could not be applied to all human beings, and that’s what he’s saying here so profoundly in Heb. 2.

When we read in Heb. 2 that He was ‘tempted in all points like we are, yet, without sin’; the only way He could be tempted is if He had a nature where He could sin. But ***He rejected every temptation!*** He was filled with the Holy Spirit from conception!

Verse 7: “For rarely will anyone die for a righteous man, although perhaps someone might have the courage even to die for a good man. But God commends His own love to us because, **when we were still sinners, Christ died for us**” (vs 7-8).

- He had to die

- He had to be subject to death

If He was subject to death, He was subject to sin. If He was not subject to sin we could not have this said of Jesus Christ.

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, but *One Who* was tempted in all things according to *the likeness of our own temptations*; yet, *He was without sin*” (vs 14-15).

The very fact that it is worded that way shows that He had the possibility to sin, but He didn't. Some people would say, ‘You are denigrating the sacrifice and life of Christ.’ *No, I'm not!* That is magnifying it even more, because for God to do that makes it even greater. Neither of those verses could be if it were not the fact that He took upon Himself in being made human, to be fully human, to take *the law of sin and death* within His own members.

2-Corinthians 5:21: “For He made Him Who knew no sin *to be sin* for us...” To *know no sin* means that He did not sin. It says He was without sin (1-Peter 2).

Hebrews 4:15: “...*He was without sin.*”

2-Corinthians 5:21 “...so that we might become *the righteousness of God in Him.*” That's how God is going to solve the problem.

It's so very important to understand what God has done. This is what happens when people become very lethargic and they began slipping away from God. What happens is that when you begin slipping away from God, you have all sorts of good intentions and justifications in your own mind as to why you are still okay, even though you know you're slipping away. Have you ever had that process go on in your life? *Sure!* That's why the Apostle Paul is making it so clear, the very importance of what Christ has done. He wants us never to forget what He has done and how great this was that God did this.

Romans 5:8: “But God commends His own love to us because, when we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Much more, therefore... [there's more beyond that] ...having been justified now by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of His own Son, much more *then*, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. And not only *this*, but we also boast in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by Whom we have now received the reconciliation” (vs

8-11).

That's what we need to remember. When everything about God or the Bible devolves down to a religion where you pick and choose what you will do, what you won't do, where you set up your own standard of righteousness, then you begin to forget about what Christ has done, you begin to slip away from God. We have seen the whole process take place, even within the Churches of God. That's why these warnings are here.

After the warnings, then he gives the reason for why we really need to look to Jesus. And the whole point of all the book of Hebrews is to keep:

- your mind
- your heart
- your affection
- everything

on Jesus Christ

- Never forget what He has done!
- Never forget Who He was!
- Never forget Who He now is!

That's what he is saying.

Hebrews 2:9: “...He Himself might taste death for everyone... [to those who repent] ...because it was fitting for Him... [in other words, it was entirely proper for Him] ...for Whom all things *were created*, and by Whom all things *exist*, in bringing...” (vs 9-10).

Remember Romans 8:14: “For as many as are led by *the Spirit of God*, these are *the sons of God.*”

Hebrews 2:10: “...in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Author of their salvation perfect through sufferings.” Not that God was ever not perfect. *He always was perfect!* But God never experienced being a human being until Christ came in the flesh.

Now then, He was able to be perfected even much more. He had to suffer because He gave up all the glory and honor of God to become a human being and take within His members *the law of sin and death*. If you don't think that is suffering, then you have no clue as to what suffering is. Not only that, but to die the ignominious death that He did. {note sermon series: *The Prophecies of Jesus in the Old Testament*}. Go back and review this series, and you can see all the prophecies that the One Who became Jesus Christ prophesied concerning Himself and the death that He would go through, and the crucifixion, and the agony, and all of the things that go with it. **God knew!** That's why it's so great. He was made perfect *through sufferings*.

For what purpose? Verse 11: “For both He Who is sanctifying and those who are sanctified *are* all of one...” You need to understand that even more. We’re going to be at one with God, the fullness of being in the same glory that Jesus Christ is.

John 17 is one of the greatest chapters in the whole Bible, because it tells us:

- what God is doing
- what Christ was
- what Christ did
- the overall goal of being one

John 17:1: “Jesus spoke these words, and lifted up His eyes to heaven and said, ‘Father, the hour has come; glorify Your own Son, so that Your Son may also glorify You.’” There are two ways that He was glorified:

1. Through the brutality of the crucifixion, because He took upon Him all the sins of the world. That glorified God because it paved the way to remove sin for all those who repent.
2. He would glorify God again at the resurrection when He would come and present Himself as *the perfect sacrifice* after the crucifixion.

Verse 2: “‘Since You have **given Him authority over all flesh...**’” No human being is going to escape the authority of Jesus Christ. I do not care whether you are an atheist or an agnostic, or if you’re a Muslim or a Buddhist—whatever—*you are not going to escape the authority of Jesus Christ over you*—period! That’s just an eternal fact of life.

- you can ignore Him
- you can reject Him
- you can despise Him
- you can hate Him
- you can fight against and kill those whom He has called

but you cannot escape Him!

He has authority over all flesh. It says in another place that *every knee is going to bow to Christ! No one excepted!* If you won’t bow the knee to Christ, you can see your fate by looking into any lava lake on any volcano, because that is a lake of fire, and when you are cast in there that is where you shall be burned up. So, He has authority over all flesh. *No one can escape that!*

“...in order that He may give eternal life to all whom You have given Him” (v 2). God the Father has to call those to eternal life. The work that

God is doing is not a happenstance chance. It is determined! It is planned! God the Father is actively involved,

John 6:44: “No one can come to Me unless the Father, Who sent Me, draws him...” He gives them to Christ!

John 17:3: “For this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God...” At the time Jesus was saying that, that was an absolutely true statement, because Christ was God manifest in the flesh, He was not wholly God at that time. So, at that time God the Father was the only true God.

“...and Jesus Christ, Whom You did send” (v 3)—referring to Him being in the flesh now at this time.

Verse 4: “I have glorified You on the earth... [by His whole life; by His whole ministry] ...I have finished the work that You gave Me to do.” There is a finish and there is an end to the work that God is doing. He finished that part of it. When you come to Rev. 21, again He says, ‘It is done.’ So, He finishes that part of the work.

Now also, there is a work that God is doing in every one of us. He is going to finish it in every one of us unto death and the resurrection. He finished it! He didn’t come and say, ‘Well, God, I really tried...’ The New-Age Jesus: ‘I really tried’? That’s the excuse for everything: ‘Well if I try, you’ve got to accept it, and it is done. I put forth the effort.’ Like if you work in a factory and something goes wrong and you blow up the machine, and the boss comes around and says, ‘Why did this happen?’ *Well, I tried.* ‘Yeah, but the machine is blown up.’ *Well, I was well intended. I tried.*

No! God is not doing a haphazard ‘I tried.’ ***He’s going to do it! He’s going to finish it!***

Verse 5: “And now, Father, glorify Me with Your own self, with the glory that I had with You before the world existed.” That means before the world existed, showing that Jesus had glory because He was God, and He divested Himself of that glory and honor and became a human being.

Verse 6: “I have manifested Your name to the men whom You have given Me out of the world. They were Yours...”

Verse 14. “I have given them Your words, and the world has hated them...” We’re going to learn that lesson, too, brethren. The world is going to hate us.

“...because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. I do not pray that You would take them out of the world, but that You would keep them from the evil one [Satan the devil]. They are

not of the world, just as I am not of the world. Sanctify them in Your Truth; Your Word is the Truth” (vs 14-17).

What do we find here back in Hebrews 2:11: “For both He Who is sanctifying and those who are sanctified **are all of one**...” Christ is showing how that process is done, through the Word of God, through the Spirit of God. You can’t have the Spirit of God without the Word of God. It’s an impossibility, the two go together.

John 17:17: “Sanctify them in Your Truth; Your Word is the Truth. Even as You did send Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify Myself...” (vs 17-19).

How is He going to sanctify Himself? *By marching to that trial and crucifixion after being arrested, and dying!* That’s how He sanctified Himself.

“...so that they also may be sanctified in Your Truth. I do not pray for these only, but also for those who shall believe in Me through their word” (vs 19-20). There is a perpetual prayer that Jesus Christ gave to God the Father, which is taking place every day for all of those that believe.

Verse 21: “That they **all may be one** ...[that’s what we read back there in Heb. 2:11] ...even as You, Father, *are* in Me, and I in You; that they also **may be one in Us**... [that goes right back to Gen. 1:26] ...in Us, in order that the world may believe that You did send Me. And I have given them the glory that You gave to Me, in order that they may be one, in the same way *that* We are one” (vs 21-22).

That’s the whole plan and purpose, brethren, of the firstfruits. A special, eternal relationship with God the Father and Jesus Christ through all eternity that none of the others entering into the Kingdom of God after that time will have. That’s something! That’s why he is so emphatic about when he says, ‘It is imperative that we give full attention to the things that we have heard.’

Verse 23: “I in them, and You in Me, that they may be perfected into one; and that the world may know that You did send Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me. Father, I desire that those whom You have given Me may also be with Me where I am, so that they may behold My glory, which You have given Me; because You did love Me before *the* foundation of *the* world” (vs 23-24).

I’ll tell you what, brethren, the Kingdom of God will never succeed unless there is the love of God. That’s what God is basing the whole thing on.

Verse 25: “Righteous Father, the world has

not known You, but I have known You, and these have known that You did send Me. And I have made known Your name to them, and will make *it* known; so that the love with which You have loved Me may be in them, and I in them.” (vs 25-26). *That is how all are sanctified in one.*

Now let’s come back and we’ll finish Hebrews 2:11: “For both He Who is sanctifying and those who are sanctified *are* all of one; for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren.”

That’s why it’s important we remember this, brethren. ***It’s absolutely amazing what God has done!***

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*

Scriptural References:

- 1) Hebrews 2:1-5
- 2) Romans 8:14-23
- 3) Hebrews 2:6-18, 7-8
- 4) 1 Corinthians 15:20-28
- 5) Hebrews 2:8-9
- 6) Psalm 8:3-4
- 7) Hebrews 1:1
- 8) Psalm 8:5-9
- 9) Genesis 1:26-28
- 10) Genesis 11:1-6
- 11) Hebrews 2:9
- 12) Romans 5:12
- 13) Romans 7:14-23
- 14) Romans 8:2
- 15) Romans 5:6-8
- 16) Hebrews 4:14-15
- 17) 2 Corinthians 5:21
- 18) Hebrews 4:15
- 19) 2 Corinthians 5:21
- 20) Romans 5:8-11
- 21) Hebrews 2:9-10
- 22) Romans 8:14
- 23) Hebrews 2:10-11
- 24) John 17:1-2
- 25) John 6:44
- 26) John 17:3-6, 14-17
- 27) Hebrews 2:11
- 28) John 17:17-26
- 29) Hebrews 2:11

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Revelation 7; 13:8
- Genesis 3:15
- 1-Peter 2
- Revelation 21

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Sermons/Series

- *IF Statements of the Bible*
- *The Names of God*

Booklets:

- *Defining the Oneness of God* by Carl Franklin
- *The Nature of God* by Carl Franklin
- *The Prophecies of Jesus in the Old Testament*

Books:

- *Josephus*
- *The Christian Passover* by Fred R. Coulter

Articles:

- *Nature of God* (*The Christian Passover*)
- *Nature of Man* (*The Christian Passover*)

FRC: mds/cis

Transcribed: 06/10/2004

Reformatted/Corrected: bo—January/2017

The Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews VII Hear God's Voice and Harden Not Your Heart

(Chapters 2-3)

Fred R. Coulter

Let's review just a little bit; Hebrews 2:9: "But we see Jesus... [Paul is emphasizing Jesus] ...Who *was* made a little lower than *the* angels, crowned with glory and honor on account of suffering **the death** ... [which covers the sins of all the world] ...in order that by *the* grace of God He Himself might taste death for everyone." Of course, everyone there represents those who repent.

Verse 10: "Because it was fitting for Him, for Whom all things *were created*, and by Whom all things *exist*, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Author... [captain or champion] ...of their salvation perfect through sufferings."

Then we covered some of the sufferings that Christ went through. {note sermon series: *The Prophecies of Jesus in the Old Testament*} That was prophesied right from the beginning what He would go through, beginning in Gen. 3:16.

Let's cover how it was that He divested Himself; in order to do this; in order to be able to taste death God manifested in the flesh. As God, He could not die, because He is eternal. If He lowered Himself to become an angel then He would not have lowered Himself to become a human being because humans are a little lower than the angels. ***He had to divest Himself of His existence; of His glory; to reduce His existence from eternal to a pinpoint of life.***

He didn't lose His existence by doing that, but it was reduced to a pinpoint of life, and then impregnated in the virgin Mary so He could be born of the flesh; and have the same nature that all human beings have. He was tempted in every way but without sin. It was necessary that He do this to bring the judgment upon Himself for what He did as Creator to all mankind.

Verse 11: "For both He Who is sanctifying and those who are sanctified *are* all of one..." We're going to be one in the Family of God, and there's a special meaning to that as we saw in part six for those who are in the first resurrection, or the firstfruits, or the Church of the Firstborn; and it has a very profound meaning. The calling that God has given us is absolutely, just amazing!

"...for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren" (v 11).

Remember that Jesus said to the disciples on the Passover night, 'You are my friends.' Now we

are called *brethren*; we have the same spiritual Father. Notice what He told Mary Magdalene on the day that He was to ascend and be accepted by God the Father as the perfect sacrifice; having been raised from the dead.

John 20:17: "Jesus said to her, 'Do not touch Me, because I have not yet ascended to My Father. But go to My brethren..." We are all the brethren of Christ. That's something! He's not ashamed to call us brethren. That's quite a thing to understand!

"...and tell them that I am ascending to **My** Father and **your** Father..." (v 17). We have access to God the Father, to call him 'Abba Father'; a direct relationship with God the Father.

"...And **My** God and **your** God" (v 17). That's really quite a tremendous and wonderful thing that Jesus has done, that He's not afraid to call us *brethren*.

Hebrews 2:12: "Saying, 'I will declare Your name to My brethren; in the midst of *the Church* I will sing praise to You.'" That's something! When is He going to do this? *He does it every Sabbath*, if we could put it that way! But it's going to happen at the resurrection when the whole Church is resurrected together. He's going to sing praise to you.

Verse 13: "And again, 'I will be trusting in Him.' And again, 'Behold, I and the children whom God has given Me.'" That's really quite a tremendous thing that we have that.

This is all part of the result of the crucifixion of Christ. Ps. 22 is a prophecy of that crucifixion and the prophecy of the suffering that Jesus would go through; and of the salvation that would be the result of it. I've often wondered what David thought when he was given this Psalm to write? I wonder what his feelings were? I also have wondered what Christ thought about this when He was in the flesh and knew that this was going to happen on the Passover Day that He was crucified on.

We have it right here, Psalm 22:22: "I will declare Your name to My brethren; in the midst of the congregation I will praise You. You who fear the LORD, praise Him; all of you, the seed of Jacob, glorify Him; and stand in awe of Him all of you, the seed of Israel" (vs 22-23). That's quite a Psalm!

The thing is, Christ calls us *His brethren*. When we get into the thing concerning 'church

government' {see booklet: *The Ministry is not the Government of the Church*}

You will know why Jesus instructed the apostles the way He did concerning how to conduct their lives. This also shows why God does not want a hierarchy. This past Feast of Tabernacles was really a great lesson in how church groups can function without a hierarchy yet have someone who's in charge and oversees it.

The coordinator for the Feast in Gulf Shores/Foley, Alabama, said this was the best Feast he's ever had in *all* the years that he's been in the Church. I would have to vouch for the fact that it was a nearly perfect Feast. But he said there was no strife; there was no contention; everyone pitched in and helped, we didn't have to have a great list of things and people struggling to see who could climb up the ladder of the hierarchy to do whatever; everyone was loving, peaceful, happy, joyful, giving and serving; and it just worked wonderfully. And that's the way Christ wants the Church to work.

Matthew 20:20: "Then the mother of the sons of Zebedee came to Him with her sons..." She wanted to really make it special for her sons. Apparently she felt that her sons really had some great value for Christ.

"...worshiping Him and asking a certain thing from Him. And He said to her, 'What do you desire?' She said to Him, 'Grant that these my two sons may sit one at Your right hand and one at Your left *hand* in Your kingdom.'.... [that's a tall order; that's a tall request] ...But Jesus answered *and* said, 'You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I am about to drink, and to be baptized *with* the baptism that I am baptized *with*?' They said to Him, 'We are able'" (vs 20-22).

Now sometimes, when you say something to God or you say you're going to do something, He'll take you up on it. So, sure enough He did.

Verse 23: "And He said to them, 'You shall indeed drink of My cup, and shall be baptized *with* the baptism that I am baptized *with*; but to sit at My right hand and at My left *hand* is not Mine to give, but *shall be given to those* for whom it has been prepared by My Father.'" This created a great furor, because here these two were trying to get a political *in* so they could get a better reward.

Verse 24: "And after hearing *this*, the ten were indignant against the two brothers. But Jesus called them to *Him* and said, 'You know that the rulers of the nations exercise **lordship** over them..." (vs 24-25)—'katakuriueuo'—which is *lordship downward*; the hierarchy of a dictatorship.

"...and the great ones exercise **authority** over them'" (v 25)—'katexousiazō'—meaning *the authority comes down*.

The way Christ wants it is this: Here's God the Father and here are you. You have direct access to God the Father and Jesus Christ in heaven above, and those who are the servants—the elders and teachers—they're the ones who are on the sidelines to help you and lead you, but to lead you and bring you to the full measure of the stature of Christ, **because you are brethren**. That's the way that God wants it run; and when we really understand that, and when we really comprehend that, then we're going to know why God does not want a hierarchy.

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

He is the example; that's Who we need to follow. That's why He's not ashamed to call us *brethren*, and the 'children whom God has given Me.'

Hebrews 2:14: "Therefore, since the children are partakers of flesh and blood..." I went through and showed how that He took upon Himself the same *law as sin and death*.

"...in like manner He also took part in the same, in order that through death He might annul..." (v 14)—destroy, put down; that is not to bring Satan to a state of non-existence.

But that: "...He might annul him who has the power of death—that is, the devil. and *that* He might deliver those who were subject to bondage all through their lives by *their* fear of death. For surely, He is not taking upon Himself to help *the* angels; but He is taking upon Himself to help *the* seed of Abraham. For this reason, it was obligatory for *Him* to be made like *His* brethren... [you can't call someone your brother unless you are like him] ...**in everything**..." (vs 14-17).

How did He do that? *We'll see how He did it; quite a thing that God did!*

{note sermon series *The Prophecies of Jesus in the Old Testament*. You will see that there was a special covenant that God the Father and Jesus Christ had between them so that the One of *Elohim* became the Father, and the other of *Elohim* became the Son.}

So, They had

- perfect trust
- perfect faith
- perfect love

so that God could come down and become a human being to save His creation; to bring upon Himself the same judgment that He brought upon all human beings when He gave the sentence of death, and *the law of sin and death* in them, when Adam and Eve sinned; and has past for all human beings since them.

Philippians 2:5: "Let this mind be in you, which *was* also in Christ Jesus." Showing again the humility that Christ had; and

- His death was in fact *the humiliation*
- His resurrection was in fact *an exaltation*

So, before there is exaltation there needs to be humiliation. God was humiliated, beaten, killed, scourged and crucified by His own creation. That's something; now that's a tremendous mind to have—to go to that end; to that length—to save His creation.

Verse 6: "Who, although He existed in *the* form of God... [existing as God] ...did not consider it robbery to be equal with God." Well, He was! If you have the same existence as the Father, you have the glory as the Father has; then you're equal with Him. That is why when we're resurrected, and receive the glory that is given to us, we're going to have the same kind of existence that Jesus Christ has, so then we will be *spiritually* brethren forever. That's something to contemplate. He came to this earth to become a human being so we can become His brethren *now*. At the resurrection we will become like He is, so that we can be spiritually brethren forever.

Notice what He did, v 7: "But emptied Himself..." He gave up:

- His glory
- His honor
- His power
- His position

He reduced His life down to a pinpoint of life and then was impregnated in the womb of the virgin Mary, to be born of the flesh.

"...and was made in *the* like likeness of men... [the same likeness of human beings] ...and took the form of a **servant**" (v 7)—slave—'doulous'

That goes *all the way back* to the very beginning of the Bible and the creation of men; Genesis 1:26 "God said, 'Let Us... [the One Who became the Father and the One Who became the

Son] ...make man in Our image, after Our likeness'..."

The *whole* New Covenant is how we can be made after the God-kind, in the God Family; that's why we're called *brethren*. So, we're made after the likeness of God. God came and was made after the likeness of man.

That's what is says in Philippians 2:7: "...and was made in *the* likeness of men, and took the form of a servant; and being found in *the* manner of man..." (vs 7-8).

That means *every bodily function, everything that a human being does*, He did. There's even one humorous account that when Jesus was sleeping—Jesus needed to sleep—back there in the back of the ship when the storm came; the waves were coming and the disciples came to Him and said 'Don't You care for us? Wake up we're drowning.'

Everything that a man does! "...He humbled Himself..." (v 8). How did He humble Himself? A lot of people think, 'Well I won't humble myself.' Look what He humbled Himself to! Look what Jesus Christ did *for you*! That's the whole theme of the book of Hebrews. **Remember what Christ has done so that you can take part in what He is doing!** You want to summarize the whole of the book of Hebrews, that's it. **Remember what Christ has done, so you can be partakers of what God is doing!**

"...He humbled Himself, *and* became obedient unto death... [Not just an ordinary death] ...even *the* death of *the* cross" (v 8)—which is the cruelest of all deaths, because it is an execution designed for torture and for pain, and that is after He was scourged.

No one in the human realm even comes close to what Jesus did, because they did not start out as God, to become man. So therefore, ***only the sacrifice of Christ; and only the life of Christ*** can be given as the perfect sacrifice for human beings.

- no other means
- no other method
- no other religion
- no other thing

will do what Christ has done!

Notice what's going to happen, v 9: "Therefore, God has also highly exalted Him... [by the power of the resurrection] ...and bestowed upon Him a name which *is* above every name." Remember it says there in Rev. 19 that He has a name that only He Himself knows.

Everyone is going to have to come to this point, whether you're atheist, agnostic, Jew, Gentile,

professing Christian, Hindu, Muslim, Buddhist, Animist or any version or mixture of all the above said together. Here's what you're going to have to do, and this day *will* come and it is going to happen, because it is right here in the Scriptures:

Verse 10: "That **at the name of Jesus every knee should bow**, of *beings* in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ *is* Lord to the glory of God the Father" (vs 10-11). That means *above all other* lords on this earth. In that day when that happens, there will be no more religions. *Christ* and the *way of God* the Father is going to supersede all of that.

Now, let me just pause here since everyone is all concerned about terrorists. We as human beings are not going to enforce that. Christ is coming! He's going to return to the earth! ***He is going to enforce it!*** So, people don't need to look at us and say 'Well that's a terrorist statement.' I mean, we need to qualify it today because that's the way people are. ***That is an actual prophetic fact, which is going to take place!*** If that upsets you, don't be concerned; you just wait. One day you will have to do this, because it says ***every knee shall bow, and every tongue will confess***. What does that mean to us? Here's the same message that Paul gave in the book of Hebrews:

Verse 12: "So then, my beloved, even as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling."

- it is your relationship with God that counts
- it is your standing with God
 - ✓ your heart
 - ✓ your mind
 - ✓ your soul
 - ✓ your being

with Him!

It's not a movement, it's not an organization, it's not a power thing that human beings have; and now this group of human beings is going to impose its will upon another group of humans. No, it's not going to work that way. Christ and the resurrected saints are coming, and Christ is going to impose it. Christ is going to make it work. And it's going to happen!

Verse 13: "For it is God Who works in you both to will and to do according to *His* good pleasure." This is the whole thing concerning

- salvation
- growing and overcoming
- being the kind of Christians that we need to be
- being the light to the world

—but believing firmly and absolutely in the Truth of God.

There are some people who think that God is going to literally destroy Satan the devil. Is that true? Will it happen?

Hebrews 2:14: "Therefore, since the children are partakers of flesh and blood, in like manner He also took part in the same, in order that through death He might **annul** him who has the power of death—that is, the devil." It could be translated *to render useless, to put down, or to make of no effect* or, as the *Interlinear* has it, *to annul*.

You can destroy a person by doing things to him, yet, you don't take away his life. This sort of contradicts the Scripture in Rev. 20. Let's read what it says concerning Satan the devil. Is it possible that God could convert Satan into a human being and then destroy him? *Anything is possible*, but does God reveal that that's what He's going to do? *No, it doesn't!* Unfortunately the word *destroy* in the English means more than to annihilate, taking away life.

Revelation 20:10 tells exactly Satan's fate: "And the Devil, who deceived them, was cast into the Lake of Fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet *had been cast*; and they, *Satan and the demons*, shall be tormented day and night into the ages of eternity."

Wherever Satan is, the demons are. Therefore, the Greek verb *shall be tormented*, is they. We know that *the beast* and the *false prophet*, being human beings—howbeit possessed of Satan the devil at one time or another—would be destroyed in the Lake of Fire; so, they are not being tormented forever and ever. Here we have that Satan and the demons will be tormented forever and ever.

A proper translation of Heb. 2:14 would mean the kind of destruction that is *not annihilation of life*, but a *putting down, an annulling, a rendering useless or of no effect*.

Let's look at another one that talks about the ashes. It seems to fit there with the one who was Lucifer, who was cast down, in this case called the *king of Tyrus*. We're going to see that ***there are two personages here***, and the reason there are two is because it's showing us, that

1. the **prince of Tyrus**, or the *prince of Tyre possessed of*

2. Satan the devil called the **king of Tyre**

Remember, Satan is called 'the king.' He's called *the king of the bottomless pit!* (Rev. 9).

Ezekiel 28:1: "The Word of the LORD came to me, saying, 'Son of man, say to the prince of

Tyre. "Thus says the Lord GOD, 'Because your heart *is* lifted up, and you have said, "I *am* a god, I sit in the seat of God..."'" (vs 1-2).

When a man does that, he is possessed of Satan the devil. We have where that is again going to happen with the one who comes into the temple, which is going to be built, and proclaims that he is God. So here's a prophecy then, of 2-Thess. 2

"...I sit *in* the seat of God, in the midst of the seas;' yet, you *are* a man and not God..." (v 2). Can a man be turned to ashes? *Yes!* It shows that Satan is going to be tormented forever.

"...though you set your heart as the heart of a god; behold, you *are* wiser than Daniel; there is no secret that they can hide from you! With your wisdom and with your understanding you have made riches for yourselves, and have gotten gold and silver into your treasures. By your great wisdom *and* by your trade you have multiplied your riches, and your heart is lifted up because of your riches.' Therefore, thus says the Lord GOD, 'Because you have set your heart as the heart of a god'" (vs 2-6).

Why would he do that? *It is of the influence of Satan the devil who has possessed him!*

Verse 7: "Behold, therefore, I will bring strangers upon you, the most ruthless *of* the nations. And they shall draw their swords against the beauty of your wisdom, and they shall defile your brightness. They shall bring you down to the pit, and you shall die the death of those slain in the midst of the seas. Will you yet say before him who kills you, 'I *am* a god'?" (vs 7-9).

Are you going to stand up there and say, 'Don't kill me, I am God.' You know it's kind of like the king with his new invisible clothes, remember that story.

Verse 10: "'You shall die the death of the uncircumcised by the hand of strangers. For I have spoken,' says the Lord GOD" (vs 7-10).

Then there's a break, v 11: "And the Word of the LORD came to me, saying, 'Son of man, lift up a lamentation over the **king of Tyre**..." (vs 11-12). This gets into being Satan the devil who possessed the prince of Tyrus, which God said was a man, who God said, 'You're going to die.'

Satan is going to be tormented forever (Rev. 20:10). How do we know that this is Satan the devil? Verse 12: "'...Thus says the Lord GOD, 'You seal up the measure of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. You have been in Eden the garden of God..." (vs 12-13).

When God made the Garden of Eden, who

did He put in the Garden of Eden?

- *Adam and Eve*, that's 2
- *God was there*; that is 3
- *Satan the devil was there*; that is 4

Those were the only four that were in the Garden of Eden. What happened when Adam and Eve sinned? *They were expelled from the garden!* Satan was also cast out of the garden. So therefore, the king of Tyrus can only be Satan the devil.

Then it talks about all the beauty and glory that he had, v 13: "...in the day that you were created... [then it defines what his position was in the Kingdom of God]: ...You *were* the anointed cherub that covers, and I set you so; you were upon the Holy mountain of God; you have walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire.... [the glorified Sea of Glass, if you understand that] ...You *were* perfect in your ways ..." (vs 13-15).

No man is perfect. So, this cannot be talking about a man here, but about a spirit being who then fell; and he fell for the same reasons that he inspired the prince of Tyrus to set himself up as God.

Verse 15: "You *were* perfect in your ways from the day that you were created..." But the prince of Tyrus was born; he wasn't created.

He was perfect "...until iniquity was found in you. By the multitude of your merchandise they have filled your midst *with* violence, and you have sinned..." (vs 15-16). This would obviously have to do with what he did with the angels. We don't understand all that went on; we don't understand what happened with the third of the angels that fell with Satan to become the demons. But here is the process by which he did it.

"...Therefore, I will cast you as profane from the mountain of God..." (v 16). Was the prince of Tyre (Tyrus) in Tyre? or Was he in the mountain of God? *He wasn't in the mountain of God; he was in Tyrus!*

He says. "...and I will destroy you..." (v 16)—expel you. This destruction is not unto death, but *will expel you!*

"...O covering cherub, from among the stones of fire" (v 16). Was he expelled? *Yes, he was!* Jesus said 'I saw Satan fall from heaven as lightning.' Rev. 12 says, 'His tail drew a third part of the stars of heaven' being the angels that fell with him.

"...I will destroy you, O covering cherub, from among the stones of fire. Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty; you have corrupted your wisdom by reason of your brightness. I will cast you to the ground; I will lay you before kings, that they

may behold you" (vs 16-17).

Let's see again it's talking about Satan. Notice he was cast down, he was going to exalt himself, set his throne above the stars of God.

Isaiah 14:14: "'I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the Most High.' Yet, you shall be brought down to the grave, to the sides of the pit. Those who see you shall stare and watch you closely, *saying*, 'Is this the man who made the earth to tremble; who shook kingdoms'" (vs 14-16). They're all going to come and see him; this indicates that he will be living.

Verse 17: "'Who made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed its cities; *who* did not allow his prisoners to go free?' All the kings of the nations, even all of them, lie in glory, every one in his own house. But you are cast out of your grave *like* a hateful branch, *and like* the clothing of those who are slain, thrust through with a sword, that go down to the stones of the pit; like a dead body trampled under foot. You shall not be joined with them in burial because you destroyed your land *and* killed your people; the seed of evildoers shall never be famous" (vs 17-20). Then it goes on into the king of Babylon from there. So, they're going to come and look at him.

Ezekiel 28:18: "By the multitude of your iniquities, by the unrighteousness of your trade, you have profaned your sanctuaries; therefore I brought forth a fire from your midst; it shall devour you, and I will bring you to ashes upon the earth, before the eyes of all who see you. All who know you among the people shall be astonished at you; you became a terror, and you *will not be* anymore." (vs 18-19).

Here it comes back to the prince of Tyre, who is killed and burned into ashes. That's the best that we can do on explaining will Satan be destroyed, that is have his life annihilated, or will he live forever? I think if we follow Rev. 20:10 that he's going to be tormented forever and ever. That is a clear statement exclusively about Satan alone; the statements here in Ezek. 28 and Isa. 14 are not quite as clear because it's involving the prince of Tyre, and also the king of Babylon, so it makes it a little difficult to put it all together. But nevertheless, Heb. 2:14 says that he will destroy him. That means *render useless; to annul; to put down* him who has to power of death that is the devil.

Hebrews 2:17: "For this reason, it was obligatory for *Him* to be made like *His* brethren in everything that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest... [this is the first time that High Priest is used] ...*in* things pertaining to God, in order to make **propitiation** for the sins of the people"—a *continual source of grace and mercy*, to propitiate or to forgive "...the sins of the people." Here's why:

Verse 18: "For because He Himself has suffered, having been tempted *in like manner*, He is able to help those who are being tempted."

Let's just do a quick review, we had:

- a comparison of Jesus and the angels
- a comparison of Jesus and mankind
- what He's done for mankind
- what He has done for those who are being called
- the warning in the first part of Heb. 2 that we need to be careful that we don't slip away
- an explanation as to why we need to not let them slip away, because of what Christ has done
- how magnificent that it was that He gave the sacrifice
- that He gave His life

When we come to Heb. 3 there's another comparison that is made, which is really very profound and important.

(go to the next track)

Hebrews 3:

We've compared Jesus with angels and with mankind; and Jesus with Satan the devil. Paul makes another comparison, which for the Hebrews is profound and very important; because now the Hebrews have to understand that Moses is *not* the top man. We're going to see that indeed, it is a very difficult thing for some of them to understand.

Hebrews 3:1: "Because of this... [he's had the warning (Heb 2)] (then he has all this explanation): ...Holy brethren, partakers of *the* heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of *the faith* we profess—Jesus Christ... [he's going to compare Him with Moses]: ...Who was faithful to Him Who appointed Him, even as Moses *was* in all His house. For He has been counted worthy of greater glory than Moses, even as He Who built the house has so much more honor than the house *itself*. For every house is built by someone, but He Who built all things *is* God. Now on the one hand, Moses *was* faithful in all his house, as a ministering servant, for a testimony of those things which were going to be spoken afterwards" (vs 1-5).

That means spoken of afterwards by Christ, because that's what we're talking about there in the beginning of Heb. 1. Christ spoke.

Verse 6: "But on the other hand, Christ *was faithful* as *the* Son over His own house; Whose house we are, if we are truly holding fast the confidence and rejoicing of the hope firm to *the* end."

Remember, *he who endures to the end, the same shall be saved*. There's a process of endurance that's very important for us to understand. Let's go back and consider some of the statements of John in the Gospel of John, concerning Moses, and concerning a comparison that was given here by Jesus.

I think that we're going to find it very interesting. You know, even to this day, it is so difficult to get Jews looking to Christ instead of Moses; even for those who believe in Jesus, like the Messianic Jews claim that they do. Still they have to go back to the tradition of the fathers, which they claim is Moses.

John 3:25: "Then there arose a question *between* the disciples of John and *some of the* Jews about purification. And they came to John and said to him, 'Rabbi, He Who was with you beyond Jordan, to Whom you have borne witness, behold, He is baptizing, and all are coming to Him.' John answered and said, 'No one is able to receive anything unless it has been given to him from heaven. You yourselves bear witness to me that I said, "I am not the Christ," but that I am sent before Him. The one who has the bride is *the* bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, who stands by and hears him, rejoices greatly because of the voice of the bridegroom; *in* this then, my joy has been fulfilled'" (vs 25-29). He could hear what Jesus was doing.

John understood what he was to do, v 30: "It is ordained that He [Christ] increase, and that I decrease. He Who comes from above is above all. The one who is of the earth is earthly, and speaks of the earth. He Who comes from heaven is above all; and what He has seen and heard, this *is what* He testifies; but no one receives His testimony. The one who has received His testimony has set his seal that God is true" (vs 30-33).

This is important because the Jews came there and they wanted to know about Jesus; and, of course, it has an awful lot to do concerning Moses and concerning their traditions; and concerning what they believed.

Verse 34: "For He Whom God has sent speaks the words of God..." This is referring directly to Christ; but this is also a test that you can test everyone who says he's a minister of God. Is he speaking the words of God?

- if he's not speaking the words of God, *then God didn't send him*
- if he speaks the words of God and misapplies them and twists them, *then he's not from God*

Speaking of Christ, v 34: "For He Whom

God has sent speaks the words of God; and God gives not the Spirit by measure *unto Him*. The Father loves the Son and has given all things into His hand. The one who believes in the Son has everlasting life; but the one who does not obey the Son shall not see life, for the wrath of God remains on him" (vs 34-36). John knew and understood what was going on.

We'll see where then Moses enters into the formula here. Jesus was talking to the Jews who were after Him to kill Him because He healed the man who had the infirmity for 38 years.

John 5:36, Jesus says: "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 36-37).

That's why, this again, is another proof that when Moses saw God it was not God the Father but it was the One Who became Jesus Christ.

Verse 38—a very key important verse, though they rely on Moses, here's something profound: "And you do not have His work dwelling in you, **for you do not believe Him Whom He has sent**. You search the Scriptures, for in them you think that you have eternal life; and they are the ones that testify of Me. 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). Yes, that's why it became such a hateful religion, because it's not based on love.

Verse 43: "I have come in My Father's name, and you do not receive Me; *but* if another comes in his own name, you will receive him. How are you able to believe, you who receive glory from one another, and do not seek the glory that *comes* from the only God? Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father. There is *one* who accuses you, *even* Moses, in whom you have hope" (vs 43-45).

But they didn't know the Scriptures. They trust in the name of Moses; but they didn't believe Moses. Isn't that interesting? Isn't that the way a lot of Protestants are? *They trust in the name of Jesus but they don't believe Him!* Same sin the Pharisees had.

Verse 46: "But **if you believed Moses, you would have believed Me**; for he wrote about Me. And if you do not believe his writings, how shall you believe My words?" (vs 46-47).

That also helps us understand why so many religions are off; because they really don't believe Moses, and they really don't believe the words of Christ. You've got to have both of them, **"If you do not believe his writings, how shall you believe My words?"** That was quite a confrontation.

John 9—this becomes really an interesting and very profound section here. Let's see what they said of Jesus. Remember He healed the man who had been born blind so he could see. And what He did, He made some clay out of spittle, you know, He got some dust and put it on His hands, spit in it and made some clay; put it on his eyes and told him to go wash in the Pool of Siloam; he went and washed and he saw.

John 9:13: "They brought him who *was* once blind to the Pharisees. Now it was *the* Sabbath when Jesus made the clay and opened his eyes. Therefore, the Pharisees in turn also asked him how he had received sight. And he said to them, 'He put clay on my eyes, and I washed; and *now* I see.'.... [it was a simple matter] ...Then some of the Pharisees said, 'This man is not from God because He does not keep the Sabbath.'...." (vs 13-16). According to whose interpretation? *The Pharisees!*

Let's see what they attribute to Moses; and this becomes important as to why Paul in Heb. 3 makes a comparison between Christ and Moses.

Verse 16: "...Others said, 'How can a man who is a sinner do such miracles?' And there was a division among them." They had a fight right there with the council of Sanhedrin, as to whether He was from God or not.

Verse 17: "They said to the blind man again, 'What do you say about Him since He opened your eyes?' And he said, 'He is a prophet.' However, the Jews did not believe *this* about him, that he was blind and had received sight, until they called the parents of the one who had received sight. And they asked them, saying, 'Is this your son, who you say was born blind?.... [they didn't say, who was born blind] ...How then does he now see?'" (vs 16-19). Well his parents were stuck; here they are at the board of inquisition.

Verse 20: "His parents answered them and said, 'We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind. But how he now sees, we do not know; or who opened his eyes, we do not know. He is of age; ask him. He will speak for himself.' His parents said these things because they were afraid of the Jews; for the Jews had already agreed among themselves that if anyone confessed Him *to be the* Christ, he would be put out of the synagogue. For this reason, his parents said, 'He is of age; ask him.'

Therefore, they called a second time *for* the man who had been born blind, and said to him, 'Give glory to God. We know that this Man is a sinner.' Then he answered and said, 'Whether He is a sinner, I do not know. One *thing* I do know, that I was blind, *and* now I see.' And they said to him again, 'What did He do to you? How did He open your eyes?' He answered them, 'I have already told you, and you did not listen. Why do you want to hear *it* again? Do you desire to become His disciples, too?'" (vs (20-27).

That really got them upset, v 28: "Then they railed at him and said, 'You are His disciple, but we are Moses' disciples. We know that God spoke to Moses. As for this Man, we do not know where He has come from'" (vs 28-29). Now you see it's a hard thing to get the Jews to look to Christ as greater than Moses.

Let's see that again with the Pharisees. We've covered this before in the past so I'm not going to go in great detail about it. The Pharisees could not get over the fact that they had to insist that the Gentile proselytes would be required to have circumcision. {see sermons on the *Circumcision Wars*}

Acts 15:1: "Now certain men who had come down from Judea were teaching the brethren..." They came down from Judea to Antioch, where Paul and Barnabas and the Christians were there.

"...saying, 'Unless you are circumcised after the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved'" (v 1). That created a great furor. They went on up to Jerusalem; they told the Church and the apostles what happened.

Verse 5: "But there stood up certain of those who believed, who were of the sect of the Pharisees..." Here are those that believed; they believed in Christ, but they still insisted upon circumcision because that's the way that they did with the proselytes and the synagogue before the advent of the Church.

"...saying, 'It is obligatory to circumcise them, and to command *them* to keep the Law of Moses'" (v 5).

In this case, the Law of Moses was not the Ten Commandments or the laws found in the Old Testament that we are to keep, this is *their interpretation* of the Law of Moses as fully expounded in the book called *Code of Jewish Law*, which are all the traditions of the Jews compiled into one book—thousands and thousands of their laws and traditions—and it begins with circumcision, and they call all of it the Law of Moses, because they feel that in making these traditions and laws they sit

in the *seat of Moses* and have been given by God the authority to do so.

When they say here, "...Command *them* to keep the Law of Moses" that is as the Jews and the Pharisees kept it, which were *vain traditions! Rejected God!* So, it was a difficult proposition to get the Jews, or in this case the Hebrews, to separate themselves, to look to Christ instead of Moses—a great, great problem. This is why the comparison is made here. Moses was looked upon as *the* man, the *prophet par excellence*, if you want to put it that way. He makes the comparison by saying that Christ was faithful over the house, which He built, and we as the Christians are part of that house.

Hebrews 3:6: "...Whose house we are... [this also shows that Christ is the Head of the Church] ...Christ *was faithful* as *the* Son over His own house; Whose house we are, if we are truly holding fast the confidence and rejoicing of the hope firm to *the* end."

Let's look at just a couple of things that are important here for us to understand. We are the house of God—those who have the Holy Spirit of God—part of the body of Christ that are growing in grace and knowledge. They are part of that which is being built up into a *spiritual temple*.

Ephesians 2:18: "For through Him we both have *direct* access... [Jews and Gentiles] ...by one Spirit to the Father. So then, you are no longer aliens and foreigners; but *you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of the household of God*.... [Christ is faithful over that house] ...You are being built up on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being *the* chief Cornerstone.... [not headstone, but cornerstone] ...In Whom all the building, being conjointly fitted together, is increasing into a Holy temple in *the* Lord; in Whom you also are being built together for a habitation of God in *the* Spirit" (vs 18-22).

This agrees that Christ is over His own house. Now we have exactly the same thing here concerning the body. So the analogy is concerning

- *the house*, which is the Church
- *the temple*, which is the Church
- *the body*, which is the Church

This tells the whole purpose of the ministry, Ephesians 4:12: "For the perfecting of the saints..." I think God is going to hold a lot of ministers accountable if they are not teaching with the view of perfecting the saints, because that's what God wants.

"...for *the* work of *the* ministry, for *the* edifying of the Body of Christ" (v 12). Here it's likened unto a body, but it all fits the same thing.

Edifying is the *building up*, and this is the same thing that is used for a house or a household, only instead of a noun this is the verb:

- to build up
- edifying
 - ✓with love
 - ✓with service
 - ✓with Truth
 - ✓with grace
 - ✓with correction

all the things that are to be brought.

Verse 13: "Until we all come into the unity of the faith..." Isn't that interesting? Remember what we read, that Jesus is not ashamed to call us brethren, to My God and your God; go to My brethren. Now here we have Paul reflecting the same thing here:

Until we *all*—Paul included with all the saints—"...come into the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man... [that means a full spiritually mature person] ...unto *the* measure of *the* stature of the fullness of Christ" (vs 13).

That's what we need to keep our focus and our mind on. That's what the book of Hebrews is warning as we're going to see when we get back there, is one of the strongest warnings in of all the New Testament. It's given to the Hebrews, and it has all of these comparisons so that they're going to have to understand that they're dealing directly with God the Father and Jesus Christ.

"...stature of the fullness of Christ; so that we no longer be children... [He wants us to grow up in Christ] ...tossed and carried about with every wind of doctrine by the sleight of men in *cunning* craftiness, with a view to the systematizing of the error; but holding the Truth in love, may in all things grow up into Him Who is the Head, *even* Christ from Whom all the body, fitly framed... [joined together] ...and compacted together by *that which* every joint supplies, according to *its* inner working in *the* measure of each individual part, is making the increase of the body unto *the* edifying of itself in love" (vs 13-16). That's the whole work that Christ is doing as a faithful High Priest over the house that God has given Him.

We're going to have to understand here that we're going to have to hold this confidence firm unto the end.

Matthew 24:13^[transcriber's correction]: "But the one who endures to *the* end, that one shall be saved." *It's not how you start, it's how you finish!* And finish we must! And finish we will! *Because Christ will make sure that we can finish.*

Hebrews 3:7: "For this reason, even as the Holy Spirit says, 'Today, **if you will hear His voice.**'" That's the whole theme of this.

- God spoke to us
- we heard His words
- Christ came in the flesh
- He was God in the flesh
- He spoke the words of God

And remember those who won't hear the words of Christ, they don't have eternal life.

Verse 7: "Harden not your hearts, as in the rebellion..." You've got to listen! Regardless of the circumstances, Paul talks about persecution; he talks about difficulties; he talks about martyrdom. We will look at the rebellion in quite some detail a little later.

"...in the day of temptation in the wilderness, where your fathers tempted Me *and* tried Me, and saw My works forty years. Because of this, I was indignant with that generation, and said, 'They are always going astray in their hearts, and they have not known My ways.' So, I swore in My wrath, 'If they shall enter into My rest—'" (vs 7-11)—showing that there are qualifications for us, just like they are qualifications for entering into the Kingdom of God.

We'll see a little later on, this baloney that 'Christ is our Sabbath' is just so much intellectual stupidity; trying to sound like you don't have to keep anything that God has commanded you. If you don't have to keep anything, why then does He talk about rebellion? Rebellion then is going against what you're commanded to keep. *Have to be, no doubt about it!*

Verse 12, he gives a strong warning. After all that we've covered through, now here is the strongest warning that he gives: "**Beware, brethren, lest perhaps there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in apostatizing from the living God.** Rather, be encouraging one another each day, while it is called 'today'..." (vs 12-13). That's very important because *today*, not tomorrow:

- *today* you must hear His voice
- *today* you must yield to God
- *today* you must obey God
- *today* you must love God
- *today* you must apply yourselves

—because there may not be any tomorrow. What's the old saying? *The way to hell is paved with good intentions!* and good intentions are always done tomorrow. It says *today*!

"...so that none of you become hardened by the deceitfulness of sin" (v 13). That was the whole

problem, and is the problem of the Laodeceans, and this you could say is really a letter to the Laodeceans to come out of their sin. ***Sin is deceptive!*** There is pleasure in sin for a season and sin becomes deceitful. Every time you sin you figure out a way why it's okay that you do it. Pretty soon ***if*** God does not prick your conscience, or you do not allow your conscience to be pricked, then *the hardness of the deceitfulness of sin* will come upon you and you won't be able to repent! That's what he says when we get to the conclusion of this section coming into Heb. 6.

Verse 14: "For we are companions of Christ, ***if*** we truly hold the confidence *that we had* at the beginning steadfast until the end." What we might say is, you really need to grow in it, that you are going to have more confidence now then you had at the beginning; because ***if*** you do grow in grace and knowledge:

- you're going to have more confidence
- you're going to have more faith
- you're going to endure to the end

and it's going to be stronger at the end rather than at the beginning. He's really trying to stir them up here. 'Look, you need to get back to the beginning.'

Verse 15: "As it is being said, 'Today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts, as in the rebellion.' For some, after hearing, did rebel, but not all who came out of Egypt by Moses. But with whom was He indignant for forty years? *Was it* not with those who had sinned, whose dead bodies were strewn in the wilderness? And to whom did He swear *that they* would not enter into His rest, except to those who had **disobeyed?**" (vs 15-18)—not just disbelief.

Now notice, ***if you disobey you do not have belief***; they go hand-in-hand; v 19: "So we see that they were not able to enter in **because of unbelief.**" ***Disobedience and unbelief go hand-in-hand!***

Now then, he's talking about the Sabbath and he's quoting from Ps. 95, the lead in to Heb. 4 and Sabbath-keeping. Let's go to Psalm 95 which is the Sabbath Psalm. What is it that people *disbelieve* and *disobey*? ***They don't believe the commandment concerning the Sabbath, so they disobey and they harden their hearts and they rebel!***

Psalm 95:1: "O come, let us sing to the LORD; let us make a joyful noise to the Rock of our salvation." This is what we are to do on the Sabbath;

- praise God
- serve God
- study His Word
- learn to pray for each other

- encourage each other
- help each other

All of these things are important, and God knows we all have enough problems and difficulties that we all need the encouragement for everyone the best we can, isn't that true?

Verse 2: "Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving..." [When? *On the Sabbath Day!*] ...and make a joyful noise unto him with psalms. For the LORD is a great God and a great King above all gods" (vs 2-3).

Why would you be interested in any of the religions of this world if God *is* God, and Christ *is* His Son, and He's a great God, and a great King? What attraction would there be to you of any of these religions which are a counterfeit and substitute for the way if God? *It shouldn't hold any attraction to you!*

Verse 4 shows that He is in control of everything: "In His hand are the depths of the earth; the peaks of the mountains are also His. The sea is His, and He made it, and His hands formed the dry land. O come, let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the LORD our Maker, for He is our God, and we are the people of His pasture, and the sheep of His hand...." (vs 4-7).

Note John 10, Christ is the Shepherd. He brings him into the pasture. This is talking about it.

Verse 7: "...Today, if you would but hearken to His voice: 'Harden not your heart as in the rebellion, as in the day of temptation in the wilderness when your fathers tempted Me, tried Me, even though they saw My work. For forty years I was grieved with that generation, and said, "It is a people who go astray in their hearts, and they have not known My ways"' (vs 7-10).

That is in spite of the fact that God was there in the presence of the people, as shown by the cloud in the daytime, and the pillar of fire by night, and Moses could have direct contact with God, they still didn't hear the voice of God and rebelled. So that's why no one should say, 'if I heard the voice of God,' or 'if God would reveal Himself to me then I would hear and then I would do. 'No you wouldn't; you'd be exactly the same as they were. So, they had a penalty happen to them.

Verse 11: "To whom I swore in My wrath that they should not enter into My rest."

That's quite a lesson for us! This, again, gets back to **today, if you will hear His voice, harden not your heart!** So this is quite a strong section of correction that we have here in Hebrews the third

chapter.

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*

Scriptural References:

- 1) Hebrews 2:9-11
- 2) John 20:17
- 3) Hebrews 2:12-13
- 4) Psalm 22:22-23
- 5) Matthew 20:20-28
- 6) Hebrews 2:14-17
- 7) Philippians 2:5-7
- 8) Genesis 1:26
- 9) Philippians 2:7-13
- 10) Hebrews 2:14
- 11) Revelation 20:10
- 12) Ezekiel 28:1-17
- 13) Isaiah 14:14-20
- 14) Ezekiel 28:18-19
- 15) Hebrews 2:17-18
- 16) Hebrews 3:1-6
- 17) John 3:25-36
- 18) John 5:36-47
- 19) John 9:13-29
- 20) Acts 15:1, 5
- 21) Hebrews 3:6
- 22) Ephesians 2:18-22
- 23) Ephesians 4:12-16
- 24) Matthew 24:13
- 25) Hebrews 3:7-19
- 26) Psalm 95:1-11

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Genesis 3:16
- Revelation 19, 9
- 2 Thessalonians 2
- Revelation 12
- Hebrews 1
- John 10

Also referenced:

Sermon Series:

- *The Prophecies of Jesus in the Old Testament*
- *Circumcision Wars*

Booklet: *The Ministry is not the Government of the Church*

Book: *Code of Jewish Law* by Solomon Ganzfried and Hyman Goldin

FRC:sav
Transcribed: 02/20/2007
Reformatted/Corrected: bo—January/2017

The Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews VIII The Greatest Provocation Against God

(Chapter 3)
Fred R. Coulter

I just want to review a couple of things in Heb. 3 that are important for us to realize; important for us to understand. Here Paul was making the comparison between Christ and Moses. In part seven we saw how important it was to make that distinction because all of the Jews, especially, thought that Moses was the prophet of God par excellence, no greater prophet of God.

Hebrews 3:1: “Because of this, Holy brethren...” That is everything in all of Heb. 1 & 2, which shows:

- the pre-existence of Christ as God
- His resurrection back to being God
- the suffering that He went through for the sake of bringing salvation to mankind
- being the High Priest who makes propitiation for the sins of the people

The reason Paul begins Heb. 3 this way, and begins comparing with Moses is because Moses also, when he was dealing with God and the children of Israel, *acted as a high priest to propitiate*, to go to God and ask for mercy for the sins of Israel, and God heard him.

Hebrews 3:1: “Because of this, Holy brethren, partakers of *the* heavenly calling...” Not just a citizen of Israel, but *a heavenly calling*; God is the One Who has called you. That’s why joining a ‘religion’ cannot bring you close to God; it can bring you some knowledge of God; it can give you a discipline in life which is better than total lawlessness, but ‘religion’ in itself becomes lawless in its final analysis; but, *we have a heavenly calling*.

“...consider the Apostle and High Priest of *the faith* we profess—Jesus Christ, Who was faithful to Him Who appointed Him, even as Moses *was* in all His house. For He has been counted worthy of greater glory than Moses, even as He Who built the house has so much more honor than the house *itself*. For every house is built by someone, but He Who built all things *is* God. Now on the one hand, Moses *was* faithful in all his house, as a ministering servant...” (vs 1-5)—a steward; someone who is in charge and acts of behalf of the interest of the owner.

“...for a testimony of those things which were going to be spoken afterwards.... [by Christ] ...But on the other hand, Christ *was faithful as the*

Son over His own house; Whose house we are, if we are truly holding fast the confidence and rejoicing of the hope firm to *the end*” (vs 5-6).

Now, let’s go back to look at some other comparisons concerning Moses. Deuteronomy 18:15 is a powerful prophecy of Jesus Christ. What is important here is *it was spoken by Moses*. So, Moses was showing that there was coming, after him at a future time, *One greater than he*.

Deuteronomy 18:15: “The LORD your God will **raise up unto you a Prophet** from the midst of you, of your brethren, One like me. To Him you shall hearken, according to all that you desired of the LORD your God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, ‘Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God, neither let me see this great fire any more, so that I do not die’” (vs 15-16).

They wanted a man to speak to them. It’s also interesting that all of the ‘religions’ of the Gentiles want God to speak to them. Isn’t that interesting? So, in sending Christ, God—Who became Jesus Christ—fulfilled this prophecy for the Jews and the Israelites, and also, for the Gentiles.

- God did come in the flesh
- God did speak to His people
- God did make His will known

through Jesus Christ Who was God manifest in the flesh.

Verse 18: “I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, *One* like you, and will put My words in His mouth....” That’s what Jesus said, ‘I don’t speak My words, but what the Father has commanded Me to speak, that’s what I speak.’ Whatever the Father does, the Son does. He shows the Son all things because the Father loves the Son, and the Son loves the Father.

“...And He shall speak to them all that I shall command Him” (v 18). That’s the whole New Testament. So therefore, *those who reject the New Testament are without excuse*, especially if they hold the Old Testament in their hands and say Christ was not from God.

Verse 19: “And it shall come to pass... [this is greater than Moses] ...whatever man will not hearken to My words which He shall speak in My name, I will require *it* of him.” Jesus said ‘I didn’t

come in my own name, I came in the name of the Father, and He sent Me.’

Verse 20: **“But the prophet who shall presume to speak a word in My name which I have not commanded him to speak or who shall speak in the name of other gods, even that prophet shall die.”**

It’s an awesome thing for anyone to set himself up as a preacher or a prophet. *They presume to speak in the name of God, and give all kinds of false doctrines!* We don’t have time to innumerate all the false doctrines and all the false Christianity of the world; all the way from prayers for the dead to snake handling.

Verse 21: “And if you say in your heart, ‘How shall we know the word which the LORD has not spoken?’ When a prophet speaks in the name of the LORD, if the thing does not follow nor come to pass, that is the thing, which the LORD has not spoken. The prophet has spoken it presumptuously. You shall not be afraid of him.” (21-22).

This has happened to even all the true ministers of God, in relationship to prophecy, because they *presumed* that they understood the times, and they didn’t. So therefore, they spoke presumptuously.

There’s another category that goes even further than this, which follows up on v 20. Everyone wants to know: Why does God allow this? Why does God allow that? *God allows it so He can test us and try us!* We’ll understand why Deut. 13 starts out the way it does because this is a comparison again between Moses and other prophets; and the Word of God and not the Word of God.

Deuteronomy 12:30: “Take heed to yourself that you do not become ensnared by following them, after they are destroyed from before you, and that you do not ask about their gods, saying, ‘How did these nations serve their gods that I may also do likewise?’”

- that’s interesting
- that’s quaint
- that’s wonderful
- that’s nice
- how thrilling
- how exciting
- it’s just such fun

We just recently had Halloween. *The depths of the evil of Satan portrayed as fun and games for kids!* All the witches were happy because they had a full moon on Halloween, the first time in 46 years.

God says you shall not do so likewise! ‘But it’s for the kids. We do it for the kids.’ You want to teach them demonism? Is that what you’re doing? *They don’t even know what they’re saying!* Same way with Christmas! I had one person say that ‘your religion is really good and it would be even better if you kept Christmas, because it’s for the kids.’ You mean:

- it’s all right to lie to children?
- it’s all right to tell them fairy tales?
- it’s all right to say there is a Santa Claus?

What happens? *That helps set the children up that they receive ‘good things’ from a liar, and someone who doesn’t exist—rather than their parents—and on and on and on!*

You could take anything else: mias and pias when the Catholics pray and they do the rosary. You know, 15 ‘hail Marys’ and 20 ‘our fathers.’ If you’re real zealous make it 200 of each. Isn’t it profound that the Muslims also have rosary? They have special prayer beads, and so do the Buddhist, and Buddhist have prayer wheels. My, that’s a handy way! You know you don’t even have to pray. Just go along and roll a wheel and there’s a prayer already written on it, and that rolls up to God. Why that’s handy dandy! Just think how much time that’ll save you, you know that’s better than going to McDonald’s for breakfast. You know we can get it done fast and in a hurry. Or whatever it may be.

Now I’m being a little sarcastic because when you watch some of these documentaries on some of these other religions they’re really stupid; just plain *stupid and demonic!*

“...and that you do not ask about their gods, saying, ‘How did these nations serve their gods that I may also do likewise?’” (v 30).

‘Well, that’s a quaint thing, let’s go ahead and put the name of Christ on it.’ That’s all the Catholic’s have done, wherever they have gone.

Verse 31: “You shall not do so to the LORD your God, for every abomination to the LORD, which He hates, they have done to their gods; even their sons and their daughters they have burned in the fire to their gods.”

To Baal, the sun-god, whose day of worship is Sunday. {note sermon series *Refuting Sunday-Keeping*}. I clearly show that Israel was sent into captivity for Sabbath-breaking and Sunday-keeping because they worship Baal and Asherah.

Verse 32: “Whatsoever thing that I command you... [add Deut. 18, that ‘that Prophet’ who was Christ like unto Moses, only of greater

stature] ...be careful to do it. You shall not add to it, nor take away from it.”

This flows right along, compared to what God has said; Deuteronomy 13:1 “If a prophet rises among you, or a dreamer of dreams, and gives you a sign or a wonder, and the sign or the wonder which he foretold to you comes to pass, saying... [we have today a lot of magicians; many magic shows on TV] ...‘Let us go after other gods...’” (vs 1-2).

That is worship God in a different manner than God has said, or even go after other gods like we have today. When a President goes into the national cathedral, which is a gothic Catholic structure if you look at it, what does he have? *He has an ecumenical service!* He has a Protestant, a Jew, a Muslim, a Catholic, an Orthodox, and *those are all priests of other gods.*

Verse 2: “...‘Let us go after other gods, which you have not known, and let us serve them,’ you shall not hearken to the words of that prophet or that dreamer of dreams, **for the LORD your God is testing you...**” (vs 2-3).

That’s why He lets it happen; *to prove you!* How are you going to know you believe the Truth unless you have proved it? have lived it? have substantiated it? If some little trial comes along, and you listen to someone with some false prophesy, listen to someone with some false doctrine, and you believe it, then *you have failed the test*; rather than going back and proving it.

I’m reading the book by J. Michael Feazell, *The Restoration of the Worldwide Church of God*. That is how it supposedly came back in line with Protestantism. ***They failed the test!*** He says he thanks God for Mr. Roberts and the Easter bunny, and he worships Christ on Christmas because God says that He likens Himself unto a green pine tree. ***They failed the test!*** So, God proves you. Why? *There are tests to know!*

Verse 3: “...*is testing you to know whether you love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul.*” Remember Gen. 22 and what Abraham was asked to do with Isaac. Remember that after all those years that Abraham followed God the angel gave the message from heaven where God said ‘Now I know that you fear Me seeing you have not withheld your son, your only begotten son from Me.’ All that time. God is going to test us through our whole lives.

“...whether you love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul. You shall walk after the LORD your God and **fear Him, and keep His commandments, and obey His voice,** and

you shall serve Him and hold fast to Him. And that prophet or that dreamer of dreams shall be put to death...” (vs 3-5).

That was when they had the *administration of death*, {note sermon: *What is the Administration of Death*}, because Israel was not only one who had the laws of God, but was also a sovereign nation of this world. Therefore, He gave them the right of the penalty of death in these things. In the Church today we find that if someone does that, the greatest right we have is expelling or disfellowshipment. We do not have the right to take the sword in our hand to do away with the immediate enemy that is within our midst. We send them on their way. This is why Jesus is looked upon, and the comparison is given that *He is greater than Moses.*

Hebrews 3:7 to the end is taken—most of it—from Psa. 95. Then we will go through and we will see all of the things that Israel did in going against God.

Hebrews 3:7: “For this reason, even as the Holy Spirit says, ‘Today, ***if*** you will hear His voice... [Showing there is choice. Are you willing to listen to God?] ...harden not your hearts, as in the rebellion, in the day of temptation in the wilderness... [so people have a choice] ...where your fathers tempted Me *and* tried Me, and saw My works forty years. Because of this, I was indignant with that generation, and said, “They are always going astray in their hearts, and they have not known My ways.” So, I swore in My wrath “***If*** they shall enter into My rest—”’” (vs 7-11).

{note sermon: *Is God’s Love Conditional?*} So, this is conditional. Every time you see ***if*** that is a condition.

Paul gives a warning, v 12: “Beware, brethren, lest perhaps there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in apostatizing from *the* living God.” The whole book of Hebrews is written to keep people from apostatizing from God, from falling away and committing the unpardonable sin.

Verse 13: “Rather, be encouraging one another each day, while it is called ‘today’...” Every choice we make is *today*. It’s always in the present. What you did yesterday—whether good or bad—if it’s bad and you’ve repented of it, that’s fine, *don’t pollute today with the sin of yesterday*. And tomorrow when it becomes today, then everything you do in life is always lived in *today*. Do you understand that? *The future is not here, and the past is already gone!* So therefore, here’s another lesson, too, if you live in the past and don’t learn the lessons of the past, then you’re bound to make the same mistakes in the future; and make the same mistakes

today. This is why it always refers to today, and the word *today* refers directly to the Sabbath. When is it that we hear the voice of God through the Word of God most of all? during the week? Is it not on the Sabbath? *Yes it is! That's when we hear to voice of God!*

“...so that none of you become hardened by *the* deceitfulness of sin” (v 13). Because there is pleasure in sin for a season; it's deceitful. If you don't believe that, just look at the world and in particular look at the so called 'fun cities' of the world; be they Las Vegas, or Reno, or Monte Carlo, or any of the gambling cities of the world; the deceitfulness of riches that come out of that, which is robbery really because they take it from everybody else, and the few that win are then held up as they've really done something. That's all *the deceitfulness of sin!* That's just an example of it. The deceitfulness of sin can also come in the way of false doctrine and false religion. So, you can add that in there, too. The deceitfulness of sin in this case is the liberty to break the Sabbath.

Verse 14: “For we are companions of Christ, *if*... [there again we have another condition] ...we truly hold the confidence *that we had* at the beginning steadfast until the end. As it is being said, ‘Today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts, as in the rebellion.’ For some, after hearing, did rebel, but not all who came out of Egypt by Moses. But with whom was He indignant *for* forty years? *Was it* not with those who had sinned, whose dead bodies were strewn in the wilderness? And to whom did He swear *that they* would not enter into His rest, except to those who had disobeyed?” (vs 14-18) They didn't go in.

Verse 19: “So we see that they were not able to enter in because of unbelief.”

- v 18: “...to those who had disobeyed?....
- v 19: “...So we see that they were not able to enter in because of unbelief”

Let's understand *if you don't believe you won't obey!* Disbelief is followed by disobedience. That's just the way it falls.

We're going to cover these things and go through them, not in a way that this is to be taken by anyone who hears this sermon who is loving God and keeping the Sabbath, and all these things, that this is correction for you. It is not correction for you. It may be for some who hear this that are disobeying God that it would be correction for them. If it is and they hear and they change, like it says, *today if you will hear His voice*. These things are given to us for a purpose; they are examples for us that we should

not do even as they did. In other words, God also believes in the principle that if you do not learn the lessons of history, you're bound to repeat them.

1-Corinthians 10:1 tells us why we should not do these things: “Now I do not wish you to be ignorant *of this*, brethren, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea. And all were baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea” (vs 1-2). We were baptized *into the death of Jesus Christ, in a covenant relationship! Our baptism is greater!*

Verse 3: “And *they* all ate the same spiritual meat. And *they* all drank *of* the same spiritual drink; for they drank from *the* spiritual Rock that followed *them*. And that Rock was Christ” (vs 3-4). Here again is another proof that the Lord God of the Old Testament was the One Who became Jesus Christ. No question about it.

Verse 5: “But with many of them God was not pleased, for their dead bodies were strewn in the wilderness. Now these things became examples for us, so that we might not lust after evil things, as they also lusted. Neither be idolaters, as *were* some of them; as it is written, ‘The people sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play.’ Neither should we commit sexual immorality, as some of them committed, and twenty-three thousand were destroyed in one day. Neither should we tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted *Him*, and were killed by serpents. Neither *should we* complain against *God*, as some of them also complained, and were killed by the destroyer. Now all these things happened to them *as* examples, and were written for our admonition, **on whom the ends of the ages are coming**” (vs 3-11). Now, that's quite thing!

In the end of the world/age, having all of the Word of God, and understanding the Word of God, **are we more accountable than other people?** *No question about it! Absolutely no question about it!*

That's why He gives v 12: “Therefore, let the one who thinks he stands take heed, lest he fall.” Fall doing what? *Doing some of the things they have here!*

Psa. 95 is known as a Sabbath Psalm. When the people would come to the temple, or the synagogues on the Sabbath Day, what would they hear? *They would hear the Word of God!* The Sabbath Day was for instruction to *hear the Word of God*, then to set your heart and mind and course to *obey the Word of God, to live by the Word of God!* And all of that takes place more on the Sabbath Day than anything else. Is it not also true that because we're fleshly human beings, we need to be taught and taught, and repeat, and learn, and grow; and the

Sabbath Day and the Holy Days become a focal point in all of that.

For example, if you did not attend Sabbath services for a whole year, nor keep any of the Holy Days of God for a whole year, how far back into the world might you slip under those circumstances? *Probably pretty far!* How much faith would you lose? *Probably an awful lot of faith, because faith comes by the hearing of the Word, and if you were not there on the Sabbath Day, you're not hearing the Word of God!* If you don't study during the week on your own, you're not hearing the Word of God by reading it, because then you read it and you hear it in your mind. So therefore, it becomes very easy not to obey the voice of God because the voice of God is way off, not even a still little whisper in your ear. That's why he always focuses on *today*.

Psalm 95:6: "O come, let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the LORD our Maker." That we're to do everyday, but in particularly on the Sabbath Day. *No doubt about it!*

Verse 7: "For He is our God, and we are the people of His pasture, and the sheep of His hand...."

Remember, Christ is the Chief Shepard. Note John 10, that He is the *true* Shepard; He leads them in and out, and they find pasture. What does this pasture mean? *This means the food from the Word of God to grow spiritually*

- in grace
- in knowledge
- in understanding
- to build the character of God!

"...Today, if you would but hearken to His voice: 'Harden not your heart as in the rebellion, as in the day of temptation in the wilderness when your fathers tempted Me, tried Me, even though they saw My work'" (vs 7-9).

Over and over again! What did they see everyday besides the Works of God? besides the manna everyday? Besides having the Sabbath marked out every week for 40 years because manna was never sent on the Sabbath. What did they see everyday? *The pillar of cloud by day, and the pillar of fire by night!* As far as a physical carnal people, that's as close to God as you can get. The only time they were closer was when they were at Mount Sinai and God gave the Ten Commandments.

This whole thing that people say, 'Well if God would tell me what to do then I would know and then I would do it.' *No you wouldn't because that's an excuse!* 'Well, if I could just see God and be guaranteed it's God then I would do it.' *No you wouldn't because the children of Israel came as*

close to seeing God, and Moses saw God and they still didn't do it! That's just an excuse because *you don't want to obey!* If you have a Bible, God has spoken to you; whether you open it, read it and listen to it or not, that is not God's problem, that's the individual's problem who has the Bible and never does anything with it.

They don't look at it that way because, 'God didn't give me the Bible, my grandma gave me it; aunt gave it to me; my mother gave it to me; my father gave it to me. God didn't give it to me.' *Yes, He did* because He caused it to be produced and printed and sent out into all the world, it just happens that God used the vehicle of your aunt, or your uncle, or your father, or your mother to deliver the Bible to you. Many people don't even consider that, but that's just the way it is. So, they saw the works forty years.

Verse 10: "For forty years I was grieved with that generation, and said, 'It is a people who go astray in their hearts, and they have not known My ways'; to whom I swore in My wrath that they should not enter into My rest" (vs 10-11). This is the lesson every Sabbath: *that you come into the presence of God*

- to hear the Word of God
- to obey the Word of God
- to be instructed and encouraged in the Word of God

today; while it is today!

It's amazing how much God put up with. I mean, absolutely amazing! God loved Israel! He was grieved every time they sinned. He corrected them, they repented, but not from the heart; they flattered Him, yet, God forgave them. God dealt with them. Why? *Because He remembered His covenant that He had with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob!*

Deuteronomy 9:3: "Therefore, understand this day... [this just before they're going into the 'promised land'] ...that the LORD your God is He Who goes over before you. *Like* a consuming fire, He shall destroy them... [all the enemies of the land, and the giants and so forth] ...and He shall bring them down before your face. So, you shall drive them out and destroy them quickly as the LORD has said to you."

When God does great things for people, as He did for Israel, as He did for America, v 4: "Do not speak in your heart after the LORD your God has cast them out from before you, saying, 'For my righteousness...'" In other words: because I'm good; because I'm industrious because I'm strong; because I have spirit; all the things of *self*.

“...the LORD has brought me in to possess this land’...” (v 4). In other words because ‘I’m so good’ God was obligated to do it. We’re saying the same things today in this war with the terrorist, ‘because we are so good God has to be on our side that we’ll get the enemy.’ God says don’t speak that way.

“...but for the wickedness of these nations, the LORD your God drives them out from before you. Not for your righteousness, or for the uprightness of your heart, do you go to possess their land, but for the wickedness of these nations, the LORD your God drives them out from before you, so that He may perform the word which the LORD swore to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob” (vs 4-5).

Before anyone in physical Israel or anyone even within the Church gets all up on their high horse by saying that ‘God had to do this because of how great we are,’ remember God has done it because of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. We in the Church are ‘*If you be Christ then are you Abraham’s seed and heirs according to the promise!*’ **We are here because of Abraham**, not because of what we are as people, but because of what Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob have done, and what God has done. If we always remember that, we’ll never get lifted above other people to think that we’re greater than other people because God is the One Who has called those who are His.

Verse 6: “Therefore, understand that the LORD your God does not give you this good land, to possess it for your righteousness...” He said it three times! A principle in the Bible, and remember this concerning the Sabbath and every other thing. When it’s *repeated* it is important. You don’t possess it for your righteousness.

“...for **you are a stiff-necked people**” (v 6). You can put it another way: *fiercely independent and self-reliant! My way is right! That’s the good ole American/Israel spirit! Yes, indeed!* And because of that, ‘God is bound to bless us because of what we do.’ **No!**

Verse 7: “Remember, *and* do not forget...” Whenever God says this, what happens? *We immediately don’t remember and forget it as quick as we can!*

“...how you provoked the LORD your God to wrath in the wilderness. From the day you departed out of the land of Egypt, until you came to this place, you have been rebellious against the LORD” (v 7).

We’re going to look at some of these

provocations, and some of these rebellions so that we can learn the lesson that God wants us to because these are examples.

(go to the next track)

Verse 20: “And the LORD was very angry with Aaron to have destroyed him. And I prayed for Aaron also at the same time.... [that’s what it means when he was up before God] ...And I took your sin, the calf which you had made, and burned it with fire, and stamped it, grinding *it* very small, until it was as fine as dust. And I threw the dust of it into the brook that descended out of the mountain. And at Taberah, and at Massah, and at the Graves of Lust, you provoked the LORD to anger. And when the LORD sent you from Kadesh Barnea, saying, ‘Go up and possess the land which I have given you,’ then you rebelled against the commandment of the LORD your God, and you did not believe Him, nor hearkened to His voice. You have been rebellious against the LORD from the day that I knew you” (vs 20-24). That was before they left Egypt.

Let’s look at some of these things and kind of take this in chronological order. Here’s one of the first difficulties they have; this one here is not necessarily a provocation, but this is a murmuring and a complaint. We will see when we get to Exo. 16, that the murmuring and complaint, even against Moses and Aaron **was really truly against God** because they were only doing what God said.

Exodus 15:23: “And when they came to Marah, they could not drink of the waters of Marah because it *was* bitter. Therefore the name of it was called Marah.... [*bitterness*] ...And the people murmured against Moses, saying, ‘What shall we drink?’” (vs 23-24).

Stop and think a minute what God had just done for them. Think of all the plagues that took place:

- the sparing of their firstborn
- the killing of the firstborn of Egypt
- taking them out of the land of Egypt
- taking them through the Red Sea saving them from Pharaoh and all the armies that came after them

—and they went just a few days journey away from the Red Sea and here they were already complaining rather than saying, ‘Wow! This water is bitter, let’s go to God and ask God to do something about the water because we know of all the mighty powerful miracles that He did, surely He came make bitter water sweet.’ *They complained!*

Verse 24: “And the people murmured against Moses, saying, ‘What shall we drink?’”

Moses was always caught between the people and God, which is worse than ‘a rock and a hard spot’; because at least if you’re between ‘a rock and a hard spot’ you have a chance of getting out of it. Here between God and the people, Moses always had the problem that when the people sinned they were Moses’ people. God says, and the people *you* brought out of Egypt. When they did well, they were *His* people. So, if anyone thinks they want to be a high exulted prophet like Moses, you better stop and think there’s an awful lot of responsibility that comes with it, an awful lot of accountability, and it’s not all the glory and all of the glamour that you might think it is, and it was a pretty tough row to hoe.

Moses being caught between the people and God, v 25: “...cried to the LORD. And the LORD showed him a tree. And when he had cast it into the waters, the waters were made sweet....”

This also shows the principle of using herbs; ties in with Psalms 104, that herbs are for the service of men, and so forth. There are quite a few things you can find in the Bible of how we should use those things and they’re now finding that a lot of them are more preferable to some of the modern chemical medicine that they have.

Verse 25: “...There He made a decree and a law for them, and there He proved them.” Look upon it this way: A lot of the trials and difficulties that you have come because *God wants to prove you*. Not necessarily to give you trouble; trouble is going to come, trials are going to come whether you’re with God or without God, as far as the world is concerned. Is there anybody in the world who does not have trials and difficulties and problems? *No, they all do!* But for us these things come upon us that God may prove us. Give us a test. Do we believe Him or not? Will we look to Him or not? *To prove them!*

“...and there he proved them. And he said...” (vs 25-26). Here we go right back to the beginning of Hebrews. Remember the first thing we started out with? ***Obey the voice of God!*** What do we have in Heb. 3? ***Today if you will hear His voice!*** What do we have in Psalm 95? ***Today if you will hear His voice, harden not your heart!*** So, we have the same thing here, again *if*.

Everything we do brethren, is conditioned on v 26 “...If you will diligently hearken to the voice of the LORD your God, and will do that which is right in His sight, and will give ear to His commandments, and keep all His laws...”

Here’s a blessing! Here is something that you can come to God and claim! And by all means,

with all the things we have now, with anthrax scare, with small pox scare; and I hear now they’re saying diphtheria scare, and all of this sort of thing to put hysteria in the people, and I tell you ***hysteria and fear comes because people don’t trust God!*** That’s why!

God gives a promise, v 26: “...***I*** will put none of these diseases upon you, which I have brought upon the Egyptians; for I *am* the LORD Who heals you.” That is Jehovah your Healer; Jehovah Rapha.

We can claim those promises! We can look to those! Of course, ***we have to obey God***; we have to do the things that He says, and here in this case we have, with the waters being made sweet, that He used the tree or the herbs of the leaves from the tree and made the water sweet. So, all of that combined together shows that God is going to fulfill His promises.

I’m just going to cover a little bit of the first part of Exodus 16 to show part of the situation here when we get to Heb. 4 and we get into the Sabbath: when the Sabbath was revealed, when the children of Israel began keeping it and so forth, then we’ll get into chapter 16 in detail because that will explain to us about some of the particular Greek words that are in Heb. 4.

Exodus 16:1: “And they took their journey from Elim, and all the congregation of the children of Israel came into the Wilderness of Sin [Zin]...” When I first read that I thought, why would God bring them into the Wilderness of Sin?

“...which *is* between Elim and Sinai. An on the fifteenth day of the second month *after* their departing out of the land of Egypt, then the whole congregation of the children of Israel murmured against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness” (vs 1-2).

This is part of their rebellion against God. Now notice what they did: *They accused God, and they made up all kinds of excuses!* This is something to always remember:

- ***The carnal mind*** will look for any excuse possible to reject God and disobey God!
- ***A converted mind*** will look for every reason
 - ✓ to serve God
 - ✓ to love Him
 - ✓ to keep His commandments

That’s the difference between them. These examples are given for our admonition upon whom the ends of the earth have come; that we should not do as they did.

Verse 3: “And the children of Israel said to them, ‘O that we had died by the hand of the LORD in the land of Egypt...’” No, that’s not what they said, they cried out to God so they could be released from Egypt.

“...when we sat by the fleshpots, when we ate bread to the full, for you have brought us forth into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger!” (v 3).

God is the One Who brought them out there, *not Moses or Aaron*. They were just following God’s instruction. Then God reveals the Sabbath, He sends the manna, we’ll cover that next time when we get into a little more detail into the situation concerning the Sabbath.

Exo. 20 is the giving of the Ten Commandments, and we’re going to see that the rebellion against God mainly centered around violating the first three commandments; and then, after that, the Sabbath commandment; and then after that, committing fornication. All of those things provoke God. But when God gave the Ten Commandments we know that He thundered them from the top of Mount Sinai.

Exodus 20:18: “And all the people saw the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the sound of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking. And when the people saw, they trembled and stood afar off. And they said to Moses, ‘You speak with us, and we will hear. But let not God speak with us, lest we die’” (vs 18-19).

So again, they have that excuse that they would rather have a human being do it. Of course, we know the whole situation concerning Hebrews is that it explains that:

- God did come in the flesh
- God did speak to them
- God did give them His Word

So, *they provoked God there!*

Let’s see some other things where they provoked God because most of the provoking is contained in Num. 11. Here is where the people were really against what Moses and Aaron were doing. This is where then they complained about flesh again. They didn’t remember the flesh that God had given them in Exo. 16. So, God sent them lots of quail, but He also let them be consumed in their lust.

Let’s look at this provocation, Numbers 11:1: “And the people complained about *their* distress, speaking evil in the ears of the LORD. And the LORD heard it, and His anger was kindled. And the fire of the LORD burned among them and

consumed some in the outermost parts of the camp. And the people cried to Moses. And when Moses prayed to the LORD, the fire was quenched” (vs 1-2).

This is the way it is all the time with carnal Israel, when God gave them some punishment, when some of them were killed, just like we have with the terrorist attack today, then they came back to God, but not in truth, and not in repentance. They flattered God with their lips, and they feared God temporarily, and then continued right on their way. This is all part of the way it is with the children of Israel.

Verse 3: “And he called the name of the place Taberah because the fire of the LORD burned among them. And the troublemakers in their midst lusted with *great* lust. And the children of Israel also turned and wept, and said, ‘Who shall give us flesh to eat?’” (vs 3-4).

We have a situation here that they didn’t believe God, though God was right there with them all the time:

- by the pillar of cloud by day
 - by the fire by night
 - by the manna six days a week and double on the sixth day, and none of the Sabbath
- all the way down through the forty years*
- plus they had the experience that God sent the quail (Exo. 16)

When they started complaining to God about this, what they should of done was go to Moses and say, ‘Moses, let’s all pray and ask God to provide for us.’ Moses could have gone to God, and God would have sent anything they needed. But notice what they were looking to, and here’s the thing that a lot of people always do: *they live in the past*.

The whole thing that we saw concerning the word **today** if you will hear His voice, that means that not only just the Sabbath Day as we’ve explained, but it means today because we live in the present tense all the time. When you live in the past you bring the problems of the past to the present. When you complain and do those things, then you’re likely to carry them forward into tomorrow, and tomorrow hasn’t even come. Tomorrow is clean and pure because it hasn’t arrived.

Notice what they said, v 5: “We remember the fish...” If you get a good succulent fish and it’s cooked just right, and you put it in your mouth it just sort of melts and tastes really good.

“...which we ate freely in Egypt, the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlic. But now our soul *is* dried

away. There is nothing at all besides this manna *before our eyes*.' And the manna *was* like coriander seed, and the color of it was like the color of bdellium. The people went around and gathered, and ground it in mills, or beat *it* in a mortar, and baked it in pans, and made cakes of it. And the taste of it was like the taste of fresh oil. And when the dew fell upon the camp in the night, the manna fell upon it" (vs 5-9).

So God was providing! If they would have gone to Moses, and to God, and said, 'we remember the wonderful quail that you sent, God, and we know out here in the desert that you can't send us fish.' God could do that! He could just reach down there in the Red Sea and pick up a whole batch of fish and just bring them over and drop them on the camp, and they could have some fish there. That would not be an impossible thing for God to do. But when people come to God and demand of God, and complain to God, it really creates great problems for the people and for God.

Verse 10: "Then Moses heard the people weeping throughout their families, every man in the door of his tent.... [we have almost a riot going on here] ...And the anger of the LORD was kindled greatly. Moses also was displeased. And Moses said to the LORD, 'Why have You afflicted Your servant?....'" (vs 10-11).

Poor Moses, he's caught between God and the people. When the people were bad they were the people that Moses brought out of Egypt, they were *his* people; when they did good they were *God's* people. So, here's Moses caught between the two of them. Even he's caught up in complaining to God.

"...And why have I not found favor in Your sight so that You lay the burden of all this people upon me? Have I conceived all this people? Did I bring them forth that You should say to me, 'Carry them in your bosom like a nursing father carries the sucking child,' to the land which You swore to their fathers? From where should I get flesh to give to all this people? For they weep to me, saying, 'Give us flesh that we may eat.' I am not able to bear all this people alone because *it is* too heavy for me" (vs 11-14).

Then after Moses further confessed and repented, v 15: "And if You are going to deal this way with me, I beg You to kill me... [In other words, if you're going to keep this up with me, God, just kill me.] ...at once... [just do it quickly, get it over with] ...or if I have found favor in Your sight, but let me not see my *own* wretchedness."

God heard his prayer. Sometimes we can pray to God even in anger and God will hear our

prayers. Even in despair and really being down like Moses was, and having almost 2-million people griping and complaining at you. Now, that's a *big* problem.

Then what God did, v 16: "And the LORD said to Moses, 'Gather to Me seventy men of the elders of Israel...'" He gave them part of the Spirit that He gave to Moses, and then they helped govern the people.

After that was done, v 31: "And a wind went forth from the LORD. And it brought quails from the sea and let them fall by the camp, about a day's journey on this side, and about a day's journey on the other side..."

This time, God made them go work for it. The first time they came right on in the camp (Exo. 16); it was right at the end of the Sabbath and God didn't want them going out at night. God said here, 'If you want them, you've got to go get it.'

"...all around the camp, and about two cubits *high* upon the face of the earth" (v 31). A cubit's is 18 inches so it's about three feet; three feet high of quail that God just took and dumped them.

Verse 32: "And the people rose up all that day and all night, and all the next day, and they gathered the quails. And he that gathered least gathered ten homers. And they spread *them* out for themselves all around the camp."

They brought them, spread them; gave them to everybody. Because of their lust and their complaining God gave them a punishment here. This is part of the provocation.

Verse 33: "And while the flesh *was* yet between their teeth, before it was chewed, the wrath of the LORD was kindled against the people, and the LORD struck the people with a very great plague. And he called the name of that place Graves of Lust because there they buried the people that lusted" (vs 33-34). Then they left there.

Now we have another problem; here's another provocation. This is why Paul had to make the comparison between Moses and Christ; to show that Christ was greater. This is a family struggle.

Numbers 12:1: "And Miriam and Aaron... [Miriam was Aaron's sister] ...against Moses because of the Cushite woman whom he had taken, for he had taken a Cushite woman."

This is the one that *Josephus* records that he married as a political marriage to solidify the alliance between Ethiopia and Egypt. This was done before God even called him. So apparently when they left Egypt Moses also took his Ethiopian wife

with him. He had a son by the Ethiopian wife—Gershom—who introduced idolatry into Israel a little later on after they went into the land. This did cause a problem, and the whole lesson here is that God would take care of Moses.

We can't use that excuse for us today because we're nowhere near in the category of Moses. But God taught a very good lesson here, and this was a provocation against God. Not by all of Israel in this particular case, but by Miriam and Aaron. Now notice, it puts her name first. We know the weakness of Aaron. Because when the people came and they brought the golden calf and so forth, and we'll get to that provocation here in just a minute when we get done with Num. 12. Then he gave in meekly to the people and built it.

Verse 2: "And they said, 'Has the LORD indeed spoken only by Moses? Has He not also spoken by us?' And the LORD heard *it*. (Now the man Moses *was* very meek, more than all the men on the face of the earth.)" (vs 2-3). This is an editorial comment inserted there by, probably, King Hezekiah when he did some canonization of the Old Testament or perhaps by Ezra when he finalized the canonization. We don't now exactly, but it's more than likely that it was Hezekiah.

Verse 4: "And the LORD spoke suddenly to Moses and to Aaron and to Miriam, 'You three come out to the tabernacle of the congregation.' And the three came out. And the LORD came down in the pillar of the cloud and stood *in* the door of the tabernacle, and called Aaron and Miriam. And they both came forward. And He said, 'Hear now My words....'" (vs 4-6).

This is why the Jews thought and understood—which was correct until Christ came—that Moses was the prophet par excellent of God.

"... 'Hear now my words: If there is a prophet among you, I the LORD will make Myself known to him in a vision, and will speak to him in a dream. **Not so with My servant Moses. He is faithful in all My house**'" (vs 6-7).

That ties right in with what Paul wrote back there in Heb. 3 that Moses was faithful as a servant, or that is a steward, over the household of God. Whereas Christ was the Builder of the house, and the One Who is the builder has more honor than steward. And has more honor than the house itself.

Verse 8: "I will speak with him mouth to mouth, even clearly, and not in dark speeches. And he shall behold the likeness of the LORD. Why then were you not afraid to speak against My servant Moses?" And the anger of the LORD was kindled against them, and He departed. And the cloud moved

from the tabernacle. And behold, Miriam *became* leprous as snow. And Aaron looked on Miriam, and behold, *she was* leprous. And Aaron said to Moses, 'Oh, my lord, I beg you, do not lay upon us the sin in which we have done foolishly, and in which we have sinned. Let her not be like one dead....'" (vs 8-12)—because surely she would be dead in just a short time.

"...of whom the flesh is half gone when he comes out of his mother's womb.'.... [in other words like a rotted fetus] ... And Moses cried to the LORD saying, 'Heal her now, O God, I beseech You.' And the LORD said to Moses, 'If her father had but spit in her face, should she not be ashamed seven days? Let her be shut out from the camp seven days, and after that let her be received'" (vs 12-14). So, Miriam was shut out of the camp and the people didn't journey again until Miriam was healed.

Let's see the major provocation. This is the most important one and this is the one that is *the* major provocation. Why is that? Remember, all you have to do is just look back at the last part of Exo. 31, where He told them about the Sabbath. So, right after that He gave the instructions concerning the Sabbath to the children of Israel, and He went back up on Mount Sinai.

Exodus 32:1: "And when the people saw that Moses delayed to come down from the mountain, then the people gathered themselves to Aaron, and they said to him, 'Up! Make us gods....'"

- This shows the weakness of Aaron
As we already saw, Moses said he prayed for him; that God would not destroy him—and God heard Moses.
- This shows the rebellion of the people
Everything that God had done up to that point was really fantastic, it was tremendous.

They should have known that Moses was going to come back down. They should have known because of the elders who were there. When the 70 elders went up with Moses, up to a level on the mountain when they confirmed the covenant, they were able to look up and see God walking on the Sea of Glass up there. They actually had as it were a wedding feast right there on the mountain with God and Moses just above them, and they were down just below.

So, all the elders could have said 'Look, let's trust God, we know Moses up there, and if he's with God everything's going to be fine. What he is doing is giving him instructions, and it's very important for us. Now everybody just relax and calm down and have faith and believe God and wait for Moses.' *No, they didn't do that!* Aaron could have

said so but apparently he was afraid of the people. So, here we have *giving into the mob*. And political expediency of doing what they do based upon what Aaron said, ‘Well you know this people is given the sins, so you know, let’s just turn them over to sin.’

So, they came to Aaron and said, “...‘Up! Make us gods which shall go before us, for this Moses, **the man** who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him.’ And Aaron said to them, ‘Break off the golden earrings which *are* in the ears of your wives, of your sons, and of your daughters, and bring *them* to me.’ And all the people broke off the golden earrings which were in their ears, and brought *them* to Aaron. And he took *them* from their hand, and fashioned it with an engraving tool...” (vs 1-4). Aaron^[transcriber’s correction] personally handmade the idols!

In this case they broke the first two commandments. We’re going to see that they broke the third commandment. We’re going to see that they broke the fourth commandment. That’s the provocation because:

- **the first commandment:** ‘I *am* the LORD thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt. Thou shalt have no other gods before me.’
- the second commandment: ‘Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of *any thing* that *is* in heaven above, or that *is* in the earth beneath, or that *is* under the earth.’ Or in the sea. Thou shalt not bow down thyself to worship them; for I the LORD your God *am* a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers unto the children of the third and fourth *generation* of them that hate me; and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandment.’

Here they were breaking the first two right away. And Aaron, the high priest of God was right there in the middle of this provocation doing it. That is remarkable, to me.

“...and fashioned it with an engraving tool, and made a molten calf. And they said, ‘These *are* your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt’” (v 4).

Now you know why—when the kingdom was split during the days of Jeroboam and Rehoboam—Jeroboam was able to make the golden calves and the people just said, ‘oh yes, that is true.’ They went head long into idolatry again.

- **the third commandment:** taking the name of God in vain

- **the fourth commandment:** having a feast which was not of God

Now, on those golden calves, if you’ve seen the movie *The Ten Commandments*, they have it just right. Where the horns come up and there is a round sun-disc right between the horns, which is symbolizing sun-worship. So, I would have to say, although it doesn’t say it directly, I would be surprised if they were not doing this on a Sunday.

Verse 5, let’s see the rest of the account here: “And when Aaron saw *the calf*, he built an altar before it. And Aaron made a proclamation and said, ‘Tomorrow *is* a Feast to the LORD.’”

Isn’t that amazing? I wonder if that was from being the Sabbath and tomorrow was Sunday. I don’t know, it doesn’t say, so let’s not go beyond just saying it’s possible.

Verse 6: “And they rose up early on the next morning...” *Yes!* For their gods they would get up early on the morning, but for the true God all they would do was squawk and complain.

“...and offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings. And the people sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play” (v 6).

That means they had a pagan sex orgy before the golden calves. If you’ve seen the movie *The Ten Commandments* I think that they show a very good depiction of what went on with that scene where it says and they rose up to play. Let’s see the rest of the story; and *see how they provoke God!*

Verse 7: “And the LORD said to Moses, ‘Go! Get you down, for your people... [he’s stuck between the people and God] ...whom you brought out of the land of Egypt, have corrupted *themselves*. They have turned aside quickly out of the way, which I commanded them. They have made them a molten calf, and have worshiped it, and have sacrificed to it, and said, “These *are* your gods, O Israel, who have brought you up out of the land of Egypt.” And the LORD said to Moses, ‘I have seen this people, and behold, it *is* a stiff-necked people. And now leave Me alone, so that My wrath may burn hot against them and that I may consume them. And I will make of you a great nation.’” (vs 7-10).

I mean, this is really quite a thing! God said, ‘Look, I can fulfill my promise to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob through you. Let Me destroy all these people of Israel because they are so rebellious.’

Verse 11: “And Moses prayed to the LORD his God, and said, ‘LORD, why does Your wrath burn hot against Your people whom You have brought forth out of the land of Egypt with great

power and with a mighty hand?... [this is putting the burden back on God]Why should the Egyptians speak and say, “He brought them out with an evil intent...” (vs 11-12).

Notice how he was able to *talk* with God; notice how he was able to *reason* with God. There are times when we can reason with God, and Moses is doing it here, and he’s doing it properly, and he’s doing it rightly.

He says, “...with an evil intent, to kill them in the mountains and to consume them from the face of the earth”? Turn from Your fierce wrath, and repent of this evil against Your people” (v 12). Those are pretty strong words!

Verse 13: “Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, Your servants, to whom You swore by Your own self, and said to them, “I will multiply your seed as the stars of the heavens, and all this land that I have spoken of will I give to your seed, and they shall inherit *it* forever.” And the LORD repented of the evil which He spoke of doing to His people” (vs 13-14).

Can prayer make a difference? *Not only is this intercessory prayer!* When you have intercessory prayer, what do you do? *You claim the promises of God!* Notice how he did it; he went back to where God swore by Himself to Abraham, and to Isaac, that He would do it. God bound himself, He said okay, *I’ll repent!* So then, Moses turned and came down the mountain, and he saw the golden calf.

Verse 19: “And it came to pass, as soon as he came near to the camp and saw the calf and dancing, then Moses’ anger burned hot, and he threw the tablets out of his hands...”—which had the Ten Commandments, and broke them at the base of the mountain.

“...and broke them at the bottom of the mountain.... [at the base of the mountain] ...And he took the calf which they had made and burned *it* in the fire, and pulverized *it* to powder, and scattered *it* upon the water, and made the children of Israel drink *of it*. And Moses said to Aaron, ‘What did this people do to you that you have brought so great a sin upon them?’” (vs 19-21).

Quite a thing! Can those who are to be the leaders and teachers bring sin upon people? *Yes!* With what has happened to the largest Church of God in this era, great sin has been brought upon God, and the people because they have rejected the Sabbath and the Holy Days and the Truth of God, and have gone right back out into this world, and said, ‘Behold, Protestantism is the true religion.’

That’s almost the same as this. So, Aaron being weak as he was:

Verse 22: “And Aaron said, ‘Let not the anger of my lord burn hot. You know the people, that they *are set* on mischief, for they said to me, “Make us gods who shall go before us; as for this Moses... [it’s your fault Moses] ...the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him.” And I said to them, “Whoever has any gold, let them break *it* off.” And they gave it to me, and I threw it into the fire, and there came out this calf” (vs 22-24).

Wooop! Boom! Automatic idolatry! That’s really something! ***This was the greatest provocation against God!***

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*

Scriptural References:

- 1) Hebrews 3:1-6
- 2) Deuteronomy 18:15-16, 18-22
- 3) Deuteronomy 12:30-32
- 4) Deuteronomy 13:1-5
- 5) Hebrews 3:7-19, 18, 19
- 6) 1 Corinthians 10:1-12
- 7) Psalm 95:6-11
- 8) Deuteronomy 9:3-7, 20-24
- 9) Exodus 15:23-26
- 10) Exodus 16:1-3
- 11) Exodus 20:18-19
- 12) Numbers 11:1-16, 31-34
- 13) Numbers 12:1-14
- 14) Exodus 32:1-14, 19-24

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Genesis 22
- John 10
- Psalm 104
- Hebrews 4
- Exodus 31

Also referenced:

Books:

- *The Restoration of the World Wide Church of God* by J. Michael Feazell
- *Josephus*

Sermon Series:

- *Refuting Sunday-Keeping*

Sermons:

- *What is the Administration of Death*
- *Is God’s Love Conditional?*

FRC:sav
Transcribed: 01/28/08
Reformatted/Corrected: bo—January/2017

The Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews IX The Faithfulness of Christ and Us Compared to the Children of Israel

Fred R. Coulter

Let's come to where we were in Exo. 32 and let's just continue the rest of the story of the great provocation, where they broke the first commandment, the second commandment, the third commandment and undoubtedly the fourth commandment when they had the golden calf. Then you also have the *breaking of the trust with God* by Aaron that he would lead the people into so great a sin.

Exodus 32:25: "And when Moses saw that the people were naked (for Aaron had made them naked to *their* shame among their enemies), then Moses stood in the gate of the camp and said, 'Who is on the LORD'S side? *Come* to me.' And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves to him. And he said to them, 'Thus says the LORD God of Israel, "Each man put his sword by his side, and go in and out from gate to gate throughout the camp, and kill each one his brother, and each one his companion, and each one his neighbor.'" And the sons of Levi did according to the word of Moses. And there fell of the people that day about three thousand men; for Moses had said, 'Consecrate yourselves today to the LORD—even though it has been at the cost of a son or a brother—in order that *He* may give you a blessing today'" (vs 25-29).

Verse 30: "And it came to pass on the next day, Moses said to the people, '**You have sinned a great sin.** And now I will go up to the LORD. Perhaps I shall make an atonement for your sin.' And Moses returned to the LORD, and said, 'Oh, these people have sinned a great sin, and have made themselves gods of gold! And now if You would only forgive their sin!....'" (vs 30-32). We're not told what it was that he spoke.

"...And if not, I pray You, blot me out of Your book which You have written.' And the LORD said to Moses, 'Whoever has sinned against Me, I will blot him out of My book. And now go, lead the people to *the place* of which I have spoken to you. Behold, My angel shall go before you. And in the day of My visitation I will visit their sin upon them.' And the LORD plagued the people because they made the calf, which Aaron made" (vs 32-35). It showed that they were responsible for it. That is the 'great provocation'!

God said that these people were rebellious from the day that they left Egypt. Moses said to

them that they were rebellious from the very day that he knew them. So, it's really quite a thing that the children of Israel were doing.

Num. 14 is where they got the sentence for their sin, having to wander for a total of 40 years. They had sent in the 12 spies to spy out the land. Moses had to pray for the people all the time!

Numbers 14:17—Moses said, "And now, I beseech You, let the power of my Lord be great, according as You have spoken, saying, 'The LORD *is* long-suffering, and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression, and by no means clearing *the guilty*, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the sons to the third and fourth *generation*.' I beseech You, pardon the iniquity of this people according to the greatness of Your mercy, and as You have forgiven this people from Egypt even until now" (vs 17-19).

Verse 20: "And the LORD said, 'I have pardoned according to your word. But truly, *as* I live, all the earth shall be filled *with* the glory of the LORD. Because all those men who have seen My glory and My miracles which I did in Egypt and in the wilderness, and have tempted Me now these ten times, and have not hearkened to My voice, Surely they shall not see the land, which I swore to their fathers, neither shall any of them that provoked Me see it. But My servant Caleb, because he had another spirit with him and has followed Me fully... [we also know that it was Joshua, too] ...I will bring him into the land into which he went. And his children shall possess it'" (vs 17-24).

Verse 26: "And the LORD spoke to Moses and to Aaron, saying, 'How long *shall I bear with* this evil congregation which murmurs against Me? I have heard the murmurings of the children of Israel, which they murmur against Me. Say to them, "*As I live*," says the LORD, "*as you have spoken in My ears, so I will do to you. Your dead bodies shall fall in this wilderness, and all that were numbered of you, according to your whole number, from twenty years old and upward, who have murmured against Me, you shall certainly not come into the land, which I swore to make you dwell in, except Caleb the son of Jephunneh and Joshua the son of Nun. But your little ones, which you said should be a prey*..."'" (vs 26-31). What you accused Me of bringing out here in the wilderness to kill.

“...I will bring them in and they shall know the land, which you have despised. But *as for* you, your carcasses shall fall in this wilderness. And your children shall feed in the wilderness forty years and bear your whoredoms until your dead carcasses have been consumed in the wilderness. According to the number of the days in which you searched the land—forty days—each day for a year you shall bear your iniquities, forty years; and you shall know My displeasure *of this generation*. I the LORD have spoken it; I will surely do it to all this evil congregation who are gathered together against Me. They shall be destroyed in this wilderness, and there they shall die” (vs 31-35).

Verse 36: “And the men whom Moses sent to scout out the land, who returned and made all the congregation to murmur against him, by bringing up an evil report upon the land, even those men that brought up the evil report upon the land died by the plague before the LORD” (vs 36-37).

They really provoked God! What an amazing thing it is that God still dealt with them, because of His promise to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

Num. 16—here we have those wanting to become of the priesthood, which were not a part of Aaron. *And that provoked the Lord!* It was Korah and the princes of the men and they came and they said, ‘Moses and Aaron, you take too much yourselves. Seeing that all the people are Holy, let’s make this equal here and let’s go ahead and we’re going to take over the priesthood.’ Well, you know what happened there! God said, ‘All right, let them bring their sensors; let them come in; God showed His business. ***They provoked the Lord!***

Numbers 16:30: “...then you shall understand that these men have provoked the LORD.’ And it came to pass, as he had made an end of speaking all these words, the ground under them split apart. And the earth opened her mouth and swallowed them up, and their households, and all the men who *were* for Korah, and all *their* goods. They and all that they had went down alive into the pit, and the earth closed upon them. And they perished from among the congregation” (vs 30-33).

I tell you, that’s something! What a sight that would have been! God really had to deal with these people.

Out of this we can get the lesson: God is going to have some harsh words to say to the false prophets. He’s going to have a harsh punishment for them. Let me just stop and mention here: Since these things were given to us as examples, that we learn not to do the same thing, I think that all those men

and women who run around trying to be prophets, trying to be teachers and leaders, when God never sent them, they better stop, look, listen, ***hear, fear and repent!*** James said, ‘Not many of you should desire to be teachers, because you know that those who are teachers are going to receive the sterner judgment.

Look at the judgment that came upon them immediately, because they assumed to usurp the priesthood and the Levitical priests that were with Moses and Aaron, and *look what God did!* He just opened up the earth and took care of them! We’ve got to understand we’re dealing with a God Who is:

- merciful
- kind
- generous
- gracious

Look at how many times He forgave them—over and over and over again! But this provocation went on for 40 years! Quite a situation! We can be thankful that God keeps His promises.

Not content with that, v 41: “But on the next day all the congregation of the children of Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron saying, ‘You have killed the people of the LORD.’ And it came to pass when the congregation was gathered together against Moses and against Aaron, they looked toward the tabernacle of the congregation. And behold, the cloud covered it, and the glory of the LORD appeared” (vs 41-42). Utt-oh! We’re in great trouble!

Verse 43: “And Moses and Aaron came before the tabernacle of the congregation. And the LORD spoke to Moses saying, Get away from this congregation so that I may consume them as in a moment. And they fell upon their faces. And Moses said to Aaron, ‘Take a censer, and put fire in it from the altar, and put on incense, and go quickly into the congregation and make an atonement for them. For wrath has gone out from the LORD. The plague has begun.’ And Aaron did as Moses commanded and ran into the midst of the congregation. And behold, the plague had begun among the people...” (vs 43-47). We don’t know what the plague was, but they were just dying on the spot.

“...And he put on incense and made an atonement for the people. And he stood between the dead and the living, and the plague was stayed. And those who died in the plague were fourteen thousand, seven hundred, besides the ones who died about the matter of Korah” (vs 47-49).

Wow! Listen, let this be a lesson to be learned very deeply just in case we might happen to be blessed to get to a ‘place of safety’: *Once you are*

there—regardless of how harsh it is—***don't whisper a peep!***

Let's see something concerning Moses and why Jesus Christ is greater than Moses. Jesus never sinned! But, in this case Moses sinned! It was not a great sin, but nevertheless, it was a *lack of faith*. This tells us that ***we better be careful how we hear what God says!*** God gave Moses some very specific instructions, and it brought a great penalty upon Moses.

The people were at Kadesh and the people were complaining again and wondering where they were going to get water:

Numbers 20:7 “And the LORD spoke to Moses saying, ‘Take the rod, and gather the assembly, you and Aaron your brother, and ***speak*** to the rock before their eyes....’ (vs 7-8). In other words, while they are there watching the rock, you tell them to look at the rock and you ***speak***.

“...And it shall give forth its water, and you shall bring forth to them water out of the rock. So you shall give the congregation and their animals *water to drink*.’ And Moses took the rod from before the presence of the LORD as He commanded him. And Moses and Aaron gathered the congregation together before the rock, and he said to them, ‘Hear now, you rebels.... [Moses got angry here] ...Must we bring water for you out of this rock?’ And Moses lifted up his hand and with his rod he ***struck the rock twice***. And the water came out plentifully, and the congregation and their animals drank” (vs 7-11).

You'd think that that would be just a *little violation!* After all, if we would do a little psychoanalysis we would say that Moses was under great stress. Did he not lose his temper? *Yes, he did!* All of those things God put up with. But to use that as an excuse to *not believe God* cost him dearly! That shows you how important it is to believe God.

Verse 12: “And the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, ‘Because you did not believe Me, to sanctify Me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore, you shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them.... [***both*** Moses and Aaron died and didn't go into the land] ... These *are* the Waters of Strife because the children of Israel contended against the LORD, but He showed Himself Holy among them” (vs 12-13). I tell you, what a thing! Going on and on and on!

The book of Numbers is a *heavy* book, but there are a lot of lessons in here for us *that we don't provoke*. We are given the warning that ***if we want to enter into His rest, that we should not sin as the people sinned***. As an example to us, it was done and recorded that look at what we have today within the

Church of God. Look at all the people that complain and gripe, instead of *coming to God* and:

- learning of His love
- repenting
- asking for a right attitude

They stand up and carp and complain and just come after people. I tell you, it's something! Then, when those people come after me with some of their silly doctrines and I won't accept them, or someone sends me some sort of silly paper that they expect me to answer with a great long dissertation, and I ignore it and throw it away because it's worthless, then someone gets mad at me because I don't want to waste my time on their stupidity. In a small sense, that's my being caught between God and the people and it's called *being pushed together with paper*.

Numbers 21:4: “And they journeyed from Mount Hor by the way of the Red Sea to go around the land of Edom....” They asked the children of Edom if they could pass by, just by the highway. We won't take any of you cattle, we won't even touch your land, we won't walk through a field, just let us go on the highway. Edom came down with swords and said, ‘No, you won't do it.’ Edom was the son of Esau!

“...And the soul of the people was very discouraged because of the way. And the people spoke against God and against Moses, ‘Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness?....’” (vs 4-5).

Yes, for all of *you who rebel*, that's true! All of those who accuse God that their children were brought out there to be killed, the children are going into the land.

“...For *there is* no bread, neither is there any water. And our soul hates this light bread.’.... [angel's food] ...And the LORD sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people. And many people of Israel died. And the people came to Moses and said, ‘We have sinned, for we have spoken against the LORD and against you.... [it's about time that you learn the lesson] ...Pray to the LORD that He take away the serpents from us.’ And Moses prayed for the people. And the LORD said to Moses, ‘Make a fiery serpent and set it on a pole. And it shall be when everyone who is bitten looks upon it, he shall live.’ And Moses made a serpent of bronze and put it upon a pole. And it came to pass that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he looked upon the serpent of brass, he lived” (vs 5-9).

You know what happened later? This was to be an historical relic of the children of Israel. But during the days of the kings *they worshipped it as an idol!* So, I tell you what a thing this is! This is

something! This just goes on and on. You would think that sooner or later they would learn a lesson; sooner or later they would get the point, but they never did. Here again, we have *another provocation* and this time by the very leaders and princes; Numbers 25:1: “And Israel dwelt in Acacia Grove, and the people began to commit whoredom with the daughters of Moab.”

This was by the council of Balak. Baalim came and he could not curse because God said, ‘No, I’m not going to curse the people of Israel. Here’s the point. God can take care of and correct His own people, *and He will!* But He’s not going to let some pagan priest come and curse them. So, He made poor old Baalim bless seven times and Balak went out of his gourd because he said, ‘Didn’t I hire you? Didn’t I give you all this money to come here and curse the people, and all you do is bless. What’s the matter with you?’

What he did he said, ‘Look, I can’t go against what God said. Here’s what you do. You have a feast, you have all your beautiful women, and you have them allure and come over and commit fornication and God will punish them.’ That’s the doctrine of Baalim. That’s what they did.

Verse 2: “And they called the people to the sacrifices of their gods...” Come and enjoy a nice meal, you haven’t had any good flesh for a long time—have you? Look, we even have bread over here.’ Remember, they weren’t to eat bread until the wave sheaf was offered after they came into the land.

“...And the people ate and bowed down to their gods. And Israel joined himself to Baal Peor...” (vs 2-3). I wonder if this was Sunday? *Baal is sun-worship!* I wonder if this may have been Christmas? *Who knows! The nativity of the sun!*

“...And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel. And the LORD said to Moses, ‘Take all the heads of the people and impale them before the LORD facing the sun, so that the fierce anger of the LORD may be turned away from Israel.’ And Moses said to the judges of Israel, ‘Every one of you kill his men who were joined to Baal Peor’” (vs 2-5).

And to show how brazen this was, v 6: “And behold, a man of the children of Israel came and brought to his brethren a woman of Midian, in the sight of Moses, and in the sight of all the congregation of the children of Israel, who *were* weeping before the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.” You talk about gall! Wow!

Verse 7: “And when Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, saw *it*, he rose up from among the congregation and took a spear in

his hand. And he went after the man of Israel into the tent, and pierced both of them through, the man of Israel, and the woman, through her belly...” (vs 7-8). It doesn’t take very much imagination to understand what was occurring here when that was done.

“...So, the plague was stayed from the children of Israel. And those that died in the plague were twenty-four thousand. And the LORD spoke to Moses saying...” (vs 8-10). Once in a while someone will stand up for God and Phinehas did. So, here he has a blessing from God.

Verse 11: “‘Phinehas the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, has turned My wrath away from the children of Israel in that he was zealous for My sake among them, so that I did not destroy the children of Israel in My jealousy. Therefore, say, “Behold, I give him My covenant of peace”’ (vs 11-12). Here’s another special covenant. {note sermon series: *Covenants of God*}

Verse 13: “And he shall have it, and his seed after him, the covenant of an everlasting priesthood...” Somewhere today there is someone of the line of Eleazar—who was a Levite—serving God somewhere in the Church of God.

“...because he was zealous for his God and made an atonement for the children of Israel.’ And the name of the Israelite who was killed, he who was struck with the woman of Midian, *was* Zimri, the son of Salu, leader of a chief house of the Simeonites.... [one of the leaders] ...And the Midianite woman’s name who was killed *was* Cozbi, the daughter of Zur. He was head over a people, and of a chief house in Midian” (vs 13-15).

What a provocation! ***The children of Israel never learned the lesson!*** Even after they came into the land—those that came—they never did wholly follow after God. Isn’t it interesting that they had to be *forced* to follow God? *With carnal people you have to do that! Carnal people look for ways to disobey God*, whereas *converted people seek every way to obey God and do the things that please Him!* The *carnal people seek every justification* in their mind as to why they are right and given license to do this thing. Just like the Protestants today, they come to one verse:

Romans 10:4: “For Christ *is the end of works* of law for righteousness...” and they take that and throw out all the laws of God and bring in a whole system of lawlessness. Amazing! Absolutely amazing! That should read the ‘Christ is the end of the *works of law* for righteousness’—not terminating the Law. It is forever, done in Spirit and in Truth!

Let’s see what they did. God told them what

to do, Judges 2:1: “And the angel of the LORD came up from Gilgal to Bochim, and said, ‘I made you go up out of Egypt, and have brought you into the land which I swore to your fathers. And I said, “I will never break My covenant with you. And you shall make no treaty with those who live in this land. You shall throw down their altars.” **But you have not obeyed My voice.** What *is* this that you have done? And I also said, “I will not drive them out from before you, but they shall be thorns in your sides, and their gods shall be a snare to you”’” (vs 1-3).

Notice again how with the book of Hebrews we tie in the theme *to obey the voice of God* or *not obey the voice of God* as we see here in v 2. So, He says, ‘Okay, I’m going to give you an ongoing penalty or a thorn in the flesh that is always going to needle you, because you are just intent on doing wrong.’

Verse 4: “And it came to pass when the angel of the LORD spoke these words to all the children of Israel, the people lifted up their voices and wept.” They don’t like to hear bad news. ‘Oh, God, we tried our best, why are You doing this to us?’

Verse 5: “And they called the name of that place The Place of Weeping. And they sacrificed there to the LORD. And when Joshua had let the people go, the children of Israel left, each man to his inheritance, to possess the land. **And the people served the LORD all the days of Joshua...**” (vs 5-7). That means they kept the Sabbath, the Holy Days; they did what God said.

“...And the people served the LORD all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great works of the LORD that He did for Israel. And Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died, being a hundred and ten years old. And they buried him on the border of his inheritance... [v 10]: And also all that generation were gathered to their fathers....” (vs 7-10).

In America we are reaching a generational change that is going to be profound. This generational change is being fed by the likes of things like *Harry Potter* and witchcraft. This generation is going to go whoring after other gods like no other generation as this older generation of us passes. You wait and see! No question about it!

Verse 10: “And also all that generation were gathered to their fathers. And there arose another generation after them who did not know the LORD, nor even the works which He had done for Israel. And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD, and served Baalim” (vs 10-11).

- they went back to Sunday-worship
- they went back to the golden calf worship
- they went back to the pagan-worship

—*immediately; as soon as they could!*

Verse 12: “And they forsook the LORD God of their fathers, Who brought them out of the land of Egypt. And they followed other gods, even the gods of the people who were around them, and bowed themselves to them, and provoked the LORD to anger. And they forsook the LORD and served Baal and Ashtaroth” (vs 12-13).

So, God sent them off into captivity. Guess what’s eventually going to come to America? *The same thing!*

Let’s review a little bit about the background here in Hebrews. The things we come to are:

- slipping away
- apostasy
- disobedience
- leaving God

This is quite a problem at that time because there were many who were saying—because of the disappointment that Christ didn’t return at that time the way the people and many of the apostles had thought—and it was only at this time, right after the writing of the book of Hebrews that the apostles were given a revelation that Christ would not return for many, many years, perhaps even for centuries.

Let’s see what Peter said. There were a lot of people saying this, and it really caused a lot of difficulties and problems because people began to give up on God. Especially those in Jerusalem, and especially the Jews who were going back to the traditions, the rituals, and the temple service. Yet, the temple was soon to be destroyed as Paul showed here in the book of Hebrews, and they didn’t realize it, but **God was preparing them for the superior covenant of the New Covenant** and the things that would be accomplished that way. Where you have the temple in heaven above and the High Priest in heaven above.

As we are seeing, all the things that are here beginning in the first part of Hebrews and leading right on up to Heb. 5. The first part talks about the qualities of Christ as God and then the qualities of Christ as a human being, with the sacrifice that He had, and then how He was faithful, more faithful than Moses, because He was the Builder of the house. We’re going to see that Paul in writing Hebrews compares the faithfulness of Christ to the lack of faithfulness that the people were having then

and then also compares that to the problems of those who were rebelling in the wilderness, and whose bodies were strewn in the desert because of their sin.

2-Peter 3:1: “Now, beloved, I am writing this second epistle to you...” He warned them that he was writing it and promised them that he would have a written remembrance of the things that they were taught. So, this is also a part of the canonization of the New Testament.

“...in *both*, I am stirring up your pure minds by causing *you* to remember *in order* for you to be mindful of the words that were spoken before by the Holy prophets, and of the commandment of the Lord and Savior, *spoken* by us, the apostles” (vs 1-2).

This does not mean that the ‘Holy prophets’ are those that give a forecast of future events. Prophets in the New Testament have to do and refer mostly to those who give inspired preaching. That is called *prophesying*; it is a telling forth of the Word of God rather than a foretelling of future events. He’s talking about those:

- who spoke to them
- who inspired them
- who uplifted them
- who taught them the Word of God

and of the commandment of ‘*us*,’ the apostles of the Lord and Savior. So, he’s including all of the apostles in this statement.

Verse 3: “Knowing this first, that in the last days *there* will come mockers, walking according to their own personal lusts.”

That is precisely what happened before the fall of Jerusalem and the total upset in the Church, and the apostasy that occurred. We will see in Heb. 3 Paul was trying to warn them so they would not apostatize; that they would look at the example and not follow the things of disobedience as the children of Israel did when they were coming out of Egypt and wandering in the wilderness before they went into the ‘promised land.’ Even after they went into the ‘promised land’ they were not faithful. They’re walking after their own lusts.

This is the same thing we’re going to be confronted with today. How many times have we heard Christ is returning? How many times have we set down a presumed date and made the Scriptures fit around the presumed date when we know that Christ said, ‘*no man knows the day or the hour, no not even the angels in heaven above, but My Father only.*’ And when the apostles, before they received the Holy Spirit (Acts 1), asked the Lord, ‘Will You, at this time, restore the kingdom to Israel.’ And He said, ‘It is not for you to know the

times or the seasons that the Father has put in His own authority.’ This is the mistake that everybody has made concerning the return of Jesus Christ.

When it happens and it doesn’t work out the way that we suppose, then we start saying this, v 4: “And asking, ‘Where is the promise of His coming?....’” In other words, we begin to accuse God. We begin to say that something is wrong with God. Of course, at that time there were so many saying that.

Here’s what they say: “...For ever since the forefathers died... [Abraham, Isaac and Jacob] ...everything has remained the same as from *the* beginning of creation.’ But this *fact* is hidden from them—they themselves choosing to *ignore it*—that by the Word of God *the* heavens existed of old, and *the* earth came forth out of water and amid water, by which the world at that time, having been deluged with water, had itself been destroyed” (vs 4-6).

What he’s saying is, ‘Look, just like the people at the Flood, they ridiculed Noah, they didn’t think it was going to happen, they didn’t think that the rain was going flood the earth or the world, and lo and behold, it did! Then Peter uses that and steps forward to the end-time and says:

Verse 7: “But the present heavens and earth are being held in store by His Word, *and* are being reserved for fire in *the* day of judgment and destruction of *the* ungodly. Now, beloved, do not let this one fact be hidden from you: that with *the* Lord, one day *is* as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day” (vs 7-8).

He’s telling us, at the time that he wrote this, very clearly here that it may be thousands of years before Christ returns, at the time that Paul wrote this. That was a revelation that was given to him and to all of the other apostles when God made known the *mystery of God* in its fullness, that we would become, literally, the very sons of God.

Verse 9: “The Lord is not delaying the promise of *His coming*, as some in their own minds reckon delay...” Let’s understand concerning the return of Christ: ***Everything is right on time! Just as the Father has planned it!***

So there’s something that we need to do because God has planned it that way so that we can be in the Kingdom of God, rather than saying, ‘Look, Christ isn’t returning, let’s eat and drink and play, just like they did in the wilderness.’ And as they did in the wilderness, ‘Let’s go after other gods.’ So, God is not slack concerning His promises, as men count slackness.

“...rather, He is long-suffering toward us, not desiring that any should perish, but that all

should come to repentance” (v 9). God wants more people in the Kingdom of God than we, in our selfish end-time plans have devised in our own minds to bring the return of Christ real soon. God wants more people in His Kingdom. He wants as many as possible to repent, if they will listen and hear and repent and obey. That’s one of the reasons that they didn’t know, that they didn’t understand.

Let’s understand as we go through this: what we need to do:

- when we hear the warnings
- when we see these things
- when there are pronouncements
- when there are warnings against falling away
- when there are warnings of becoming lukewarm
- when there are warnings because you’re dull of hearing

is go back to the greatest thing that God has given us and that is **to understand** that:

- God loves us
- that God gave His Son for us

That’s what Paul is teaching us here in the book of Hebrews, and that we are to respond and **love God with all our heart, mind, soul and all of our being**.

- then we can make it through these dark times
- then we can make it through the things that we face
- then it doesn’t matter what the circumstances in the world are

But we are to continue to watch and we are not to start slacking off, and we are not to become apostatizing. Human nature is all the same—mine, yours and everybody else’s—if it’s not urgent to do then we put it off, and *we put it off*. **That’s what happens spiritually:** we put it off, *we put it off!* and *we grow lukewarm!* We do live in a Laodicean age. Our apostatizing could follow right along with the rest of them; we just go along the way that *we think* we should.

(go to the next track)

Let’s see what Peter said we need to do. After saying that love and the steps of coming to Godliness:

2-Peter 1:8 “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...” (vs 8-9).

What does God say of the Laodiceans? *They are 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... [that’s what we have to be about doing] ...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. Therefore, I will not neglect to make you always mindful of these things, although you *already* know them and have been established in the present Truth. For I consider it my duty, as long as I am in this tabernacle, **to stir you up by causing you to remember these things**” (vs 8-13).

That’s the whole purpose of the book of Hebrews, too. To stir them up! To have them look at themselves! To not let themselves slip away!

Let’s just review a little bit, some of the important things and the warnings that are given in Heb. 2. Let’s understand that these things apply to us today, because we are in very much the same situation as they were then. There were a lot of people back then who were turning from God, just like there are today.

Hebrews 2:1: “For this reason, it is imperative that we give much greater attention to the things, *which* we have heard, lest at any time we should slip away. For if the word spoken by angels was *enforced* without fail, and every transgression and disobedience received just recompense, how shall we escape, *if* we have neglected so great a salvation; which was first received when it was spoken by the Lord, *and* was confirmed to us by those who heard *Him*” (vs 1-3).

Let’s review Heb. 3 and let’s look at some of the **IF** clauses from this point forward. There is no question whatsoever about God:

- God is eternal
- God is always consistent
- God never lies
- God is never lazy
- God never slacks down
- God’s love is always there—if we yield ourselves to it; it is always conditional to us if we don’t

We’re going to see that there are a lot of conditions which are given to human beings which, when you stop and analyze it, goes all the way back to Adam and Eve and the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil and being in the Garden of Eden and so forth.

Hebrews 3:5: “Now on the one hand, Moses *was* faithful in all his house, as a ministering servant, for a testimony of those things which were going to be spoken afterwards. But on the other hand, Christ *was faithful as the Son...*” (vs 5-6).

We’re going to see that just as he compares the faithfulness of Moses with the faithfulness of the children of Israel—or *the lack of faithfulness*—so he is drawing the parallel with the faithfulness of Christ in relationship to us as compared to the children of Israel in relationship to Moses.

“...over His own house; Whose house we are...” (v 6).

- we’re the *temple* of God
- we’re the *building* of God
- we have the *Holy Spirit* of God

but notice, *there is a condition!* “...**if** we are truly holding fast the confidence and rejoicing of the hope firm to *the end*” (v 6). We’re not to slip away. We are to hold it firm until the end.

Then he begins drawing the comparison, v 7: “For this reason, even as the Holy Spirit says, ‘Today, **if you will hear His voice.**’”

Verse 11—because of their disobedience: “So I swore in My wrath, ‘**If** they shall enter into My rest—’ Beware, brethren, lest perhaps there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in apostatizing from *the living God*” (vs 11-12). We’ll come back to that and ask what are some of the steps of apostasy.

Verse 14: “For we are companions of Christ, **if** we truly hold the confidence *that we had* at the beginning steadfast until the end.” He’s repeating himself here, so it’s very important for us to understand that God inspired him to say that in vs 6 & 14. We’ve got to hold steadfastly! He repeated himself, so it’s got to be very important.

Matthew 24:13^[transcriber’s correction]: “But the one who endures to *the end*, that one shall be saved.”

Hebrews 3:15: “As it is being said, ‘Today, **if you will hear His voice...**’” The question is:

- Do we *hear* the voice of God?
- Are we *doing* the things that God wants us to?

The condition is upon us! “...do not harden your hearts, as in the rebellion” (v 15).

Hebrews 4:3: “For we who have believed, we ourselves are entering into the rest, as He has said, ‘So I swore in My wrath, “**If** they shall enter into My rest—”’...” Entering into the Kingdom of God is dependent upon—not God’s part, because He

is firmly and fully committed to that, and there is no turning back on God’s part.

- *we are the ones* who have been given free moral agency
- *we are the ones* who have to choose
- *we are the ones* who have to listen
- *we are the ones* who have to be diligent and stirring ourselves up

Verse 5: “And again concerning this: ‘**If** they shall enter into My rest’—” Of course, that’s all tied around the Sabbath, and the Sabbath Day is the first thing that people begin to reject or never accept and *harden their hearts and will not listen*, though it is right in front of their faces! It’s amazing how people do. They say, ‘God knows my heart; I go to church every Sunday; I’m a good person; God knows my heart.’

That’s just a nice carnal excuse for *hardheartedness*. Yes, God does know your heart! Yes, God does know that you go to church on Sunday, if you do. I had one man tell me that, and it was quite shocking just to hear him, but it was really quite a justification in carnal reasoning and how people think. Most people think of themselves as good. Most people think of themselves as doing right. Even in the criminal acts when they go against the law, and even know that they do, they justify it in their mind that there is a right and proper reason why they did it, so therefore, they give themselves an allowance to do it and they should not be held accountable. ***That’s not how God looks at it!***

Verse 7: “...‘Today, if you will hear His voice, harden not your hearts.’” Paul is talking to those who know the Word of God, and it all centers around the Sabbath.

Verse 11 shows a very important thing which we should do: “We should be diligent therefore to enter into that rest... [resting on the Sabbath] ...lest anyone fall after the same example of disobedience.”

This whole book of Hebrews is filled with warnings and admonitions and encouragement. Some of the warnings get very blunt and very to the point.

Hebrews 10:23: “Let us hold fast without wavering to the hope *that* we profess... [see how many times he repeats himself] ...for He Who promised *is* faithful... [the One Who is always faithful is God] ...and let us be concerned about one another, and *be* stirring up *one another* unto love and good works; not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together... [here again we have the Sabbath issue] ...even as some *are* accustomed to

do; but rather, encouraging *one another*..." (vs 23-25).

- to be faithful
- to not fall away
- to hear the voice of God
- to love one another
- to do the good works of God

"...and all *the* more as you see the day drawing near" (v 25). And that is prophecy for us today at the end-time, as it says, 'upon whom the ends of the world have come.' All the way through the book of Hebrews we are going to see:

- teaching
- admonition
- correction
- warning

and here we have a warning, v 26: "For if we willfully go on sinning after receiving the knowledge of the Truth, there is no longer any sacrifice for sins... [then here is a real warning]: ...but a terrifying expectation of inevitable judgment and of fierce fire, which will devour the adversaries of God" (vs 26-27). Quite a warning! Who is the responsibility upon *but us*!

Verse 28: "*Consider this*: anyone who rejects *the* Law of Moses dies without mercy under *the testimony* of two or three witnesses. How much worse punishment do you think he will deserve who has trampled underfoot the Son of God, and has regarded the blood of the covenant, with which he was sanctified, *as* an unholy thing, and has scorned the Spirit of grace? For we know Him Who has said, "*Vengeance belongs to Me. I will recompense!*" says *the Lord*.' And again, '*The Lord will judge His people.*' ***It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God***" (vs 28-31). You talk about the admonitions; it's something!

Then he reminds them again; here's an exhortation or encouragement, v 32: "But remember the earlier days when, after you were enlightened, you endured much conflict in *your* sufferings."

We need to remember when we were first called. We need to remember when we were baptized and received the Holy Spirit of God, and started keeping the Sabbath and the Holy Days and the joy and our zeal and drive and our understanding. ***We need to have that again in a mature way***, and to really develop the perfection of these things through the power of God's Holy Spirit.

Hebrews 12:7 talks about correction, and there will be correction along the way: "***If***... [there's the condition again] ...you endure chastening, God is dealing with you as *a Father* with *His* sons. For

who is the son whom *the* Father does not chasten? But ***if*** you are without chastisement, of which all are partakers, then you are bastards and not sons" (vs 7-8). Quite a warning!

Here is encouragement, and what we need to look forward to. Here's where we need to focus the long-range thoughts and vision and understanding of the purpose of our calling, which is the resurrection, which is to come to the resurrection on the Sea of Glass.

Verse 22: "But you have come to Mount Sion, and to *the* city of *the* living God, heavenly Jerusalem; and to an innumerable company of angels; *to the* joyous festival gathering... [which it will be in that day of resurrection] ...and to *the* Church of *the* Firstborn... [that's us, brethren] ...registered in *the Book of Life* in heaven; and to God, *the* Judge of all; and to *the* spirits of the just who have been perfected; and to Jesus, *the* Mediator of *the* New Covenant; and to sprinkling of *the* blood of *ratification*, proclaiming superior things than *that of Abel*" (vs 22-24). You have:

- the encouragement
- the vision
- the explanation

Verse 25: "***Beware*** that you do not refuse to *hear* Him Who is speaking! For if they did not escape *judgment*, who refused to *hear* the One Who was on the earth Divinely instructing *them*, how much more *severely will we be judged*, if we ourselves apostatize from Him Who speaks from heaven."

Let's see the warning about apostatizing. Apostatizing means *going away from God! Leaving God!* But also leaving God in a *hostile* and *rebellious* and *angry* way. That's what the people did when they came out of the land of Egypt, when they apostatized.

Hebrews 3:12: "Beware, brethren, lest perhaps there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in apostatizing from *the* living God. Rather, be encouraging one another each day, while it is called 'today,' so that none of you become hardened by *the* deceitfulness of sin" (vs 12-13).

Sin is deceitful because there is a 'pleasure in sin for a season.' How does one begin apostatizing?

- they begin taking things for granted
- they get lazy
- they don't do the things that God says
- they turn their back on God

Rather than keeping the focus on the love of God, their focus becomes *on themselves* and they lose the

love of God. Let's see the beginning of apostatizing, because it's very important for us to realize it.

Let's see what God told the Church at Ephesus and their sin. Remember, the apostasy set in before the apostles died. By time we come to the Church, about 125^{A.D.} and history pulls back the veil, it is a totally different church from what it was when Christ founded it and the apostles taught and raised it up under the power of the Holy Spirit of God. This is why the Church at Ephesus is the apostolic church.

Revelation 2:2: "I know your works, and your labor, and your endurance, and that you cannot bear those who are evil; and *that* you did test those who proclaim *themselves* to be apostles, but are not, and did find them liars; and *that* you have borne *much* and have endured, and for My name's sake have labored and have not grown weary; nevertheless, I have *this* against you, that **you have left your first love**" (vs 2-4).

That is the first step of apostasy: ***you lose your love of God!*** This comes from the Greek 'protos.' The primary love, the first and greatest commandment is ***to love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind, strength and being!*** That's what they lost. That's the first step in apostasy.

Verse 5: "Therefore, remember from where you have fallen, and repent, and do the first works; for if *you do* not, I will come to you quickly; and I will remove your lampstand out of its place unless you repent." So, it's the same thing for us today, exactly the same thing.

Let's look at another aspect of apostasy. Matthew 24:42: "Watch, therefore, because you do not know in what hour your Lord is coming." If we don't watch, that is another step in apostasy!

Verse 43: "But know this, that if the master of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have been watching, and would not have allowed his house to be broken into. Therefore, you also be ready. For the Son of man is coming at a time that you do not think" (vs 43-44).

There are two ways that the Day of the Lord is going to come upon us:

1. we die in the faith and are put in the grave
2. we die in apostasy and are put in the grave

God has come upon you, and the next moment will either be that you're resurrected unto life, or you're resurrected unto the Lake of Fire.

Let's look at the next category, because it has to do with those who are servants and teachers.

Verse 45: "Who then is the faithful and wise servant whom his lord has set over his household, to give them food in due season?... [this is talking about ministers and overseers] ...Blessed *is* that servant, whom his lord when he comes shall find so doing" (vs 45-46).

Every elder and every teacher better read, study and live by 1st & 2nd Timothy, Titus and all the words of Christ, Paul and the apostles concerning how to conduct your ministry and serve and teach the brethren.

Verse 47: "Truly I say to you, he will set him over all his property."

Here is another thing in apostasy, because what happens is when those people creep in unaware, as Paul said. Let's see the warning the Apostle Paul gave to those that he ordained, that God raised up as elders and overseers in the Church at Ephesus. Here it all ties together.

Acts 20:28: "Take heed therefore to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to feed the Church of God..." That is the responsibility of the elders and ministers, ***to feed the Church of God!***

- they are to *know* the Word of God
- they are to *teach* the Word of God
 - ✓ to *perfect* the saints
 - ✓ to *uplift* them
 - ✓ to *help* them
 - ✓ to *exhort* them
 - ✓ to *encourage* them
 - ✓ to *inspire* them
 - ✓ to *correct* them
 - ✓ to *lead* them in the way

—because God, through the Holy Spirit, has made them overseers for that purpose!

It is the Church of God "...which He has purchased with His own blood" (vs 28). There is the profound and deep responsibility. It's not a political organization, not a hierarchy, and it is not to serve the ministers and have the brethren as lackeys to do the minister's bidding. It's the other way around. The ministers, elders and teachers ***are to serve the brethren, to teach them.***

Notice how this fits in with Hebrews, with 1-Peter, with Matt. 24. Notice the warning:

Verse 29: "For I know this: that after my departure grievous wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves men will rise up... [Why? How?] ...speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after themselves" (vs 29-30).

Remember, Christ gave the warning and He said that there will be many false prophets who will deceive many, and the majority of the people will follow them. That's just the way it is. Here is an apostasy of an elder, a minister, a teacher or anyone who is a servant of God:

Matthew 24:48: "But if that evil servant shall say in his heart, 'My lord delays *his* coming.'" How many warnings do we have about that? *It's unreal!*

Notice, he changes his behavior. Instead of serving them, he beats them. Instead of giving them meat in due season, instead of encouraging and correcting and uplifting and always pointing them to Jesus Christ and God the Father:

Verse 49: "And shall begin to beat *his* fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken."

What does it mean to eat and drink with the drunken? Does that mean to just go out and become debauching alcoholics? *No!* They begin to get *familiar with the world* and they begin to bring in the *world's ways* of doing things into the Church, and the *world's philosophies* and the *world's religion* and they drink out of the cup that the great Babylon, the whore, has: 'all the inhabitants of the world have drunk of the wrath of her fornication.' That's what it refers to here.

It's not just the return of Christ, because Christ can come upon anyone at anytime to do His will, and we've seen this happen:

Verse 50: "The lord of that servant will come in a day that he does not expect, and in an hour that he does not know. And he shall cut him asunder and shall appoint his portion with the hypocrites. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (vs 50-51).

Those are the steps of apostasy. Let's tie this in and see the warning given by God in Deut. 12. When it comes to eating and drinking with the drunken, and it comes to going out and bringing in the world's religion—whether it be the carnal 'Christianity' of this world or Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam or any of the other religions of the world—God gave specific commands. This is always the thing that happens. This is the cycle that has taken place over and over again, as we have seen in Heb. 3 with the children of Israel going after Baalim and Ashtaroth. ***He gave the warning!***

Deuteronomy 12:30: "Take heed to yourself..." We need to realize, brethren, ***we always have to be on guard!*** We always have to be motivated by the Spirit of God. We can never ever

be satisfied wherever we are in our Christian growth. What we do today is fine, but that only counts for tomorrow if we do well tomorrow. Remember the old saying—the old Laodiceans' saying—*the road to hell is paved with good intentions!*

Verse 30: "Take heed to yourself that you do not become ensnared..."

- these things are interesting
- these things look like fun
- these things look like wonderful goodness and beauty and everything like that

I saw Larry King interviewing Laura Bush and it was so beautiful with the Christmas trees and, I thought as the interview was going on, here is a lovely woman—sincere and dedicated in what she's doing, and probably one of the best first ladies we've had in the White House for a long time—and Larry King (who's a Jew) interviewing her and talking about Christmas and the beautiful decorations. They don't even know what is happening, because to them it is a good thing.

That's why it comes as a snare. Satan has cleverly taken the paganism of Christmas and has wrapped it around the things of family gatherings, giving of gifts, being with your children, having wonderful and beautiful decorations, lights and all of those things, which appeal to ***the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh and the pride of life***. He says it's a snare!

Verse 30: "Take heed to yourself that you do not become ensnared by following them, after they are destroyed from before you... [God is the One Who destroyed them] ...and that you do not ask about their gods, saying, 'How did these nations serve their gods that I may also do likewise?'"

'I'll do them in the same manner. I'll do it unto the Lord. If I do it unto the Lord, that makes it right, because I'm good and God knows my heart.' God says ***you're not to judge by what you see; you're not to judge by what you hear. You are to judge by the Spirit of God and the Word of God!***

God gives a warning again, v 31: "You shall not do so to the LORD your God, for every abomination to the LORD, which He hates, they have done to their gods; even their sons and their daughters they have burned in the fire to their gods. Whatsoever thing that I command you, be careful to do it. You shall not add to it, nor take away from it" (vs 31-32).

Is there any difference between that warning and the warning in Revelation 22:14: "Blessed are those who **keep** His commandments... [Greek 'poieo'—*practice*] ...that they may have the right to

eat of the Tree of Life..." Going all the way back to the beginning with Adam and Eve, the Garden of Eden and the Tree of Life, you cannot have access to it unless you are keeping the commandments of God and loving God. This is not much different that what we read in Deut.

"...and may enter by the gates into the city. But excluded *are* dogs, and sorcerers, and fornicators, and murderers, and idolaters, and everyone who loves and devises a lie. I, Jesus, sent My angel to testify these things to you in the churches...." (vs 14-16).

This is summing up the whole Word of God. Christ has given this so that it should be testified in the churches, wherever they are.

"...I am the root and the offspring of David, the bright and morning star.' And the Spirit and the bride say, 'Come.' And let the one who hears say, 'Come.' And let the one who thirsts come; and let the one who desires partake of the water of life freely" (vs 16-17). That's what God says to us. We have to do it, but there are conditions: *that we remain faithful*.

Verse 18: "For I jointly testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book..." This is the summary of the whole Bible. The Apostle John in canonizing and finishing off the New Testament to be placed alongside the Old Testament as the complete instruction book for those that God deals with.

"...*that* if anyone adds to these things, God shall add to him the plagues that are written in this book" (v 18).

As a witness and warning to all the world because He's put the Bible out there for everyone to have, for everyone to know. How many really read it and know it, and understand it and want to love God and do His will? So, He gives this warning! Again, we're back to hearing the words. Remember what we've read: ***Today, if you will hear His voice!***

Verse 18: "For I jointly testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book, *that* if anyone adds to these things, God shall add to him the plagues that are written in this book. And if anyone takes away from the words of *the* book of this prophecy..." (vs 18-19)—the inspired writings of God; not just the prophecies of the book of Revelation.

"...God shall take away his part from *the* book of Life, and from the Holy City, and from the things **that are written in this book....** [that's quite profound] ...He Who testifies these things says, 'Surely, I am coming quickly.' Amen. Even so,

come, Lord Jesus. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you all. Amen" (vs 19-21).

That's quite a thing! We need to understand what a tremendous thing it is that God has done for us in giving us these warning through the book of Hebrews and how He was preparing the people of God for that time. We need to use the book of Hebrews to prepare us for this time, because we are entering into a time of trouble that is really going to be very desperate, and it increases and multiplies as we go down through the time before Christ returns. We have to be ready at any time!

- let's be *faithful*
- let's *obey*
- let's *hear His voice*
- let's *love and serve one another*
- let's *encourage and exhort one another*

—while it is called today and *we hear His voice and do the things that are pleasing in His sight!*

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*

Scriptural References:

- 1) Exodus 32:25-35
- 2) Numbers 14:17-24, 26-37
- 3) Numbers 16:30-33, 41-49
- 4) Numbers 20:7-13
- 5) Numbers 21:4-9
- 6) Numbers 25:1-15
- 7) Romans 10:4
- 8) Judges 2:1-13
- 9) 2 Peter 3:1-9
- 10) 2 Peter 1:8-13
- 11) Hebrews 2:1-3
- 12) Hebrews 3:5-7, 11-12, 14
- 13) Matthew 24:13
- 14) Hebrews 3:15
- 15) Hebrews 4:3, 5, 7, 11-12
- 16) Hebrews 10: 23-32
- 17) Hebrews 12:7-8, 22-25
- 18) Hebrews 3:12-13
- 19) Revelation 2:2-5
- 20) Matthew 24:42-47
- 21) Acts 20:28-30
- 22) Matthew 24:48-51
- 23) Deuteronomy 12:30-32
- 24) Revelation 22:14-21

Scripture referenced, not quoted: Acts 1

Also referenced: Sermon Series: *Covenants of God*

FRC:bo
Transcribed: 3-7-11
Reformatted/Corrected: January/2017

The Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews X A Study of “the rest” of God

(Chapter 4)
Fred R. Coulter

I think Hebrews is really fitting for our day, because we are reaching a time very similar in our day to what they were going through in the time when Paul wrote this epistle—which is really a sermon, which I’m sure, he really perfected by preaching many, many times. We need to understand that the section from Hebrews 3:1 thru 5:10 all fits together and is a continuous thing.

Hebrews 3:7 thru 4:13 is a subsection that is sandwiched in between about the faithfulness of Christ as the Builder of the house and then when we come to the last part of chapter four and into five, we are talking about the High Priest Melchisedec. All of the things from the beginning of Heb. 1 clear up to 5:10 are leading the brethren to point them to looking to Christ Who is the High Priest in heaven above, how He got there:

- through His sacrifice
- through participating in human flesh
- by being faithful to God
- by dying on the cross
- by being resurrected
- by building His Church
- He is the Head Apostle over everything

Then we come to Heb. 3, and we’ve gone through it, where today the theme is **today, if you will hear His voice, harden not your heart!** This carries over into Heb. 4. There are some very important things for us to understand. Heb. 4 is completely misunderstood by the theologians of the world when they say that *Christ is our ‘rest’* and *Christ is our ‘Sabbath,’* therefore, ‘we do not have to keep the Sabbath Day’—which goes absolutely contradictory to the meaning of the Greek text here in Heb. 4.

Principles to always remember:

- **Christ died for our sins**—which is true!
- **Christ was resurrected!**
- Through the power of the Holy Spirit, and God the Father sending it, **we are called**—which is true!
- We have the **forgiveness of sin** through the sacrifice and belief **in the blood of Christ**—which is true!
- Christ did not keep any commandment in our stead!

Meaning:

- in Christ keeping the Sabbath *does not relieve us* from keeping the Sabbath
- in Christ being obedient does not mean that we are relieved from obedience

That is the implication that is given in the lawless religions of this world, which proclaim that Christ is our ‘rest’ and if we ‘rest in Christ’ we have nothing to do! **That is absolutely a false doctrine,** and why they use Heb. 4:9 is only because of the translation in the *King James*.

Let’s start by going to Heb. 4:9 and then we’ll do like we should in the *Fourteen Rules of Bible Study* and read the verse before and the verses after. Because this is a convenient translation, which we will show is entirely and utterly wrong.

Hebrews 4:9 (KJV): “There remains, therefore, a rest to the people of God.” They all know that this was translated from the Greek word ‘sabbatismos.’

Let’s read it the way it should have been translated, and we will see the vast difference in it. What they are doing, they are making ‘sabbatismos,’ which means *Sabbath-keeping* to assume the equivalency of ‘katapausis,’ which means *rest*. It does not assume that meaning.

Hebrews 4:9 (FV): “There remains, therefore, Sabbath-keeping for the people of God.” While it is true we are to rest on the Sabbath from our work as it commands, it is not true that we are relieved from Sabbath-keeping because we rest in Christ.

Let’s read the verses before and after. We’ll just read it through so we get the context and then go back and analyze it and we will see that there is a connection between *faith and obedience* and *unbelief and disobedience*. This is what we are talking about and it is all centered on Sabbath-keeping.

Verse 1: “Therefore, we should fear, lest perhaps, a promise being open to enter into **His rest**, any of you might seem to come short. For truly, we have had the Gospel preached *to us*, even as they also *did*; but the preaching of the Word did not profit them because it was not mixed with faith in those who heard. For we who have believed, we ourselves are entering into **the rest**, as He has said, ‘So, I swore in My wrath, “If they shall enter into **My rest**—”’...” (vs 1-3). Which actually shows that

entering into the ‘promised land’ is conditional and also entering into the Kingdom of God is conditional. That’s why it is left hanging.

“...although the works were finished from *the* foundation of *the* world. For He spoke in a certain place about **the seventh day** in this manner: ‘And God **rested** on the seventh day from all His works’; and again concerning this: ‘If they shall enter into **My rest**’—Consequently, since it remains *for* some to enter into it, and those who had previously heard the Gospel did not enter in because of disobedience, again, He marks out a certain day, ‘Today,’ saying in David after so long a time (exactly as it has been quoted *above*), ‘Today, if you will hear His voice, harden not your hearts.’ For if Joshua...”(vs 3-8)—not Jesus (*KJV*), because that contradicts the statement that if you ‘rest in Jesus’ you have rest.

If you read it as Jesus “...had given them rest...” it would make no sense. That’s a contradictory statement.

Verse 8: “For if Joshua had given them **rest** He would not have spoken *long* afterwards of another day. There remains, therefore, Sabbath-keeping for the people of God. For the one who has entered into **His rest**, he also **has ceased** from his works, just as God *did* from His own *works*. We should be diligent therefore to enter into that **rest**, lest anyone fall after the same example of disobedience” (vs 8-11).

Let’s go back and analyze this—*Hebrews Study Heb. 4:1-9* (guide with this series found at truthofgod.org):

“For He spoke in a certain place about the seventh *day*...”

Why talk about the seventh day if you’re not talking about the Sabbath?

...in this manner: ‘And God rested on the seventh day from all His works’...”

Why did God do that?

1. To show that the Sabbath was to be perpetually a day of rest and part of the commandments of God *by creation!*
2. To show His presence in the Sabbath Day and the Holy Days—not in any of the other days that other religions keep!

I was talking to a man who was in Jerusalem for a while and he said that it’s a real circus from Friday through Sunday. He said that because certain parts of Jerusalem the Muslims have there is no work done on Friday. In certain parts where the Jews are, there’s no work done on Saturday, and certain parts where the Catholics and Orthodox are, there’s no

work done on Sunday. So, essentially you have four days for shopping. That shows you why God did not leave it to the choice of men.

Now then, there is a connection between Sabbath observance and entering into the ‘promised land’ for the Israelites, and a connection between Sabbath observance and entering into the Kingdom of God for those who are Christ’s. The Gospel that was preached to them was the Gospel of the good news of entering into the ‘promised land’ to receive the physical blessings given to the seed of Abraham through Isaac and Jacob. The promise of ‘rest’ that we have is the promise of entering into the Kingdom of God. However, in both cases, the Sabbath Day was the key point of obedience necessary.

“...and again concerning this: ‘If they shall enter into My rest.’ Consequently, since it remains *for* some to enter into it, and those who had previously heard the Gospel did not enter in because of disobedience...”

What did they do? As we saw, we went through all the points of disobedience. They made the golden calf, and the golden calf is a picture of the sun-god, because right between the horns of the golden calf is a big sun-disk. What did they do? *Those rebels in the wilderness obeyed Sunday-keeping!*

Let’s look at a couple of Scriptures for that to put it into the record here, to show the connection between the Gospel then—as preached under the Israelites and entering into the ‘promised land’ and the Sunday-worship that they had right under the nose of God—and the Gospel being preached to us and the Sabbath Day in relationship to obedience to God.

Acts 7:37: “This is the Moses who said to the children of Israel, ‘A Prophet shall *the* Lord your God raise up for you from among your brethren, like me; Him shall you hear.’” A prophecy of Christ, just like we saw in the first part of Heb. 3. between Moses and Christ.

Verse 38: “This is he who was in the assembly in the wilderness with the Angel Who... [Christ Who was leading them] ...spoke to him [Moses] in Mount Sinai, and with our fathers... [Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob] ...who received *the* living oracles to give to us; to whom our fathers would not be subject, but thrust *him* away, and turned their hearts back to Egypt” (vs 38-39).

Where does disbelief come from? *From within! From the heart!* Where does belief come from? Remember what the Eunuch said to Philip? ‘What prevents me from being baptized?’ Philip said, *If you believe with all your heart that Jesus is Lord and Savior, it is permitted for you be baptized!*

He said, ***I believe!***

“...their hearts turned back to Egypt” (v 39). We read all that how they wanted the fleshpots, the onions, the leeks, garlic, fish and all those good things. Yea, the day is going to come—in our day—when it’s going to happen; you won’t have the supermarket and you can’t get everything from all around the world to fill your table with a great delight.

Verse 40: “Saying to Aaron, ‘Make us gods who shall go before us...’” This tells you a little bit of something about Aaron; he was kind of a wishy-washy weak person. But nevertheless, because God chose him He stuck with him; nevertheless Aaron was penalized.

“...for this Moses who brought us out from *the* land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him.’ And they made a calf in those days, and offered sacrifice to the idol, and rejoiced in the works of their hands” (vs 40-41). Furthermore we know from the context in 1-Cor. 10 and that it was in their celebration a sex orgy. Or you might say in modern parlance today, ‘a rock concert.’

Verse 42: “Then God turned and delivered them over to serve the host of heaven...” Please understand, this is true: If you don’t want to obey God and you want your own way, God will let you have it. But don’t be surprised when the judgment of God comes upon you.

“...as it is written in *the* book of the prophets, ‘Did you offer slain beasts and sacrifices to Me *those* forty years in the wilderness, O house of Israel?’” (v 42).

We need to understand that in the wilderness there were two services always going. That’s why God removed Himself from the middle of the congregation and put the tent outside the camp. Moses had to go out there and the faithful had to go there, and they left the rest of them worship the ‘host of heaven’ right in the presence of God, because they already had the death sentence put upon them, that all of those over 20 would die. That’s what it says here. They did it for 40 years in the wilderness.

Verse 43: “But you took up the tabernacle of Moloch, and the star of your god Remphan, *even* the images that you had made to worship them; and *so* I will remove you beyond Babylon.” Now he’s talking about the whole space of time:

- what happened to them in the 40 years;
- when they came into the ‘promised land’
- when they rebelled against God in the ‘promised land’
- when the Jews were sent off into Babylon

That’s a condensing of history, but it’s all based on the same thing: Sunday-worship. Beginning in the wilderness there was true Sabbath worship for those who believed God and were faithful, and there was Sunday worship for the disobedient and unbelieving, *and they all died* as a lesson that if you don’t obey God you’re not going to *enter into the rest*, be it the ‘promised land’ as with the Israelites or the Kingdom of God in our case.

Verse 44: “The tabernacle of the testimony was among our fathers in the wilderness, as He Who spoke to Moses had commanded, to make it according to the pattern, which he had seen; which also our fathers, who received it by succession, brought in with Joshua, when they took possession of *the land from* the nations whom God drove out before *the* face our fathers, until the days of David” (vs 44-45).

That is what it is talking about. We see the connection between belief, obedience and Sabbath-keeping *and* disobedience, rebellion and Sunday-keeping, right in the wilderness. This escapes most people. They don’t understand that. What is the solution?

(continuing with *Hebrews Study 4:1-9*)

(v 6): “Consequently, since it remains *for* some to enter into it, and those who had previously heard the Gospel did not enter in because of disobedience, again He marks out a certain day, ‘Today,’ saying in David...”

So, we came down to the same time in Acts 7. We came down to David, a man after God’s own heart.

...after so long a time (exactly as it has been quoted above), ‘Today, if you will hear His voice, harden not your hearts.’ For if Joshua had given them rest, He would not have spoken *long* afterwards of another day.... (vs 7-8).

Referring to another day in which the ultimate fulfillment of the Kingdom of God would be. Because entering into the ‘promised land’ was not the finalization of the plan of God.

...Therefore, ***there remains Sabbath-keeping for the people of God***” (v 9).

We need to also understand that with:

- the Spirit of God
- loving and serving God
- believing and obeying God

that ***He gives us protection*** from the forces of this world and Satan the devil! That’s why in the model

prayer, it says, ‘Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one’: Satan the devil! I truly believe that in keeping the Sabbath in faith, ***we are then given added blessing and protection, because we believe and obey God!*** Just think on that!

Paul did not write, “There remains Sabbath-keeping for the Jews.”

Which is what the Protestants and other religionists say. Not true!

He clearly declared, “There remains Sabbath-keeping for the people of God.” The people of God include the Gentiles, as well as the Jews (1-Pet. 2:10; Eph. 2:11-19).

I’ll leave it to you to read those. In both cases it says, ‘who were not a people, but who are now the people of God.’ Who were cut off from the covenants and promises of God and were without God in this world.’ They are the people of God today.

Now, let’s get into a little technical study of the words:

The word translated “Sabbath-keeping” in the English is from the Greek word ‘sabbatismos.’ In the New Testament, ‘sabbatismos’ is only used in Hebrews 4:9....

Not any other Scripture. It is the only place! There’s a peculiar Greek word to describe that, and that is called ‘hapax legomenon’ which means *a one time use*.

...It is a noun meaning *Sabbath-keeping*. It is entirely incorrect to translate ‘sabbatismos’ as *rest* as it has been translated in the *KJV* and other versions. However, it is apparent that those who keep Sunday have theological and political reasons to translate it as *rest*, so they may avoid the seventh day Sabbath question and continue to keep Sunday.

That is precisely why the *King James* translators did it that way. And they *knew*; no question about it! That was the seed that has led to the failure of the Protestant Reformation. Instead of coming out of the world and repenting and becoming God’s people, they became no more than reformed Catholics. If you don’t believe that, go back and re-read *Rome’s Challenge to the Protestants*. That will tell you.

When the entire context of these verse leading up to verse nine are analyzed, it is apparent that the main subject is the “Seventh Day” and its relationship to entering into the rest of God [receiving salvation]...

which ultimately then is the Kingdom of God

...and entering into the *weekly* Seventh Day Sabbath as a day of rest.

The Greek word that is used in Heb. 4:9 is ‘sabbatismos,’ which means *Sabbath rest, Sabbath observance* (Arndt and Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*). This definition of the Greek word ‘sabbatismos’ is confirmed by other historical works: “The words ‘sabbath rest’ translate the Greek noun ‘sabbatismos,’ a unique word in the New Testament. This term appears also in Plutarch (*Superset .3 [Moralia 166a]*) for Sabbath observance, and in four post-canonical Christian writings which are not dependent on Heb. 4:9” (*The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, vol. 5, p. 856).

So, there are some honest scholars out there. There are some who are honestly seeking the Truth. And lo and behold, when they honestly seek the Truth, *they find it!*

The Greek word ‘sabbatismos’ is a noun. The verb form of the word is ‘sabbatizo,’ which means “to keep the Sabbath” (Arndt and Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*). The meaning of ‘sabbatizo’ is confirmed by its use in the Septuagint, a Greek translation of the Old Testament which dates from the third century B.C. It is called the Septuagint.

All of the quotes in Hebrews—every single Scriptural quote—comes from the Septuagint, Greek translation of the Old Testament.

The Apostle Paul quotes exclusively from the Septuagint in his Epistle to the Hebrews. When Paul used the Greek word ‘sabbatismos’ in Heb. 4:9, he knew that the meaning of this word was well known to the Greek-speaking believers of that day. The verb form ‘sabbatizo’ was used in Septuagint, which was as familiar to the believers of New Testament times as the *King James* Bible is to Christians today.

Exodus 16:23 (*KJV*): “And he said unto them, ‘This *is that* which the LORD has said, “tomorrow *is the rest of the Holy Sabbath unto the LORD*. Bake *that* which you will bake *today*, and seethe that you will seethe; and that which remains over lay up for you to be kept until the morning.’ And they laid it up till the morning, as Moses bade; and it did not stink, neither was there any worm in it” (vs 23-24).

God showed by miracle that that’s proof. You know the old saying, ‘seeing is believing.’

Verse 25 (KJV): “And Moses said, ‘Eat that today; for today *is* a Sabbath [‘shabot’] unto the LORD. Today you shall not find it in the field.... [that’s the sermon message for the Sabbath] ...Six days you shall gather it; but on the seventh day, *which is* the Sabbath, in it there shall be none.’ And it came to pass *that* there went out *some* of the people on the seventh day to gather *it* and they found none” (vs 25-27).

Stop and think: If you were there and the cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night were there, and you saw all these miracles and you were delivered from Egypt and you walked through the Red Sea, that you would believe God enough—through Moses—that if He said don’t go out on the Sabbath and look for any because it’s not there, you would say, ‘Well, yeah, let’s not go out.’ But NO! that’s the hardness of the heart; they didn’t listen! It’s like telling a child: ‘Don’t touch the stove, it’s hot! I told you not to touch it, it’s hot!’ There’s a penalty; same thing here. So, they went out and “...found none.” Surprise! God said there wouldn’t be any.

Verse 28 (KJV): “And the LORD said unto Moses, ‘How long refuse you to keep My commandments and My laws?... [we have here the unbelief and the disobedience tied together] ...See, the LORD has given you the Sabbath... [always remember, *the Sabbath is a gift of God!*] ...therefore He gives you on the sixth day the bread of two days. Abide every man in his place, let no man go out on the seventh day.’ So, the people rested on the seventh day” (vs 28-30).

The word *rest* here is ‘sabbatizo.’ They sabbathized! That is a different *rest* than the other *rest*. To sabbathize means *to keep it in a way that God intended*. The other word ‘katapausis’ means *to rest*, which is also connected with the Sabbath Day. Here you have ‘sabbatizo.’

...The use of the verb ‘sabbatizo’ in Lev. 23:32 in the Septuagint leaves no room to mistake its meaning. Here is the English translation of this verse in the Septuagint: “It [the Day of Atonement] shall be a Holy Sabbath [literally, a Sabbath of Sabbaths:] to you; and ye shall humble your souls, from the ninth day of the month: from evening to evening **shall ye keep your Sabbaths**” (*The Septuagint with the Apocrypha*, Brenton).

The clause “shall ye keep your Sabbaths” is translated from the Greek words ‘sabbatieite ta sabbata,’ which literally

mean, “You shall sabbathize the Sabbaths.”....

I want you to look at the second and third word: ‘ta sabbata’—that is plural, *Sabbaths*. Sabbath alone is ‘to sabbato’; whereas, this is ‘ta sabbata.’ The other is singular. Which tells us that *all the Holy Days are Sabbaths*. So, if there ‘remain Sabbath-keeping for the people of God’ that includes the Holy Days; no question about it!

...The Greek verb ‘sabbatieite,’ which means *ye shall keep*, is the second person plural form of the verb ‘sabbatizo.’ Since the verb ‘sabbatizo’ means *to keep the Sabbath*, this verb applies not only to the weekly Sabbath and the annual Sabbaths of God, but also to God’s command for the seventh-year rest from farming the land [Jubilee year]. Throughout the Septuagint, the verb ‘sabbatizo’ is used in relation to Sabbath keeping and Sabbath rest only.

The use of the Greek word ‘sabbatizmos’ in Heb. 4:9 contradicts the teaching that the fourth commandment has been abolished. As the context of this verse shows... [which we’ll go through step-by-step] ...the observance of the seventh day as a day of rest and worship is as binding for the people of God today as it was for Israel of old. In addition to the weekly Sabbath, the annual Holy Days that God commanded, which are also called Sabbaths, are included in the fourth commandment....

That’s why Lev. 23 starts out with the weekly Sabbath and followed by all the annual Holy Days.

...The early New Testament churches kept the Holy Days of God, as determined by the calculated Hebrew calendar. The Apostle Paul kept the Holy Days and commanded Gentile converts to keep them (1-Cor. 5:7-8). None of the apostles or the early converts to Christianity observe the pagan holidays that are now called Christmas and Easter. These holidays, which originated in sun-worship, were later adopted into Christianity through the influence of the Roman Church. They became false substitutes for the annual Holy Days that are commanded by God, just as Sunday has become a false substitute for the weekly Sabbath.

Now, we’re ready to start looking at the other words for ‘rest.’

There are four other Greek words that have been translated into the English as the verb

‘to rest; and the noun ‘rest.’

- 1) The Greek verb ‘katapauo’ means *to cause to stop, bring to an end, to bring to rest, to stop to rest*—
- 2) The Greek noun ‘katapausis’ means *rest* and when used with ‘sabbatizo’ it means *a Sabbath rest*, the weekly Sabbath, an annual Sabbath or the land Sabbath

(go to the next track)

Now, let’s look at ‘katapauo’ which is the verb *to rest*. It has the meaning and connection with *resting from your enemies; entering into the rest* that God had given in the land that He promised.

Acts 14:18: “And *even* by saying these things, they could hardly keep [restrain]... [‘katapauo’ means *to cause to cease*] ...the multitudes from sacrificing to them.”

Hebrews 3:11: “So I swore in My wrath, ‘If they shall enter into My **rest**—’”—‘katapausis.’ In the Greek it has an ‘n’ or ‘u’ at the end of it because there’s action to it—*enter into*. That is referring to *entering into the ‘promised land.*’

Then he gives a warning, v 12: “Beware, brethren, lest perhaps there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in apostatizing from *the* living God.... [apostasy begins with unbelief] ...Rather, be encouraging one another each day, while it is called ‘today,’ so that none of you become hardened by *the* deceitfulness of sin” (vs 12-13).

Verse 18: “And to whom did He swear *that* they would not enter into His **rest**... [‘katapausis’] ...except to those who had disobeyed?... [we saw that; they disobeyed] ...So, we see that they were not able to enter in because of unbelief” (vs 18-19). Notice the connection between unbelief, disobedience and apostatizing. Also, “disobeyed,” v 18—last word. So, unbelief and disobedience go hand-in-hand.

If you don’t believe God, will you obey Him? *No!* That’s precisely why Protestants feel free to keep Sunday, because they don’t believe God. ***Every act of disobedience really is that you don’t believe God.*** Maybe temporary unbelief. Remember the man whose son was possessed with demons and the disciples couldn’t cast them out? He came to Christ and said, ‘Your disciples couldn’t cast them out; if there’s anything You can do, please do it.’ Christ said, ‘Do you believe?’ and he said, ‘Lord, I believe, but help my unbelief.’ Every time you disobey it’s because you don’t believe, or your carnal nature puts you in a state of unbelief. ¹

Hebrews 4:1: “Therefore, we should fear, lest perhaps, a promise being open to enter into **His rest**, any of you might seem to come short.”

We’re going to see ‘His rest’ is different from having rest from sin, because there’s an entirely different word that is used for that. It is not ‘katapausis.’

Verse 3_[transcriber’s correction]: “For we who have believed, we ourselves are **entering into the rest**...”—‘katapausis.’

- What sort of rest are you entering into? *This is present tense; we are entering into!*
- Are you entering into the Kingdom of God? *No!*
- Will you enter into the Kingdom of God? *Yes!*

But it doesn’t say *will*; it says we *are entering into the rest!*

- What ‘katapausis’ or ceasing do you enter into? *The Sabbath!*

Verse 4: “For He spoke in a certain place about the seventh *day* in this manner: ‘And God rested... [‘katapauo’] ...on the seventh day from all His works.’” Very interesting! Very profound!

Let’s look at some words, which in the Septuagint are translated ‘katapauo’ from the Hebrew—meaning *to rest, to cease*.

Genesis 2:2: “And by *the beginning* of the seventh day God finished His work...” That means the seventh day was beginning. I mentioned before, on the sixth day, the Septuagint says that on the sixth day and the in *Interlinear Hebrew-English Old Testament* by George Ricker Berry, has sixth day.

“...which He had made. And He **rested** [katapauo] the seventh day from all His work, which He had made. And God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it because on it He **rested**... [‘katapauo’] ...from all His work which God had created and made” (vs 2-3).

Exo. 20—here again we have the seventh day and ‘katapauo’; when it’s talking about *we are entering into that rest*, we are entering into the Sabbath Day. Not some sort of lawless licentiousness, that if we enter into an ethereal emotional rest in accepting Jesus, that we don’t have to keep the commandments of God.

Exodus 20:8: “Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it Holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work. But the seventh day *is* the Sabbath of the LORD your God. In it you shall not do any work,

you, nor your son, nor your daughter; your manservant, nor your maidservant, nor your livestock, nor the stranger within your gates; for in six days the LORD made the heaven and the earth... [it goes right back to creation] **...the sea, and all that is in them, and rested...** [‘katapauo’] ...the seventh day. Therefore, the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and sanctified it” (vs 8-11).

We’re going to look at another Greek word here, which is called ‘phulasso’ which means *to keep*. From the *Hebrews Study, Hebrews 4:1-9*:

5) The Greek verb ‘phulasso’ is another Greek verb that is used in connection with keeping the Sabbath and means *to watch, guard, defend, protect, stand guard, keep*—as in keeping the law—to follow or observe a law. (Arndt & Gingrich)

Exodus 31:13: “Speak also to the children of Israel, saying, ‘Truly you shall keep My Sabbaths...’” In the Hebrew and the Greek it is plural—‘ta sabbata’ from the Greek Septuagint—Sabbaths; *you shall keep*—‘phulasso’ meaning *to observe as a law*, but also *to guard and keep*, which ties in with *remember*!

“...for it is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations to know that I *am* the LORD Who sanctifies you. You **shall keep**... [‘phulasso’] ...the Sabbath...” (vs 13-14).

Remember, in the command that we find of the Sabbath Day (Exo. 20) is that God rested. Here we have a little different emphasis:

Deuteronomy 5:12 **“Keep...”**—‘phulasso’—a command that means *to watch, guard, defend, protect, stand guard, keep*, as in keeping a law.

“...the Sabbath Day to sanctify it as the LORD your God has commanded you” (v 12). If you disbelieve God, you will disobey God and won’t keep it.

- In today’s world, will you have trials and troubles because of keeping the Sabbath?
Yes, there are going to be times that you will!
- Does God know that? *Yes, He does!*
- Is He there to help you? *Yes, He is!*

But maybe it’s going to be kind of like Tyndale said—and I always like this one, and he’s absolutely correct in it: **‘If God bid you to go across the sea in a ship, He will send a tempest to test you whether you believe Him or no.’** So likewise with the Sabbath! Today, in this world—and, of course, in every society—we’re also going to be confronted

with, ‘How shall I live if I can’t work on Saturday?’ The answer is, *by faith in God! He will provide!* What if it’s long in coming? *Don’t worry, it’ll come!* Not every test lasts forever! Sometimes it will be like that song on Hee-Haw when they stand up and say, ‘Agony!’ Well, God will see you through it. Just trust in God.

We have to look at Abraham’s example: He came to **hope in hope!** There was nothing else left to do. What happens when you get down to that point? Should you just get discouraged? *No!* You’re right where God wants you!

- *look* to Him
- *trust* Him
- *believe* Him
- *obey* Him

Verse 12: “Keep the Sabbath Day to sanctify it as the LORD your God has commanded you. Six days you shall labor and do all your work. But the seventh day *is* the Sabbath of the LORD your God. *In it* you shall not do any work, you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your manservant, nor your maidservant, nor your ox, nor your donkey, nor any of your livestock, nor your stranger within your gates, so that your manservant and your maidservant may rest as well as you. And remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt...” (vs 12-15).

What is this society likened today? *Sodom and Egypt!* If you don’t believe it, just go visit San Francisco or Los Angeles, or New York, or anyplace where there is a Sodom and Gomorrah community called ‘a gay community’ in any city, and you will see! Remember that you are slaves to this society, too. That’s why we keep the Sabbath, because we come out of this world on the Sabbath Day. *Yes, we do!*

“...and the LORD your God brought you out from there... [remember that *God has called you*] ...with a mighty hand and with an outstretched arm. Therefore the LORD your God commanded you to **keep**... [‘phulasso’] ...the Sabbath Day” (v 15).

- ‘phulasso’ is used in reference to *keeping*; that is *to keep*
- ‘katapauo’ is used in reference to *keeping*
- ‘katapausis’ is used to signify *rest*

Hebrews 4:4: “For we who have believed, we ourselves are entering into the rest... [katapauo’] ...as He has said, ‘So, I swore in My wrath, “If they shall enter into My rest—”’” (vs 4-5).

Remember, we covered those who rebelled in the wilderness did not keep the Sabbath.

Therefore, they didn’t enter into the ‘promised land’ because their bodies were strewn in the wilderness. Today we have the same thing. If we’re going to enter into the Kingdom of God we must rest on the Sabbath [‘katapauo’] to enter into the [‘katapausis’]. We will see that.

Verse 5: “And again concerning this: ‘If they shall enter into My rest—’ Consequently, since it remains *for* some to enter into it, and those who had previously heard the Gospel did not enter in because of **disobedience**” (vs 5-6). To what? What are we talking about here? *The Sabbath Day!* What about today?

Verse 7: “Again, He marks out a certain day, ‘Today,’ saying in David...” That’s what the whole 95th Psalm is all about—a call to the people of Israel to keep the Sabbath Day. It was a Sabbath Psalm, to be read in the synagogue and to be read at the temple for all the children of Israel.

“...after so long a time (exactly as it has been quoted *above*), ‘Today, if you will hear His voice, harden not your hearts’” (v 7).

When you talk to a staunch Sunday-keeper, even though they say they believe in God and Jesus Christ. Do you come upon a hardness of heart? *Yea! Verily yea!* That’s why they’re called ‘hard-shelled’ Baptists. Do they disobey God because they don’t believe God? *Yes! They keep Sunday!* Are they going to enter into the Kingdom of God? *No! They’re disobeying!*

It says here that “...those who had previously heard the Gospel did not enter in because of **disobedience**” (v 6).

Verse 8: “For if Joshua had given them rest...” If they entered into the ‘promised land’ under Joshua and they entered into the finality of the Kingdom of God and that was the total sum of salvation:

“...**He would not have spoken long afterwards of another day**” (v 8). Once they conquered the land, God would conquer the world and bring in the Kingdom of God to the whole world. But it didn’t happen; *that’s why He spoke of another day.* That’s why it says, ‘Today.’

Because it hasn’t been fulfilled, v 9: “There remains, therefore, Sabbath-keeping for the people of God.” Why? *To rest from your work on the Sabbath and keep the Sabbath as God has commanded, and to give you the blessing of looking forward to entering into the Kingdom of God!*

Stop and think for just a minute. I know, in talking to people who have given up on the Sabbath—some people do give up on the Sabbath

and God still works with them and they come and repent and come back—and they say, almost universally, once they stopped keeping the Sabbath, they forgot about the Kingdom of God. Why? *Because on the Sabbath Day, that’s why we are here!* The Sabbath Day you’re taught about God, About Christ, about the Kingdom of God; you’re looking forward to the coming Kingdom of God and the thousand-year reign of Christ. And it is true, in type, the Sabbath Day does picture the Millennial reign of Christ and the saints on the earth—that is true. That is the *rest* of God.

Let’s see what it talks about concerning the Kingdom of God and the reign of Christ on earth in relationship to *rest*, which is also ‘katapausis’ in the Septuagint.

Isaiah 11:10: “And in that day...” What day? *The return of Jesus Christ!* This ties right in with Heb. 4: *today!* Which is looking forward to that day and there is ‘katapausis’ or ‘katapauo’ involved with us as well as with God.

“...there shall be the Root of Jesse [Christ] standing as a banner for the people; to Him the nations [Gentiles] shall seek... [that is when the knowledge ‘as the waters cover the earth’ v 9] ...and His rest [‘katapausis’] shall be glorious” (v 10). That’s what we are looking to.

Hebrews 4:10: “For the one who has entered into **His rest**... [‘katapausis’] ...he also has **ceased**... [‘katapauo’] ...from his works...”

Here we have ‘katapausis’ the noun and ‘katapauo’ the verb—has ceased from Him works.

“...just as God *did* from His own *works*” (v 10). When did God cease from His work? *On the seventh day, after He made everything!* The one who’s going to enter into the Kingdom of God has to cease from his own works on the Sabbath Day, just as God did from His own works.

There are those who say that He has entered into us—that is the *rest of Christ*—and God has done everything for you, has ceased from His works, so therefore there’s nothing for you to do, **which is a totally twisting of the Scriptures**. That is not what it means. A comparison is made here, just as God did from His. What did God do the first six days? *Worked!*

Verse 11—very key thing: “We should be diligent therefore to enter into that **rest**... [‘katapausis’—which is the *rest* of the Sabbath] ...**lest anyone fall after the same example of disobedience**.” Now, rather than doing away with the Sabbath, this reinforces it very powerfully.

Let’s understand something: Because of

unbelief and disobedience they were not able to enter into the ‘promised land.’ After they entered into the ‘promised land,’ when they sinned, because they didn’t believe God—they were punished by war, foreign domination and exile and final destruction of the temple. That goes through the whole book of Hebrews. We have the same thing for us today.

Remember this: *The human heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked; who can know it? There is a way that seems right to a man and the ends thereof are the ways of death.* It seems right while you’re on the way. But we can’t fool God, and we can’t fool the Word of God. We can trick ourselves, and Satan can trick us, but when you know the Truth and you know better and we’re sort of fighting our conscience and putting it down and avoiding God and trying to get away from God so that we won’t have to squirm and squeal. Just wait, God’s not done yet.

Verse 12: “For the Word of God *is* living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword...” This is why people don’t like the Bible. That’s pretty sharp! Always reminds me of this movie I saw. This guy had a sword that was so sharp that he took it and he whacked the guy’s head off, and the knife went through that person’s spine and neck and didn’t even move the head. There was just a little line. He didn’t realize it for a few seconds until his head fell off. That sword was sharp! When I read this, I think of that.

Verse 12: “For the Word of God *is* living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword piercing even to the dividing asunder of both soul and spirit, *and* of both *the* joints and *the* marrow...”

Marrow is very important because marrow gives you physical life. That’s where your blood cells are made. When your blood cells are no longer produced, you die! So, it goes right down to the substance of life.

“...and *is* able to discern *the* thoughts and intents of *the* heart” (v 12). No other book is able to do that.

He’s saying in relationship to kidding yourselves and not keeping the Sabbath and entering into the *rest* of the Sabbath, the seventh day, think on this:

Verse 13: “And there is not a created thing that is not manifest in His sight; but all things *are* naked and laid bare before the eyes of Him to Whom we must give account.”

The word ‘must’ means it’s necessary. Remember, the judgment is on the house of God today.

(continuing with *Hebrews Study, Hebrews 4:19*)

- 4) The Greek noun ‘anapausis’ means *rest, a stopping, a ceasing, a resting place.*
- 3) The Greek verb ‘anapauo’ means *to cause to rest, to give (someone) rest, refresh*

Notice: the Greek verb ‘anapauo’ and the Greek noun ‘anapausis’ are never used with the Sabbath, or ceasing from work on the Sabbath....

Let’s see where it’s used, where they like to spiritualize the way keeping the Sabbath. They come to this and say that you *rest in Christ*. Here it says that you *rest in Christ*. Christ even said it. However, it is not ‘katapausis’ or katapauo.’ It’s ‘anapausis’ and ‘anapauo.’

Matthew 11:28: “Come to Me, all you who labor and are *overly* burdened, and I will give you rest.”

‘See, Jesus is our rest.’ *NO!* He *gives* rest, which is ‘anapausis’ the noun. What is that *rest* from? *From sin!* Why do you have rest from sin? *If you believe Jesus and obey Him you’re not going to be living in sin!*

- He brings to you
- He causes you to rest
- He refreshes you
- He gives you spiritual refreshing

Not used in relationship to the Sabbath at all.

Verse 29: “Take My yoke upon you, and learn from Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart...” If you follow in the footsteps of Jesus Christ:

- Will you find rest? *Yes!*
- Will you find rest from sin? *Yes, you will!*
- Will you be refreshed with His Spirit? *Yes!*

That ties right in with the renewing of the mind that we covered earlier.

“...and you shall find rest for your souls” (v 29). You’re not going to be driven to and fro with sin pulling you here and there. But ‘anapauo’ or ‘anapausis’ is a *rest from sin*.

If you *rest in Christ* and do not keep the Sabbath, do you have rest from sin? *No! You’re still breaking the fourth commandment*—the seventh day Sabbath—and transgression of the law is sin. You can’t take that and apply it to the Sabbath Day and say Christ has given me rest. I rest in Christ and there’s nothing for me to do. That is a twisting of the Scripture and a lie!

Verse 30: “For My yoke *is* easy, and My burden is light.” Why is it? *Because He’ll fight your battles for you!*

There we have it! That is the meaning of Heb. 4. For Israel, it was a rest for Israel, with a connection of the Sabbath and entering into the ‘promised land.’ For the Church of God, the people of God, it is entering into the Kingdom of God in connection with the Sabbath. It does not mean a *rest from sin!*

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

Scriptural References:

- 1) Hebrews 4:9, 1-11
- 2) Acts 7:37-45
- 3) Exodus 16:23-30
- 4) Acts 14:18
- 5) Hebrews 3:11-13, 18-19
- 6) Hebrews 4:1, 3-4
- 7) Genesis 2:2-3
- 8) Exodus 20:8-11
- 9) Exodus 31:13-14
- 10) Deuteronomy 5:12-15
- 11) Hebrews 4:4-7, 6, 8-9
- 12) Isaiah 11:10
- 13) Hebrews 4:10-13
- 14) Matthew 11:28-30

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- 1-Corinthians 10
- 1 Peter 2:10
- Ephesians 2:11-19
- 1-Corinthians 5:7-8
- Psalm 95
- Isaiah 11:9

Also referenced: Sermon Series:

From *The Holy Bible in It’s Original Order, A Faithful Version*:

- Appendix A: *Fourteen Rules of Bible Study*
- Appendix N: *Rome’s Challenge to Protestants*

Book: *Interlinear Hebrew-English Old Testament* by George Ricker Berry

FRC:bo

Transcribed: 3-7-11

Reformatted/Corrected: January/2017

The Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews XI

Signs of God's People

Fred R. Coulter

We want to review just a little bit, just so we understand very profoundly concerning the Sabbath. The Sabbath is a sign of God's people, always is. We'll see that again. However in addition to that, there are other signs that God gives which are important; in fact, take precedence over it.

I. First Sign—Keep the Commandments

Mark 12:29: "...Hear, O Israel. Our one God is *the* Lord, *the* Lord. And you shall love *the* Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.' This *is the* first commandment. And *the* second *is* like this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these" (vs 29-31). Matt. 22 said that 'on these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.'

- if you have the Sabbath without love, *you don't have God*
- if you have the Sabbath without understanding the grace of God, *you do not have it right*
- if you have the Sabbath and you use it as a means of *salvation by works* through your Sabbath-keeping, *you have it wrong*

Sabbath-keeping is required, so we don't want to put Sabbath-keeping as the #1 thing. Jesus also said:

John 14:15: "If you love Me, **keep the commandments—namely, My commandments.**" The condition is on us, not on God. Never does it say *if God loves the world*, or *if God loves you*.

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, but may have everlasting life."

Therefore, God's love for us will be constant ***IF*** we love Him and keep His commandments. If we do not, the wrath of God abides upon us. The wrath of God does not necessarily come with death and destruction and immediately.

II. Second Sign—Love One Another

I think within the Churches of God this is a great failing because we get caught up in the doctrinal wars. It is true we do need to have correct understanding of doctrine. False doctrine will lead you astray! But please understand this:

- *if you love God*, according to the first commandment, with all your heart, mind, soul and being
- *if you love your neighbor as yourself*, as Jesus said
- *if you love Christ* and keep His commandments

then you will come to the correct understanding of doctrine—not necessarily of prophecy, but of doctrine unto salvation.

John 13:34: "A new commandment..." This was not given before; and Jesus gave this to them on the Passover night, because He knew that instituting the New Covenant that things were going to change. This new commandment, please understand, does not wipe away all other commandments.

"...I give to you: **that you love one another in the same way that I have loved you, that is how you are to love one another**" (v 34).

This makes it especially difficult in the Church of God. God has given us a difficult proposition in it. It is easy to have camaraderie and join a club of like-minded people, and you become a Rotary, an Elk, whatever it is. *The hardest thing to do is to love someone not like you!*

III. Third Sign—Love Your Enemies

Always remember this; this is also one of the signs of God's people, in addition to the Sabbath, in addition to these other things:

Matthew 5:43: "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.'" Then He gives the hardest, hardest thing to do, which He knows is contrary to human nature.

- this takes the Spirit of God
- this takes understanding the plan of God
- this takes understanding of human nature to realize that many people do things that they don't even know what they are doing, even your enemies

Verse 44: "But I say to you, **love your enemies...**" Stephen did that. After he gave a tremendous witness before the Sanhedrin. They were so angry that they were gnashing their teeth, probably had broken teeth in their mouth as they took Stephen out and stoned him. What did he do? *He blessed them and said, 'Lord, lay not this to their charge.'* Then he died. So, he literally fulfilled it.

“...**bless those who curse you...**” (v 44). Why? *Vengeance belongs to God*, and He'll take care of it in the final analysis. Besides, maybe they're just filled with hate themselves that that is part of the curse that is upon them and you should pity them for the way that they are. It doesn't mean you have to be friends with them. It just means you don't hate them.

What about the 9/11 episode? God has the civil authorities that He says He's raised up and given the sword. He will use those to execute His vengeance. We can hate the deed, but truly, we ought to really feel sorry for those Arabs who have such a hateful religion that they live by the sword. Remember in *Fiddler on the Roof* when the young man came to the rabbi and he said, 'Rabbi, is there a blessing for the Czar?' He stroked his beard and thought a little while, and he said, 'Yes, my son, may the Lord bless him and keep him *far away* from us!' That's still loving your enemy.

To love your enemy means that you don't take up the sword and fight him. God will take care of it; *He will!* This is a tough one!

“...**do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who despitefully use you and persecute you**” (v 44). *That's hard to do!* The truth is being a true Christian is really a difficult proposition. Without the Holy Spirit of God and you growing in it, it's an impossible thing to do.

I would have to say that just like it was said of the kings of Israel of old when the enemies came up against them, 'We'll surrender to them, because the kings of Israel are compassionate.' That is true even of modern Israel today. We go in an we bomb Afghanistan—parts of it—to near oblivion, and those who say, 'we're on your side' we come in and 'hug and kiss them' and say we'll rebuild the whole place. The movie, *The Mouse that Roared*—a little island government about ready to go into bankruptcy and they didn't know where they were going to get the money, so they came up with a great idea: let's declare war on the United States. Let them invade and we'll repent and they'll come in and rebuild us and we'll have a great economy.

This is also a built-in, natural trait that God has given to most Israelites! Not Levi and Simeon, because they had the sword, but most Israelites, especially Joseph—Ephraim and Manasseh—and because of that we get 'simple-headed' and stupid at times and get taken advantage of. However, God would rather have you be kind and compassionate and be taken advantage of, than to be mean and hostile and curmudgeon and overbearing.

Verse 45: “So that you yourselves may be *the* children of your Father Who *is* in heaven...”

Then He gives a statement to help us to understand lest we get caught up in: God has called us and 'tu tu' to the rest of the world.

“...for He causes His sun to rise on *the* evil and on *the* good, and sends rain on *the* just and on *the* unjust. For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not the tax collectors...” (vs 45-46). He uses that because you know that all tax collectors are the most despised, hated, of any in the world; always, since the beginning of taxation.

“...practice the same *thing*? And if you salute your brethren only, what have you done *that is* extraordinary? Do not the tax collectors practice the same *thing*? Therefore, you shall be perfect, even as your Father Who *is* in heaven is perfect” (vs 46-48).

- that's the whole goal of overcoming and striving against sin
- that's the whole goal of the reason that God has called us, that we can practice this new commandment

Let's understand why it is more difficult within the Church of God. When we were in the world we could select our friends. What is the old saying, and you saw it from the time you entered into the sandbox: '*Birds of feather flock together and they love their own.*' You have little clichés and little gangs and so forth. I saw it when I was growing up.

I remember when I was in the third grade. I wanted to be one of those safety patrolmen and I could have on one of these little white harnesses that they had, and you have a badge on it and you stand in the corner and you've got a flag that you put out there to stop. They announced at school that they're going to choose the student patrol kids who could get out there and do that. Oh, I wanted that so bad! But, I wasn't one of the 'birds that flocked together.' So, it was a political thing. The son of the mayor got one. The son of the leading banker got another. The son of the principal of the high school got one. So, I got a real early lesson in partiality.

When we come into the Church of God, we do not have the selectivity or the sense of choosing our own, and we have the partiality of saying 'I like this person. I don't like that person.' We get a whole different mix, and yet, we have the commandment that we are to love each other as Christ has loved us. Here's why it's difficult within the Church of God, and it's more of a challenge to do so, and that's why we need the Spirit of God to do so.

1-Corinthians 1:26: “For you see your calling, brethren, that *there are* not many who are wise according to the flesh...”—are called. So, what

happens? *We have a lot of people who just are not well educated!* Those of us who have become well educated have had to work at it.

You've probably heard me tell the story of how I had to learn English. It goes back to 1953 when I made the 'wise decision' three months before graduation of high school to join the army. I joined for three years. Later I found out that I could have volunteered for the draft and only done two, but you see how smart I was. I wanted to be patriotic! I was RA [regular army] and even remember my number. They said to remember that serial number and never forget it.

In high school math and science were my strong forte. Of course, with sibling rivalry with my sister who was a year and half older than I, she was good in English and not good in mathematics. I determined I would be good in math and just sloughed along with English. Well, after I got out of the service and I decided the only way I could do anything was go to college, so I had the GI plan. I went to the College of San Mateo; it was a junior college at that time. I knew that I was very bad in reading, and I knew I was very bad in English. When I started going to San Mateo Jr. College I started at night. I knew I needed a running start and I was about 24-25 at the time.

I took public speaking, speed-reading, and when I started I could only read about 75 wpm—how's that for speed—huh? I finally got it up to where I could read 250 wpm, so that improve. Then the next semester I decided I knew I could not qualify for English 101, so I signed up for 'bone-head' English. They gave assignments: write a page on this and I would go home and I couldn't think of a thing. I'd walk back and forth, I didn't know how to write anything. Then they had a test that you would take. After six weeks of that I was hauled before Dr. Sharp—a German professor—and you talk about 'steely' eyes. You'd just tremble.

He looked at me with those eyes and said, 'How did you get in this class?' *I just signed up for it!* 'Your test scores are so bad that you do not even qualify for the English for the foreign born!' That's true! *What must I do?* 'You can stay in the class, but you know—he gave me a courtesy D-minus the first six weeks—you have to pass with a B-minus or you cannot continue in college.' I said *okay*. So, a woman (can't remember her name) ran a private school right close to where I lived. I went over to her school and said I've got a problem. She took me down to the teacher who taught 4th, 5th and 6th grade.

She wanted to know where I was in English, so she made me to do the thing I hated to do. She said to stand at the blackboard and write this sentence. I wrote it out. She said to diagram it.

Started out in the 6th grade level. Couldn't do it. We went down to the 5th grade level. Wrote another sentence. Diagram it. Which is subject and which is verb? Where's the preposition? What's the object of the preposition? *BLANK!* 4th grade—let's make this simple! Sure enough, I couldn't even do 4th grade. All right, 3rd grade. Here I am at 25, starting out English in the 3rd grade. I took private tutoring everyday after school and doing it before I went to work, too. I worked at night.

Needless to say, I got everything up. I got an A on my final exam in the writing and ended up with a B-minus for the course and passed. I can tell you, from experience, any education that I've had, has come the hard way! If you still see some typos in my letters or some misspellings, you will know that my English today may have improved a great deal. I remember when I first got my computer up and running. I think we had about 35-40 people on the mailing list and I brought the letter up and had Belinda read it, and it was so bad she said, 'Do you have 'spell check' on your computer?' I said, 'What's that?' I went home and sure enough it was there. What do you know! Lo and behold, spell check! That's why we need to understand. We don't very many PhDs, we don't very many experts in language and so forth. God intended that!

"...not many who are powerful..." (v 26)—political people. 'Would you do me a favor?' *Yes, I'll go talk to the City Council... Board of Supervisors... the Governor personally for you!*

"...not many who are highborn *among you*.... [No princes! No kings!] ...Rather, God has chosen the weak things of the world..." (vs 26-27). Brethren, *that's us!* I have to admit it's hard to accept, but it's true. Now you know why we make such foolish mistakes, sometimes more than just time-to-time. This also makes it difficult because we are in the Church together, and wherever you are this would be true:

If you were in the world and you had your choice, you would not choose that person to be your friend to love. So, God has given us a great project—hasn't He? It becomes more important that we learn to love each other and to love God than to just bang the hammer on the Sabbath, though the Sabbath is very important. I think if you just look at Judaism and see that they are very lacking in love, and that you can have all the words of God in your hand—which they don't; they only have the Old Testament; but nevertheless those commandments are there—*without love you have nothing!* I mean, look at Islam. That's a big problem. Everything they do is by *works of law*. When God calls us together and we assemble on the Sabbath, yes we are to keep the Sabbath; no doubt about it!

Brethren, if we don't have these other things, then we're going to be as futile as they are. That's why when we come together to meet in Sabbath services we have to love each other. We have to love each other and be concerned for each other when we're not assembled together. We have to set aside our own carnal peculiarities and our own carnal choices as to whom our friends are, because God says *He has called all these people* and they are the *friends of Christ*. Though we're foolish! Though we're weak!

"...so that He might put to shame the strong things" (v 27). With it He's going to do a marvelous thing, because if you went out to world rulers today and brought all the people of God together and said, 'Here we are we're going to rule the world.' He'd look out there at our motley crew and say, 'Where did you get these people? What school did you attend? What experience do you have, that you would presume to rule the world?' God is going to make it happen.

"...and God has chosen the weak things of the world so that He might put to shame the strong things. And the lowborn of the world, and the despised has God chosen—even the things that are counted as nothing—in order that He might bring to nothing the things that are" (vs 27-28). Always remember this: The tiniest virus can take down the strongest, most virulent person in the world.

Verse 29: "So that no flesh might glory in His presence." We're not going to go to God and say, 'God, I'm sure glad you recognize my talent. I know that You had to call me. How could You escape not calling me, God.' That's why Job went through what he went through. So that Job could not go up and say, 'God, I was perfect in the flesh and You were indebted to me to give me eternal life.' **NO! God is not indebted to any man!** That's why these are the things that are most important for us.

Verse 30: "But you are of Him in Christ Jesus, Who was made to us wisdom from God..." If you have the Word of God you know the true wisdom.

"...even righteousness..." (v 30)—right standing with God the Father in heaven above; direct access to God the Father through the blood of Christ into the Holy of Holies of the throne room in heaven above.

"...and sanctification... [you're set aside as Holy for God] ...and redemption... [through the power of the resurrection] ...so that, as it is written, 'The one who glories, let him glory in the Lord'" (vs 30-31).

This is why God has called us from everywhere, all different ages—young and old and

in between—weak and strong. Most of us today are weak, especially the 'rust belt' crew. Aging is not the problem; it's the rusting out. This will help you understand this commandment even more:

John 13:34 "A new commandment I give to you..." It's not a suggestion! It is not an idea! It is not something that's just good for you to do so that you would like to do it! *It's a commandment!*

"...that you love one another in the same way that I have loved you, that is how you are to love one another. By this shall everyone know that you are My disciples—if you love one another" (vs 34-35).

While we emphasize the Sabbath, Heb. 4 makes it absolutely crystal clear concerning the Sabbath—and we're here emphasizing it—let us not lose sight of the important things that need to be.

John 15:7: "**If** you dwell in Me..." Conditional! How do you dwell and remain in Christ?

John 14:15: "If you love Me, keep the commandments—namely, My commandments."

John 15:7: "If you dwell in Me and My words dwell in you..." In reference to the Sabbath, what does it say? *The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath!* Therefore, *the Son of man is even Lord of the Sabbath!* Those are part of the words of Christ, as well as all His other words—you have to add all of them.

"...you shall ask whatever you desire, and it shall come to pass for you" (v 7). We know other Scriptures which say

- in God's time
- in His will
- in His way

Verse 8: "In this is My Father glorified, that you bear much fruit..."

- of love
- of knowledge
- of understanding

"...so shall you be My disciples. As the Father has loved Me, I also have loved you; live in My love. If you keep My commandments, you shall live in My love; just as I have kept My Father's commandments and live in His love. These things I have spoken to you, in order that My joy may dwell in you, and *that* your joy may be full. This is My commandment: that you love one another, as I have loved you" (vs 8-12). He said it twice.

Verse 13: "No one has greater love than this: that one lay down his life for his friends. You are My friends, if you do whatever I command you" (vs

13-14).

When it's all said and done, when we get together as brethren, remember, everyone that is together and has the Spirit of God is a *friend of Christ!* He loves each one. We are to love each other and view each other as the very friends of Christ *in spite of our:*

- weaknesses
- faults
- difficulties
- obnoxiousness

But then it gives a challenge to each person to grow and overcome, and overcome the difficulties and failings that they have in their own lives, through Christ.

IV. Fourth sign—Live by Every Word of God

The final thing that shows that you are Christ's, is Deut. 8:3; Matt. 4:4; Luke 4:4—'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God shall man live.' All of those are signs.

V. Fifth Sign—Keep the Sabbaths

Now, we're going to look at the sign of the Sabbath. We have the Sabbath in its proper perspective. However, Satan likes to come along and say: 'If you have all of these things that I have just now covered, you don't need to keep the Sabbath.' **Nonsense!** The truth is, you cannot have all of the above unless you keep the Sabbath.

I want to cover something very important, and this is in the way of a little review about 'katapausis' and the Sabbath and *rest* and *ceasing* and things like this.

Exodus 31:12^[transcriber's correction]: "And the LORD spoke to Moses saying, 'Speak also to the children of Israel, saying, "Truly you shall keep **My Sabbaths**..."'" (vs 12-13).

In the Hebrew and the Greek it is both plural. The Greek being the Septuagint; the Hebrew being the received official Masoretic text. The word 'keep' here in both Hebrews and Greek means *to keep, to observe, to guard, to protect!* This gives a responsibility of something that is a result of the first things that we covered as the signs of the people of God. This is what we are to do. Satan is there to attack that as the first thing.

I was talking with someone the other day and they said that it's so sad to see people who have kept the Sabbath for years, and you go up to them and they say, 'we don't have to do that anymore.' Remember the example of two plus two plus two. If

you only have two plus two, you have four, but the real equation will be six. If you have the things that I enumerated the first time and you don't have the Sabbath and the Holy Days, then you're still deficient! So, here's he given a responsibility *to keep, to guard, to protect!*

"...for it... [*keeping, guarding and protecting*] ...is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations to know that I *am* the LORD Who sanctifies you" (v 13). Here's another key: **You cannot really know the Lord unless you keep the Sabbath and the Holy Days!**

Then He goes on reiterating about the weekly Sabbath. Let's come to Deuteronomy 5. The Sabbath commandment here is just a little bit different than the one in Exo. 20. Because they're a little different, does not mean that one cancels out the other. It means that they both go together. Remember, in understanding the Scripture, the principle of addition: The Scriptures go together and both apply. The theology of the world and their hatred toward the laws of God is that they have the principle of subtraction. They come along and say, 'Since this commandment is not the same as the one in Exo. 20, therefore, which one is right?' Since we don't know which one is right, are we really under obligation to do anything?' That's the carnal reasoning!

Deuteronomy 5:12: "Keep..." In both Hebrew and Greek it means *to keep, to observe, to guard, to protect!* The Spanish is *guard*.

"...the Sabbath Day to sanctify it as the LORD your God has commanded you. Six days you shall labor and do all your work. But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD your God..." (vs 12-14). God owns it! God has a great purpose for it:

- to put His presence in it
- to fellowship with you
 - ✓ through His Spirit
 - ✓ through His Word

When you read and study the Word of God, God is communicating to you. If you read the Word of God—which God has spoken—God has spoken to you. A lot of people say, 'If God would speak to me, I'd listen.' *He did!* That's important to understand. It belongs to God for a great and a marvelous purpose. That's what it's all about in Heb. 4:9, about entering into His *rest*.

"...*In it* you shall not do any work, you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your manservant, nor your maidservant, nor your ox, nor your donkey, nor any of your livestock, nor your stranger within your gates... [it does not say 'automobile'] ...so that your manservant and your maidservant may rest as

well as you. And remember... [we're to remember this, too, because we have the spiritual application of it] ...that you were a slave in the land of Egypt..." (vs 14-15).

Today we are to remember when we were out there in the world. As well intended as we may have been, or as bad and evil as we may have been, we were slaves to sin and Satan the devil. We are saved—by God's grace (Eph. 2), because He loves us—from our sins and trespasses in which we were dead, in which we were held in bondage in slavery.

"...and the LORD your God brought you out from there with a mighty hand and with an outstretched arm...." Likewise, the calling of God to understand the Truth and to receive the Holy Spirit of God is as much a miracle as coming out of Egypt with a strong hand. Even more so because God had to work in your mind to do something, which is the hardest place to work.

"...Therefore, the LORD your God commanded you to keep the Sabbath Day." (v 15).

Remember the Scripture that Jesus said in the Sermon on the Mount, Matthew 5:17: "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish, but to fulfill."

In *A Harmony of the Gospels* you can read the commentary on the Sermon on the Mount. Also see booklet: *How Did Jesus Fulfill the Law and the Prophets?*

Notice that Paul whom people say was an advocate of doing away with the laws and commandments of God. Here he is called to task. He was in Caesarea in prison, and Felix was the one who was the Roman curator at the time. Caesarea was one of those regional capitals, which was part of the Roman Empire. They were to have the Jews come down from Jerusalem to bring the charges against Paul, and Paul gave his defense.

Acts 24:12: "And neither did anyone find me disputing with anyone in the temple, nor inciting a tumult among the people—neither in the synagogues, nor in the city; neither can they prove *the things* of which they now accuse me. But I confess to you that according to the way, which they call heresy..." (vs 12-14). Believing in Christ as Savior; believing in forgiveness of sin through the blood of Christ, the grace of God.

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

(go to the next track)

We're going to look at something in the

Prophets. Paul said he believed this. There's a great message here:

Ezekiel 20:1: "And it came to pass in the seventh year, in the fifth *month*, the tenth day of the month..." This is the seventh year of the Babylonian captivity of the Jews.

"...that some of the elders of Israel came to ask of the LORD, and sat before me" (v 1). So, they came to Ezekiel and they're going to ask him, 'Why are we here?' How many sermons have we heard that started out with 'Why are you here?' When you've lost your home; you've lost your land; you've lost all that you possess; and now you're a prisoner of war in a prisoner of war camp. He had a little bit of freedom, so he came and sat before them.

Verse 2: "And the Word of the LORD came to me, saying." These are not the words of Ezekiel; *these are the words of God!* Like I've said before, If God said it and you read it, then God has spoken to you.

Verse 3: "Son of man, speak to the elders of Israel and say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD, "Have you come to inquire of Me?..."' Isn't that what people do? *The biggest mistake that people do is go to God and have Him approve their actions!*

"...As I live,' says the Lord GOD, 'I will not be inquired of by you.'" (v 3). Why do you come and question ME? God *is* God!

Verse 4: "'Will you judge *them*, son of man, will you judge them? Cause them to know the abominations of their fathers.' And say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD; "In the day that I chose Israel, and lifted up My hand to the seed of the house of Jacob, and made Myself known to them in the land of Egypt; when I lifted up My hand to them, saying, 'I *am* the LORD your God'"'"' (vs 4-5).

This ties right in with the first commandment, which is: *I AM the Lord your God which brought you out of the land of Egypt!* That is the first commandment; everything else flows from that. If you don't believe the first one, then you're picking and choosing of which ones you will observe, and that amounts to thievery and lawlessness, that you would create a religious system using the Scriptures partially and excluding the rest of the words of God. That's why it says that the 'mystery of iniquity or lawlessness does already work' (2-Thess.). **Remember:**

- there is prosperity in sin, and pleasure in sin for a season
- Satan would like to deceive you and have you happy and believing in your deception that you are right

What better condition?

- Satan told Jesus, 'If you bow down and worship me, I'll give you all the kingdoms of the world, for they're delivered unto me and I give it to whomsoever I will.'

Therefore—I won't say all—many of the surface blessings that come from a lawless religion, do not come from God! That's rather shocking! You need to understand that not all 'good' comes from God. There is a 'good' that comes from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, which then is the good that *seems right to a man, but the ends thereof are the way of death!*

He made it clear, v 6: "In the day *that* I lifted up My hand to them, to bring them out from the land of Egypt into a land that I had searched out for them... [and He blessed them] ...flowing *with* milk and honey, which *is* the glory of all lands" At that time:

- it was forested
- it was beautiful
- it was fertile
- it had streams
- it had valleys
- it had the best climate in the whole world

Down in what is called the Jordan Valley, that climate being anywhere from 1200 feet below sea level clear down to the Dead Sea, you have the best climate in the winter to where you can even grow melons. Wonderful land!

Verse 7: "Then I said to them, 'Let each man throw away the abominations of his eyes, and do not defile yourselves with the idols of Egypt....'"—which then are other religions and other gods. And today, what is the greatest fascination of archeology; one of the greatest fascinations? *Egyptology*; the Egyptian pyramids, temples, mummies. They found out a lot about it. I just saw one the other day. Two of the most common diseases of Egypt were arthritis and hardening of the arteries. Nothing's new under the sun, and they had organic food!

Revelation 11:8: "And their bodies *will lie* in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified." That is Jerusalem! The long and the short of it is, nothing very much has changed since the exodus.

Ezekiel 20:7: "Then I said to them, 'Let each man throw away the abominations of his eyes, and do not defile yourselves with the idols of Egypt. I *am* the LORD your God.'.... [emphatically, the same as the first commandment] ...But they rebelled

against Me and would not hearken to Me. They did not each man throw away the abominations of their eyes, nor did they forsake the idols of Egypt. And I said, 'I will pour out My fury against them to fulfill My anger against them in the midst of the land of Egypt.' But I worked for My name's sake..." (vs 7-9).

Because He promised Abraham, God would not pollute His name. If God promises, He cannot lie, and He told Abraham that it would be so, which was not conditioned upon the behavior of his descendants. Therefore, since it was not conditioned on the behavior of his descendants, He promised He would do it, and He did it, but He also then punished the descendants for their behavior. He did not deprive them of the blessing that He promised, but when they didn't do as He commanded then He punished them.

Verse 9: "But I worked for My name's sake that it should not be profaned before the heathen..." Moses said it to the Lord. Remember when they rebelled in making the golden calves? Remember the weakness of Aaron? What did Moses say? After God said, 'Leave Me alone and I'll destroy them all and raise up a great nation of you and fulfill My promise.' Moses said to God, 'Lord, the heathen will say that You brought them out here in the wilderness to kill them.' God repented of that judgment. God said, 'All right, I won't do it.'

Verse 9: "But I worked for My name's sake that it should not be profaned before the heathen among whom they *were*, *for* I made Myself known to them in their eyes, by bringing them out of the land of Egypt."

This was a world-known thing! Egypt lay in such desolation and ruin that it was 400 years before they recovered from that. It was known! Remember when they were on the other side of the Jordan and ready to cross? All the heathen were afraid and they remembered what was done in Egypt and they said, 'Oh, it's going to happen to us.' That's what it's talking about here.

Verse 10: "And I caused them to go out from the land of Egypt, and brought them into the wilderness. And I gave them My statutes and showed them My ordinances, which *if* a man do, he shall even live in them. And also **I gave them My Sabbaths...**" (vs 10-12)—plural—so the Sabbath and Holy Days are gifts from God!

In the New Testament a 'gift' is called *grace*. Comes from the word *grace*. A lot of people don't like to say *grace* and *Sabbath* go together, but they do! If it is a gift that God has given, and in that day God puts His presence to fellowship with you, which is a gift; and you have the Holy Spirit of God,

which is a gift; and it's all grace, the way that you fulfill the Sabbath is through the *grace of God while you keep it!* They're not contradictory one to another. Paul said, 'Do we, through grace, abolish the Law? GOD FORBID! We establish the Law.' So likewise, with the Sabbath, *you establish the Sabbath through the grace of God because it is His gift!* Remember: *He rested on the Sabbath and was refreshed!*

That's so that when we rest on the Sabbath and we become before God to learn of His Word, to learn of His way... I'll tell you what, if we don't keep the Sabbath every week, we're all just carnal enough that we begin losing it a little bit, a little bit every Sabbath. That's why we have the Sabbath! If we come to God on the Sabbath Day:

- knowing it's a gift
- knowing that we have His Holy Spirit
- knowing that He wants to fellowship with us
- knowing that He wants to bless us
- knowing that He wants to give us the way of salvation on this day so we can understand it

therefore, it becomes one of the most important tools of God

- to keep us in the faith
- to keep us in the love of God
- to keep us focused on His plan and purpose

That's why it says in Hebrews 4:9: "There remains, therefore, **Sabbath-keeping** for the people of God." When they cease doing that and cease looking to Christ—what happens? *He warned them that they were committing the unpardonable sin* (Heb. 6).

Ezekiel 20:12: "And also I gave them My Sabbaths **to be a sign between Me and them**... [We already covered the other signs that were in addition to it for the New Testament/New Covenant.] ...that *they* might know that I *am* the LORD who sanctifies them."

A very important thing to understand. Howbeit in 1-John they may not have been all the way into Sunday-keeping, but starting into it, therefore, he gives this warning. Remember, even there it says you're going to know the Lord, because of the Sabbath.

1-John 2:3: "And by this *standard we know* that **we know** Him..." You know it! That's why

- in the process of conversion
- in the process of growing and overcoming

- in the process of the trials that we go through

—which we all go through—we come *to know that we know!* It's one thing to say, 'I know' and still maybe have a doubt. It's another thing to say that *you know that you know*—no doubt! Total conviction! Total truth, because you *believe God* and *believe in God*.

Verse 3: "And by this *standard* we know that we know Him: **if** we keep His commandments. 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, truly in this one the love of God is being perfected. By this *means* we know that we are in Him" (vs 3-5)—which goes right back to where we started.

Verse 6: "Anyone who claims to dwell in Him **is obligating** himself also to walk even as He Himself walked."

- Did Jesus ever break the Sabbath? *No!*
- Did He ever sin? *No!*
- What is sin?
- *Sin is the transgression of the Law!*

New Testament doctrine, written by John, agrees perfectly with this concerning the Sabbath:

Ezekiel 20:12: "...that *they* might know that I *am* the LORD who sanctifies them. But the house of Israel rebelled against Me in the wilderness... [we covered all of that in Heb. 3] ...they did not walk in My statutes... [right under the very nose of God] ...and they despised My ordinances, which *if* a man does, he shall even live in them. And they greatly polluted My Sabbaths. And I said, 'I will pour out My fury on them in the wilderness to destroy them'" (vs 12-13).

God had an obligation to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and an obligation for His name's sake to the rest of the world.

Just like I brought out at the beginning with us. As brethren within the Church, what we are as a people, we're to love each other and we're stuck with each other. So likewise—'God, because of His promises, was stuck with Israel in their rebellion—which Moses said, 'You were rebelling from the day that I knew you.' That's quite a relationship. Does God love His people in spite of everything? *Yes!* But, will He correct them for their sins? *Yes!*

Verse 14: "But I worked for My name's sake, so that it should not be profaned before the heathen in whose sight I brought them out. And also I lifted up My hand to them in the wilderness, *and swore* that *I* would not bring them into the land

which I had given *them*—flowing *with* milk and honey, the glory of all lands—because they despised My judgments and walked not in My statutes; and they polluted My Sabbaths; for their heart went after their idols. Nevertheless My eye spared them—from destroying them; nor did I make an end of them in the wilderness. But I said to their children in the wilderness...” (vs 14-18).

Remember, they wandered in the wilderness 40 years and their carcasses were strewn all over the desert and buried. The ones 20-years-old and downward were able to live and go into the ‘promised land.’ Here He is telling them in the wilderness, “...‘Do not walk in the statutes of your fathers, nor observe their judgments, nor defile yourselves with their idols’” (v 18).

God had to put up with an awful lot; He puts up with an awful lot. I don’t remember the exact time-setting of the division of the ten tribes of Israel after Solomon died, during the days of Jeroboam and Rehoboam, but God put up with the paganism of the ten tribes for well over 200 years before He sent them off into captivity. He put up with their paganism right in the wilderness.

Amos 5:21: “I hate, I despise your feast days, and I will take no delight in your solemn assemblies.”

Why? *Because they’re not solemnized to God!* God didn’t call for them. Those are not the ones that God authorized. These are by ‘do-gooders’ who are going to do their thing and try and force it down God’s throat, which He won’t do.

Verse 22: “Though you offer Me burnt offerings and your grain offerings, **I will not accept them.** Nor will I regard the peace offerings of your fat animals.”

If the heart was not right, if it was not according to the way that God said, then it was unacceptable! It fits into the same category as the sacrifice between Abel and Cain. Cain did it his way, to say, ‘God, You must accept it; look how good I am.’ And God said, ‘No, sin lies at the door.’ Abel did it according to the way that God said and he was righteous. Likewise, here, He says, ‘No, I’m not going to listen to it.’

Verse 23: “Take the noise of your songs away from Me; for I will not hear the melody of your harps. But let judgment roll down like waters, and righteousness like a mighty stream. Have you offered sacrifices and offerings to Me **forty years in the wilderness**, O house of Israel?” (vs 23-25).

Remember how I said in going through Stephen’s statement that the tabernacle had to be removed out of the camp because of the sins of the

people. And that there were Sabbath services with Moses and those who worshipped God, and there were these services with those people who rebelled. Listen, here it is right here. Do we have 40 years? *Yes, in the wilderness!* That’s what it says, in the wilderness for 40 years.

Verse 26: “But now you have carried the tabernacle of your Moloch and Chiun, your images, the star of your gods which you made for yourselves.... [which they never gave up] ...So I will cause you to go into exile beyond Damascus,’ says the LORD, Whose name *is* the God of hosts” (vs 26-27).

We have, likewise, the same thing here in Ezek. 20 in the seventh year of their captivity. In the fifth month on the tenth day, they came before Ezekiel to find out: ‘What’s the Word of the Lord? When are we going to get out of this captivity? We don’t like it.’ So, this is what He said:

Ezekiel 20:19: “I *am* the LORD your God.... [again relating to the first commandment] ...Walk in My statutes, and keep My ordinances, and **do them**, and keep My Sabbaths Holy; and they shall be a sign between Me and you, that you may know that I *am* the LORD your God.... [the Bible talks about He held out His hand to a gainsaying people] ...But the children rebelled against Me....” (vs 19-21).

There are certain events that happen that become so mind-impressing that you wouldn’t forget, such as when we had the earthquake here in 1988. Well, there was an earthquake that took place after the golden calf, and all of those that were on God’s side came over to Moses, and the earth opened up and swallowed those who did not come over to Moses’ side, for their golden calf and religious activities that they had of which Aaron was greatly to be blamed in it. You would think that if you were standing there and you witnessed that, that that would be enough for you to hear and fear that God means what He says. But it didn’t impress them.

Verse 21: “But the children rebelled against Me. They did not walk in My statutes, nor keep My ordinances to do them—the ordinances which, *if* a man do, he shall even live in them. And they polluted My Sabbaths...” Listen, when you pollute the Sabbath it is an abomination and you pollute God’s name.

“...and I said I would pour out My fury on them, to fulfill My anger against them in the wilderness” (v 21). You talk about long-suffering!

Since you have trials, and some of them are pretty tough to go through, we’ve never asked:

- Does God have trials?
- Was this not a trial for God in dealing with the children of Israel?
- Was it not as frustrating to Him as some of your trials are to you?

He had His presence there in the pillar of cloud by day and fire by night and they still didn't believe. Seeing is not believing! When God gets mad, listen! God says, 'Vengeance belongs to Me.'

Verse 22: "Nevertheless, I withdrew My hand and worked for My name's sake, that it should not be polluted in the eyes of the heathen, in whose eyes I brought them out. I also lifted up My hand to them in the wilderness, *swearing* that I would scatter them among the heathen and scatter them throughout the lands" (vs 22-23)—which He eventually did.

It is true to this day, especially for the Jews who are hissing and cursing to this day, until they repent and accept Jesus Christ—yes, Jesus Christ!—that shall continue. I think the final holocaust is going to be worst than what Hitler had. In that we know they will repent!

This is a very key, important verse to understand, because this is where Sunday-keepers go to say *we don't have to keep the Sabbath*.

Verse 24: "Because they had not done My ordinances, but had despised My statutes and had polluted My Sabbaths, and their eyes were after their fathers' idols." Today, that's this way:

- Once a Catholic always a Catholic. My mother and father were Catholics and it's good enough for them, it's good enough for me.
- Once a Buddhist always a Buddhist. My mother and father were Buddhists, therefore, it's good enough for me.
- Once a Muslim always a Muslim, and my mother and father were Muslim and it's good enough for me.
- Once a Protestant; my mother and father were Protestants and it's good enough for me.

Went after their idols!

Verse 25: "Wherefore I also gave them **over to their own** statutes that were not good, and *their own* ordinances which they could not live. And I defiled them in their own gifts..." (vs 25-26)—meaning *He gave them up to their pagan religions* and let them suffer the consequences of it.

That's what He did. This does not mean that He forsook His Sabbath as those who believe in Sunday-keeping try and twist and turn it.

"...in that they caused all that opened the

womb to pass through *the fire*..." (v 26). They went so far as to worshipping Molech and passing their children through the fire. In other words, the firstborn were sacrificed as a burnt offering.

"...that I *might* make them desolate, to the end that they might know that I *am* the LORD" (v 26). This is meaning: Through the experience of this horrible sin, they will come to absolutely abhor it so much that they would repent! In that repentance they might know and understand that God's way is supreme and not their way.

Verse 27: "Therefore, son of man, speak to the house of Israel and say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD, "Yet in this your fathers have blasphemed Me, in that they have acted treacherously against Me. When I had brought them into the land, which I lifted up My hand to give to them, then they saw every high hill, and all the thick trees, and they offered their sacrifices there. And there they provoked *Me* with their offerings. There also they made their sweet savor, and poured out their drink offerings.... [that is to other gods] ...And I said to them, 'What *is* the high place to which you go?' And its name is called High Place to this day.'" Therefore say to the house of Israel, 'Thus says the Lord GOD, "Are you defiled in the same way as your fathers? And do you commit whoredoms after their abominations? For when you offer your gifts, when you make your sons to pass through the fire, you defile yourselves with all your idols, even to *this* day. And shall I be inquired of by you, O house of Israel? *As I live*," says the Lord GOD, "I will not be inquired of by you"' (vs 27-31).

- You're not going to come and question Me!
- I've done all of this!
- I've been gracious!
- I've been good!
- I've been kind!
- I forebear!

Verse 32: "'And what comes into your mind shall not come to pass at all—in that you say, 'We will be like the heathen, like the families of the countries, to serve wood and stone.'"

That is a prophecy we can carry unto this day, that we'll have a great one-world religion where we all get along.

Verse 33: "'As I live,' says the Lord GOD, 'surely with a mighty hand, and with a stretched out arm, and with fury poured out, I will reign over you'" (v 33). Eventually it's going to be. Finally they will repent.

Verse 43: "'And there... [when He finally brings them out of captivity] ...you shall remember your ways and all your doings in which you have

been defiled. And you shall loathe yourselves in your own sight for all your evils, which you have committed. And **you shall know that I am the LORD** when I deal with you for My name's sake, not according to your wicked ways nor according to your corrupt doings, O house of Israel,' says the Lord GOD." (vs 43-44). They're going to know then!

We've covered enough of Hebrews 4:1-9. Go back through the study paper. Why do we have so much Sunday-keeping? I was talking to a man who said he spent some time in Israel and Jerusalem and he says that Jerusalem is a terrible city. He says to think of this: Friday the Muslims take off, so this section of the city has no business. Saturday the Jews take off and they close everything down in their section of the city. On Sunday the Catholics and Orthodox have their day and they close down their shops and businesses. So the truth is in Jerusalem you really have only four good shopping days of the week. When you come to Friday, if you're in the Jewish section you've got about a half a day.

Ezekiel 22:25: "There is a conspiracy of her prophets in her midst, like a roaring lion tearing the prey. They have devoured souls; they have taken the treasure and precious things; they made many widows in her midst. Her priests have done violence to My law and have profaned My Holy things. They have put no difference between the Holy and the profane..." (vs 25-26).

All days are the same! What day do you worship on? *I worship every day*. What Sabbath is for you? *Everyday is a Sabbath for me; my Sabbath is in the Lord*. Not so!

"...and have not taught the difference between the unclean and the clean, and **they have hidden their eyes from My Sabbaths, and I am profaned among them**" (v 26). That's what happens.

Someone comes up in a Sunday-keeping church and says, 'I've been reading the Bible, what about the Sabbath?' *Don't worry about it! Christ did away with it! We are in the Sabbath-rest of God* and Christ has kept all the commandments for you. All you have to do is love God and be good. Whatever you feel is good, *that's good*. Whatever you feel is right, because you love God, *that's got to be right*.

Well, that's not what Hebrews 4:9 says: **"There remains, therefore, Sabbath-keeping for the people of God.** For the one who has entered into His rest... [Sabbath-keeping] ...he also has ceased from his works... [on the Sabbath] ...just as God *did* from His own *works*. We should be diligent therefore to enter into that rest..." (vs 9-11).

Weekly Sabbath, and also can pertain to the Kingdom of God ultimately. But if you don't diligently enter into the rest of the Sabbath, you aren't going to be in the Kingdom of God!

"...lest anyone fall after the same example of disobedience" (v 11)—which we just read of in Ezek. 20.

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*

Scriptural References:

- 1) Mark 12:29-31
- 2) John 14:15
- 3) John 3:16
- 4) John 13:34
- 5) Matthew 5:43-48
- 6) 1 Corinthians 1:26-31
- 7) John 13:34-35
- 8) John 15:7
- 9) John 14:15
- 10) John 15:7-14
- 11) Exodus 31:12-13
- 12) Deuteronomy 5:12-15
- 13) Matthew 5:17
- 14) Acts 24:12-14
- 15) Ezekiel 20:1-7
- 16) Revelation 11:8
- 17) Ezekiel 20:7-12
- 18) Hebrews 4:9
- 19) Ezekiel 20:12
- 20) 1 John 2:3-6
- 21) Ezekiel 20:12-18
- 22) Amos 5:21-27
- 23) Ezekiel 20:19-33, 43-44
- 24) Ezekiel 22:25-26
- 25) Hebrews 4:9-11

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Matthew 22
- Deuteronomy 8:3
- Matthew 4:4
- Luke 4:4
- Exodus 20
- Ephesians 2
- Hebrews 6

Also referenced:

- Book: *A Harmony of the Gospels* by Fred R. Coulter
- Booklet: *How Did Jesus Fulfill the Law and the Prophets*
- Reference Paper: *Hebrews Study 4:1-9*

FRC: bo
Transcribed: 3-7-11
Reformatted/Corrected: January/2017

The Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews XII The Operation of God's Grace & The High Priesthood of Jesus Christ

(Chapters 4-5)
Fred R. Coulter

We just finished a special study on Hebrews 4:9-10, and I just want to mention some things concerning the Sabbath and grace, and the Sabbath and faith. It's very important for us to understand. Protestants believe in a form of grace that leads to lawlessness. ***God has a form of grace that leads to love and obedience!*** There's a vast difference. You cannot love God if you don't keep His commandments. Therefore, what makes the Protestants think that you cannot have Sabbath-keeping and grace at the same time? The truth is, Sabbath-keeping and grace go hand-in-hand.

Here is something that we need to realize and emphasize in everything that we do, Romans 3:31: "Are we, then, abolishing law through faith? **MAY IT NEVER BE!** Rather, **we are establishing the Law.**" Why do you establish law through grace? *Then you understand the full purpose of the Law!*

Let's use the example of the Sabbath. The command is 'Remember the Sabbath day to keep it Holy, for in six days the Lord made the heaven and earth and sea and all things that are therein, and He rested on the seventh day and blessed and sanctified the seventh day. Therefore, you shall rest and not do any work in it.'

Keeping the Sabbath from sundown to sundown is a physical aspect of the law of Sabbath-keeping. Resting on the Sabbath is a physical aspect of keeping the Sabbath. Everything else is an operation of grace. Why is that? What is grace? *Grace is the first expression of God's love toward us through the things that He has provided for us!* He gave the Sabbath Day as a gift, which means that a gift is grace. He made the operation of the Sabbath Day to be an *operation of grace*. The only operation of law is from sundown to sundown and to rest. The rest of it is the *operation of God's grace*.

We will see why it is an *operation of grace* and what it is that God has done, and what it is that He wants us to do today. Just like all the rest of creation that is enumerated there in Gen. 1 that God did—everything that He created on each different day was to be perpetuated in its kind, after its kind from that time down through however long it is until God completes His plan and New Jerusalem comes down out of heaven to the earth. All the animals

were to reproduce after their kind; all the birds after their kind; the fish after their kind; human beings after their kind—and human beings were made in the image of God!

The reason that God made us in His image is so that we can enter into His Family, as we know. I'm just summarizing some of these things right now. God wants to have a special day where He would put His presence. Originally, the presence of God with Adam and Eve was direct, together. You cannot say that they were not in the gracious presence of God. God made Himself in a form—not with His glory, not with His power, not with His splendor—which Adam and Eve could see Him and talk to Him and they did (Gen. 2-3); He especially created the Sabbath Day for that operation of grace, that God can fellowship with His creation, mainly man!

Genesis 2:1: "Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them." All the physical creation was done. By the way, they all operate by law—don't they? *Yes, they do!*

Verse 2: "And by *the beginning* of the seventh day God finished His work which He had made. And He rested on the seventh day from all His work, which He had made. And God blessed the seventh day..." (vs 2-3).

This blessing was to be a continuous blessing through all time, just like the creation of everything that He did and He said, and He blessed them and told them to be fruitful and multiply, was to be for all time as long as the creation in this form existed. He blessed the seventh day and in blessing it and sanctifying it—that is making it Holy—He made it Holy with His bodily presence for Adam and Eve when He set aside the time that is Holy. In effect, created it! This then was for the act of grace that He could fellowship with mankind whom He had made.

"...and sanctified it because on it He rested from all His work which God had created and made" (v 2). Does God need to rest in the sense that He's worn out from doing His work as compared to human beings? If you put in a heavy day's labor, you're tired; you're worn out. You want to rest; you want to sleep. ***God never wears out! God is spiritual!*** So, even though He rested, and even

though it said He was refreshed (in another place) *God created the Sabbath for man!* Jesus said, 'The Sabbath was made **for** man'—meaning *mankind* from that time all the way through—and not man for the Sabbath.' Therefore, 'the Son of man is Lord of the Sabbath Day.' Look at all the things that Jesus did on the Sabbath Day:

- to heal
- to teach
- to bring them the Word of God

*All of these were an **act of grace** on the Sabbath Day:*

- to bring them the Truth of God
- to bring them the love of God
- to heal them
- to forgive them their sins
- to show them God's way
- to bring salvation to them

All of that is an **act of grace!**

So, when we keep the Sabbath Day today, it is literally fulfilling the grace portion of the Sabbath. Remember, if anyone says that you keep the Sabbath because the Law says, in the fourth commandment: 'remember the Sabbath, to keep it Holy'; the function after the Sabbath, after it's defined as law is an *operation of grace!* You can apply the same thing to all the commandments of God. 'You shall have no other gods before Me.' And if you have no other gods before the true God then God's grace comes upon you. 'You shall not make any graven image of any likeness of any kind, of anything in heaven above or in the earth beneath, and shall not bow down to worship them; because God is a jealous God.'

If He's the Creator, then anything that He has created cannot represent God. So then, there's a penalty that comes from breaking the Law, and you are *exiled from grace*, because God is a jealous God and brings a 'punishment to the third and fourth generation of those that hate Him. But unto thousands who love Me and keep My commandments.'

Love and commandment-keeping are also an extension of grace!

- Can you keep the commandments of God through the grace of God? *Yes, you can!*

You can keep them in a way that is spiritual. You can keep them in a way that is with understanding.

- Are you not blessed for honoring father and mother, as He says, 'that your days

may be long on the earth'?

- Is that not a blessing?
- If it is a blessing, is it not grace from God?
- *No question about it!*
- How about 'you shall not commit murder'?
- Is that not a blessing and grace to the society?
- *Look at the societies where they have nothing but murder!*

Chicago, Illinois, had the highest rate of murder of any city in the United States; that's a hodge-podge of Babylon and predominately Catholic, by the way. It's also the home of Louis Farrakhan and the Islamic nation. It was also the place where they had the Parliament of the World's Religions. It's also heavily laced with a lot of Mafia. Because they have more murders, is Chicago a gracious place to live in? *NO!* Certain sections you wouldn't even want to venture into. You can apply that to any city, anywhere, any society, any people, anytime in history down through time.

You can go right on with the rest of the commandments and you come to the tenth commandment: 'You shall not covet.' When there is not covetousness, then you have honesty and truth, respect of private property, which then is a gracious blessing from God. When God said in Deut. 28 that if you will '*listen to keep all My commandments you will be blessed*':

- *a blessing comes* from the grace of God
- *a cursing comes* because we do not keep the commandments of God

Let's apply this to the Sabbath Day.

Let's see the real reason why God, now today, wants us to keep the Sabbath with the operation of grace, through His Spirit. To worship Him ***in Spirit and in Truth*** is an *operation of grace*. We need to understand that. It's interesting how John starts 1-John, and this is really profound for us to understand.

1-John 1:1: "That which was from *the* beginning..." There are three places where it talks about the beginning of the creation: Genesis, Gospel of John and 1-John; then Mark talks about the beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

"...that which we have heard, that which we have seen with our own eyes, that which we observed for ourselves..." (v 1)—seeing Him. Of course, John was one of the three that saw Him in the transfiguration on the mount.

"...and our own hands handled... [after He was resurrected] ...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 we are reporting to you in order that you also may have fellowship with us; for the fellowship—indeed, our fellowship—is with the Father and with His own Son Jesus Christ" (vs 1-3).

Fellowship becomes *an operation of grace*. The only problem is, too many churches turn it into an operation of socializing. If you put getting together with people, your friends and those that you know, before worshipping God and serving God and keeping the Sabbath and doing it in grace, then your fellowship can become in vain because the true fellowship doesn't come just with each other. The true fellowship comes first from God the Father and Jesus Christ and then each other.

"...indeed, our fellowship—is with the Father and with His own Son Jesus Christ" (v 3). So, when you keep the Sabbath as an operation of grace, because God has put His presence in it with His Spirit, that's why it becomes very important that on the Sabbath Day that you *pray*, that you *study*, that you use this day as a *day of*:

- grace
- forgiveness
- thanksgiving
- drawing close to God

That's why God gave the Sabbath Day. Also, you can apply it to the Holy Days, because *the Holy Days show the operation of God* beginning with the Church and clear on into the salvation of the whole world as you come clear on down to the Last Great Day. It's really quite a thing that you understand it.

Let's remember what it says: 'If you're Christ's then you're Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise.' When God called Abraham out of the land of Ur and told him to go into the land where he would go, and God blessed him and 'in you shall all the nations of the world be blessed. Those that bless you I will bless and those that curse you I will curse.' God gave grace to Abraham to begin with.

We know that Abraham obeyed God. We know that he kept His commandments, His statutes, His laws. He obeyed His voice and His charge. Grace does not in any way imply a lawlessness. It implies a complete *spiritual* understanding of the laws of God. You *establish the Law* because you desire to do it rather than the children of Israel who were disobedient and gainsaying or contradicting.

That's exactly what Israel does to this very day. They read the Scriptures and they contradict God.

Let's see about Abraham, Romans 4:1: "What then shall we say *that* our father Abraham has found with respect to *the* flesh? For if Abraham was justified by works, he has a basis for boasting, but not before God" (vs 1-2). Please understand this, it's very important to realize: ***Justification only comes by believing in Christ and believing God!***

When it says there in Gen. 15 that Abraham believed God and it was counted as righteousness for him, that does not mean it's a substitute for keeping the commandments of God. That righteousness is the right standing of God, which is called *justification*. If you don't keep the Sabbath *spiritually* from the point of view of grace, as we're covering today, then all your Sabbath-keeping can be in vain, because you're missing the purpose of Sabbath-keeping. If you don't believe that just get the *Code of Jewish Law* and read all of their laws concerning *their* laws for Sabbath-keeping.

Verse 3: "For what does the Scripture say? 'And Abraham believed God, and it was imputed to him for righteousness.' Now, to the one who works, the reward is not reckoned according to grace; rather, *it is reckoned* as a debt" (vs 3-4).

This is very easy to understand, very simple. If you are hired by someone to work and they say, 'If you work for me I will pay you \$10/hr. Fair enough?' *Fair enough*. 'You work 8-5 with an hour off for lunch.' *Fair enough*. Then at the end of the week he owes you, as a debt, \$400 for your work. Now, if he doesn't pay you, you can take him to court and get your \$400, provided he doesn't declare bankruptcy between now and then.

When you have belief in God... Notice it said that ***he believed God!*** There's a vast difference in believing that there is a God—because even the demons do and tremble—and believing God! If you believe God you're going to do what God says! It was counted to him for righteousness. In other words, by believing God, you're put in right standing with Him, and this applies to the sacrifice of Christ. You believe that your sins are forgiven upon repentance and the application of the blood of Christ for the remission of your sins. You believe that! ***That is an operation of grace***, because it is the work of the Spirit by repentance. It's the work of belief by the heart and mind, and you are justified by that.

Verse 6 also shows repentance: "Even as David also declares the blessedness of the man to whom God imputes righteousness **separate from**

works...[‘without’ in the *King James* and is a very improper translation] ...‘Blessed are *those* whose transgressions are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is *the* man to whom *the* Lord will not impute *any* sin’” (vs 6-8).

This shows the operation of grace and forgiveness, and then in believing God a desire to love and serve God and do the things that are pleasing in His sight. All of that is *an operation of grace*, and that’s what God wants the Sabbath to be.

So, all of those that say that if you keep the Sabbath you have fallen from grace, that is a false statement! If you keep the Sabbath and worship God in Spirit and Truth and believe God and are justified by the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, the Sabbath Day—through the Spirit of God and the Word of God—becomes an *operation of grace*!

- God created the day for that!
- He fellowships with us on that day!
- He puts His presence in that day!
- He gives us understanding of His Word on that day!

In many cases we learn more on the Sabbath than we do studying the Bible during the week. That comes about because of God’s presence and God’s Spirit because He’s fellowshipping with us. If we approach the Sabbath from that point of view:

- the whole keeping of the Sabbath
- the whole benefit of the Sabbath
- the whole understanding of the Sabbath

becomes so much greater.

Let’s see it shows something very important. Here, in describing on how to keep the Sabbath, God is really describing the operation of keeping the Sabbath as an *operation of grace*. There are a few things we need to do: Keep it from sundown to sundown and rest. There are other things we need to do to keep the Sabbath Holy:

Isaiah 58:13: “If you turn your foot away from the Sabbath... [from trampling on it. In other words, using it for your own means] ...*from* doing your own desires on My Holy day, and call the Sabbath a delight, the Holy of the LORD, honorable; and shall honor Him, not doing your own ways, nor pursuing your own desires... [business—after all, the Sabbath should be a pleasure] ...nor speaking *your own* words”—meaning:

- you speak the words of Christ
- you encourage and fellowship with each other in the Word of God
- talk about how your days in the week have

gone and how God has helped you

- encourage one another to love God
- be loving and forgiving

All of these things are very important in Sabbath-keeping.

Here’s the key. When you do that and keep the Sabbath as an *operation of grace*, remember as we started, *grace establishes the Law*!

Verse 14: “Then you shall delight yourself in the LORD; and I will cause you to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed you with the inheritance of Jacob your father, for the mouth of the LORD has spoken it.”

In other words, you will have your inheritance with God and with Christ. That’s what it’s talking about—Sunday-keeping {note sermon series: *Refuting Sunday-Keeping* and *Holy Sabbath*}. Since we’re here in Hebrews and we’re just about concluded with *Sabbath-keeping for the people of God* we want to finish it up with the *operation of the Sabbath*, which is really an *operation of grace*.

God promises that He will bring you into that inheritance. Let’s look at another thing that happens when you worship God in *Spirit and in Truth* on the Sabbath Day. Let’s see what happens. I tell you what, I’ve experienced this over and over again through the years, and especially on the Sabbath Day. There are many times when I have sermon prepared and I’ve spent a lot of time doing it, that I would come to Sabbath services and something will come up, then God will inspire me to speak on something entirely different, I have not even prepared. Also, give us an understanding of things that we have never understood before.

I remember in particularly the series on Daniel/Revelation where I did the chart. The first time I did the chart I just did it on a blackboard at services. It didn’t dawn on me until the Sabbath Day driving to services. Here is what God will do. Here’s the important thing that is a function of the Sabbath. This functions all the time, but on the Sabbath particularly so, because God puts His presence in the Sabbath and His Spirit in the Sabbath, so then on the Sabbath Day we get the teaching and the inspiration and the edification that God wants us to have.

1-Corinthians 2:7: “Rather, we speak *the* wisdom of God in a mystery... [which the world can’t understand] ...*even* the hidden *wisdom* that God foreordained before the ages unto our glory, which not one of the rulers of this world has known (for if they had known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory); but according as it is

written, *“The eye has not seen, nor the ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him”* (vs 7-9).

Loving God truly and keeping His commandments is also an *operation of grace*.

Verse 10: “But God has revealed *them* to us by His Spirit...” This is what God's Spirit does:

- when we study God's Word on the Sabbath
- when we come together and ask for God's blessing
- when we ask God to open our minds
- when we come together and ask God to give us understanding of ‘Your Word’

Like David said in Psalm 119:18: “Open my eyes, so that I may behold wondrous things out of Your Law.”

God reveals them in particularly on the Sabbath Day, and He reveals them to those who worship Him in Spirit and in Truth on any day of the week; at any time.

1-Corinthians 2:10: “But God has revealed *them* to us by His Spirit, for the Spirit searches all things—even the deep things of God.” That's what God wants us to be perfected in today; the deeper things of God, to understand the things of God.

Verse 11: “For who among men understands the things of man except *by* the spirit of man, which *is* in him? In the same way also, the things of God no one understands except *by* the Spirit of God. Now, we have not received the spirit of the world, but the Spirit that *is* of God, so that we might know the things graciously given to us by God” (vs 11-12)—which is clearly this:

If you have the spirit of the world you cannot understand the things of the Spirit of God, because they're contrary one to another. But if you have the Spirit of God *you can understand*. And here's the reason: ***that we might know the things that are given freely to us of God!*** Everything that is given freely is an ***operation of grace!*** The understanding of God's Word is ***an operation of grace***, not an operation of intellect. We read in Rom. 1, the *wise* say, ‘we know better, there is no God, so they become fools!’ It's not an operation of philosophy or logic; it's an *operation of conversion* of the heart and the Spirit of God. Then God's Spirit teaching you through the grace of God that you can grow in it.

Verse 13: “Which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in *words*

taught by *the Holy Spirit in order to* communicate spiritual things by *spiritual means*. But *the* natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand *them* because ***they are spiritually discerned***” (vs 13-14).

That's how you understand the Scriptures and how I understand the Scriptures: ***by the Spirit of God and not by the self; not by the wisdom and the intellect.***

Let's see some very important things and why we come to the point that we do, and why these things are given this way. Let's review:

Hebrews 4:9: “There remains, therefore, Sabbath-keeping for the people of God. For the one who has entered into His rest...” (vs 9-10)—the *rest of God*—‘katapausis’ is the Sabbath. You have not yet entered into the Kingdom of God, yet, because that hasn't come. And you don't enter into any ethereal spiritual rest where you have nothing to do because Christ did it for you. *That is a satanic, lawless lie!*

You “...enter into His rest, he also has ceased from his works... [Gen. 2—and that was on the seventh day] ...just as God *did* from His own *works*. We should be diligent therefore to enter into that rest...” (vs 10-11). This applies two ways:

1. we need to be diligent to enter into the rest of the weekly Sabbath as it comes to us
2. we need to be diligent to keep our eyes on the goal of the Kingdom of God so that we can enter into the Kingdom of God

“...lest anyone fall after the same example of disobedience” (v 11). Disobedience and disbelief go hand-in-hand. If you don't believe God you won't obey God; it's that simple!

Verse 12: “For the Word of God ***is living***... [it's the only kind of word in the world] ...and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of both soul and spirit, *and* of both *the* joints and *the* marrow, and *is* able to discern *the* thoughts and intents of *the* heart.... [that's why people don't like it] ...And there is not a created thing that is not manifest in His sight; but all things ***are naked and laid bare*** before the eyes of Him to Whom we must give account” (vs 12-13).

Those two verses are very powerful, and it's very interesting that it follows in sequence right after the Sabbath Day. You go back and read: “...the Word of God *is* living and powerful...” for those who refuse to keep the Sabbath when God gave it to

Israel. *Oh, absolutely!* Sent them into captivity.

There is something else important concerning the Word of God that is *living* and *powerful!* God has inspired that it be written down so that we will know. And there are a lot of people who have Bibles in their homes, which they never, never read but it is there. I call your attention to a witness that Jeremiah gave. He gave it, wrote it down, and he sent a messenger to Babylon and he was told when he gets to Babylon to 'read the message, put a rock around it and throw it in the river of Babylon.' Just stop and think, from a practical point of view: How many people in Babylon really heard that? Was the whole population of the city of Babylon standing there watching him while he gave that witness? *No!* But everything that God said in that witness to Babylon took place.

Let's apply the same thing to those who have Bibles at home that never read them. You have a witness sent from God right in your own home. If you don't read it—if you don't find out about it—you are *ignoring the witness of God and you are liable!* Granted, as it says in another place, 'he that knew to do his Lord's will would be beaten with many stripes, and he who knew not to do his lord's will, will be beaten with few stripes.' So therefore, it is still a witness! It is living!

Now, let's understand something concerning *living and powerful*. Even for those who don't know the Word of God, or have ignored it, thrown it out, discounted it or rejected it, the laws contained in the Word of God, ***the operation in the Word of God is living and powerful and works in their lives.*** Let's take for example: All of those who have a 'religion'—which is a rejection of God's Truth—have another god before the true God.

- Do they have understanding and love that comes from the Word of God? *No!*
- Do they have penalties that come upon them?
- What about these societies that are so led by demons?

Let's just take a real base society, the basest in the whole world—New Guinea. God put them there and, unfortunately, they have gone after demons. Granted, missionaries have gone in there to try and convert them. Only some of the missionaries have had their heads become 'brain soup.' But you watch on the documentaries that you see, maybe on Discovery Channel or something like that, and you see those societies, how wretched and how evil that they are because they do not have the blessing of the

laws of God. But, nevertheless ***the laws of God still work!***

- If they murder and commit cannibalism, do they not have brain disease and die? *Yes!*
- If they follow demons and superstitions and idols, do they not have their mentality demented and are superstitious? *Yes!*
- If they constantly war and fight, do they constantly have a diminishing of the population by their own hand? *Yes!*

So, whether anyone knows it or not, it's still operates in their lives. For example: How about all of the young people that dishonor their fathers and mothers and die because they don't obey their fathers and mothers when they say: 'If you take the car don't speed and don't drink.' They disobey and what happens? *You can read about it many times:* a whole carload of teenagers die because they dishonored father and mother. Is the Word of God living and powerful and dividing asunder? Even of people in the world? *Absolutely! No question about it!*

Let's understand the Word of God and how powerful it is.

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 ages; 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..." (vs 1-3). The whole universe stays together because of the Word of the power of God! That's quite something!

I find it very profound; false doctrines come in cycles. There's another false doctrine of the oneness of God, which is there is only one God—period! Christ was not God, and that the first verses in the Gospel of John are a personification of the Word. Well, they're not a personification of the Word in the exact inspired account of the Word of God. Remember, it says, 'Christ upholds all things by the Word of His power. He has the power, and upholds the universe and everything that there is!'

This also shows the Word of God. This is not a personification such as in Prov. 8 where it says, 'I wisdom am like.' That is a personification. This is a statement of fact that John wrote, and in all probability—when you examine the way that the Gospel of John is written; the first part and the last part—that when they did the final canonization of the New Testament, or maybe even before that, this was added to the beginning of it because of the

problems we have in 1-John 4, that anyone who says that Christ did not come in the flesh is an antichrist. This is an answer to it.

John 1:1 "In *the* beginning **was** the Word..." That is not a personification; that's a statement of fact. 'en'—which means, can actually have the connotation *before the beginning* of what we see as the creation.

"...and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (v 1). Granted, there is no definite article in the Greek before *God*, where it says "was God." That is also very profound.

It reads this way in the Greek: 'Theos en ho logos.' Why does it not have any definite article before 'Theos'? *It is showing that the Word was God*, and without the definite article it means ***everything that God is the Word was.***

Verse 2: "He was in *the* beginning with God. All things came into being through Him, and not even one *thing* that was created came into being without Him... [Did He create Himself? *Of course not!*] ...In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men" (vs 2-4). That's how ***powerful and living*** the Word of God is!

(go to the next track)

Verse 10 also becomes very profound; this shows the absolute rejection of God by His creation. Yet, He is there as the Savior

Verse 10: "He was in the world, and the world came into being through Him..." How can you get around that? *In order to have the world made by Him, He had to have existed before the world existed!*

"...but the world did not know Him. He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him" (vs 10-11). *They rejected Him!* 'Receive' here means *to welcome* like you would bring someone into a bosom hug.

Verse 12: "But as many as received Him, to them He gave authority... [power] ... to become *the* children of God, *even* to those who believe in His name; who were not begotten by bloodlines, nor by *the* will of *the* flesh, nor by *the* will of man, but by *the* will of God" (vs 12-13). So, God is the One who does the calling so there are no mistakes.

Verse 14: "And the Word... [Who was God, and God is spirit] ...became flesh and tabernacled among us (and we ourselves beheld His glory, *the* glory as of *the* only begotten with *the* Father), full of grace and truth."

When we talk about the Word of God is

living and powerful, and we talk about that in relationship to Jesus Christ, there is no question whatsoever that He *was* God—before He became a human being. Please understand that ***nothing is impossible for God!*** The Jews say that Christ could not have been God and to become a human being, because 'we don't believe that.' You need to *listen* to that statement, because just because they don't believe it doesn't make their disbelief correct—does it? ***Nothing is impossible for God!***

- He was the incarnate of the Word of God
- He spoke the Word of God
- He brought the living Truth of God

And it exists always, at all times, everywhere in the universe, and there is no variance to that whatsoever!

Psalm 138:2—let's see how powerful that God places His Word: "I will worship toward Your Holy temple, and praise Your name for Your loving kindness, and for Your Truth; for You have magnified above all, Your name *and* Your Word." Let's understand something about the Word of God:

- why it's living
- why it's powerful
- why it's sharper than any two-edged sword

Whatever God says is Truth! God cannot lie! It exists everywhere at all times and is so powerful. This is why people do not like the Bible.

Hebrews 4:12: "For **the Word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of both soul and spirit, and of both the joints and the marrow, and is able to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart.**" No other book does that, only the Word of God!

Let's look at some of the things that people do not like; they don't like to hear it, but this is the way that life is with human beings:

Proverbs 14:12: "There is a way which seems right to a man, but the end thereof *is* the way of death." They don't like to be told that. That's repeated in Prov. 16:25.

Jer. 17—this is what people really don't like, especially for those people who consider themselves good, honest, sincere and upstanding, so much so that they don't even need God. Remember that any moral standard that someone has, that they believe—which is good and they follow—though they reject God, it still comes back to the Word of God. If they would say:

- *I would never commit adultery.* Where did

they get that from?

- *I would never steal.* Where did they get that from?
- *I always take care of my neighbor in need.* Where did that come from?

Even if they have all of this—*all of this*—they still have a heart described here in Jer. 17. There's a book out and I talked to Wayne Stenhouse and he said they're using it for Bible study on Friday night up there in Canada—*The Lies We Believe*. If we do not live in a lying, deceptive society today, where everything is an elusion and delusion and just the reality of things are not what you really see, and it's because of this. Why do people believe it? The same reason that people taunt.

Jeremiah 17:9: "The heart *is* deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?"

There's no other book on the face of the earth that really tells you that. When people read that and think that they're really good, honest, upright and they're moral, they don't like to hear that they're deceptive. But they all like to have their 'little' lies.

Verse 10: "I the LORD search the heart, *I* try the reins, even to give to each man according to his ways, according to the fruit of his doings." That's just the way that life is.

Job 42—this will be very instructive for us. Remember, Job, in the letter of the Law, was a perfect man. God said to Satan, 'Behold Job My servant, no man like him; perfect and upright.' Let's notice what he said after he went through everything and he figured that he was so righteous that he had a righteousness that he could match up to God, where he could say, 'God, You come down here and look at my righteousness and I will hold it up to You and You will have to declare that, yes, I am righteous.' So, when God finally revealed Himself, He said, 'Job, I want to speak to you.' Job said, 'Oop! I'll put my hand on my mouth.' God said, 'Will you disannul My judgment that you may be righteous.'

Part of the judgment of God is the heart of man that He's given man because of sin. It goes all the way back to Adam and Eve. We are born with human nature, with 'a heart that is deceitful above all things'; whether we consider ourselves righteous or whether we know that we are wicked and evil. The heart is still 'deceitful above all things.' After God got done with Job, here's what Job said:

Job 42:1: "And Job answered the LORD and said, 'I know that You can do all things, and **that no thought can be withheld from You**'" (vs 1-2). No other book has the power of judging the thoughts

except the Word of God. No other book has the power—with the Holy Spirit of God—to convict people of sin and lead them to repentance than the words of God.

Verse 3: "*You asked*, 'Who *is* he who hides counsel without knowledge?' Therefore I have spoken that which I did not understand; *things* too wonderful for me; yea, which I did not know."

That's another part of human nature—'vanity of vanities, all is vanity' says the preacher. And 'man at his very best states is altogether vanity.' Now Job begins repenting:

Verse 4: "Hear, I beseech You, and I will speak; *You said*, 'I will ask of you, and you will declare to Me.'" I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear; but now my eye sees You. Therefore I abhor *myself*, and repent in dust and ashes" (vs 4-6).

That's why the Word of God is *living and powerful* and cuts to the dividing asunder.' So that men and women will repent! So that they will come to God! And also for us to know that there is **nothing** that is not open to God.

God's Word convicts that way! Let me just add that when you have the Holy Spirit of God and you begin fighting sin in your mind, it is God's Spirit revealing the sin to you in your mind, because that's where sin begins and God reveals it to you so you can repent, which is a tremendous *operation of the grace of God*:

- to help cleanse your mind
- to help purge your mind
- to grow in grace and knowledge
- to bring every thought into captivity unto the obedience of Christ

Hebrews 4:13: "And there is not a created thing that is not manifest in His sight; but all things *are* naked and laid bare before the eyes of Him to Whom we must give account."

Psalm 139:1—here David shows this very profoundly: "O LORD, You have searched me and have known me." **God knows!** How much does God know? If God's Spirit is in you and Christ is in you all these things take place. If you are the temple of the Holy Spirit—which you are—and Christ is in you, then everything you do Christ does with you. That's why you only receive a portion of the Spirit of God, a begettal, because you have to wait for the resurrection in order to receive the full measure of the Holy Spirit of God. That's why the Holy Spirit of God within you convicts you of sin in your mind; that you can repent!

Verse 2: "You know my sitting down and my rising up; You understand my thoughts afar off. You measure my going about and my lying down, and are acquainted with all my ways" (vs 2-3). Of course! God made every human being. He knows how human beings are going to act. *Yes, He does!*

"...For there is not a word on my tongue, but, lo, O LORD, You know it altogether. You have enclosed me behind and in front, and laid Your hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it" (vs 4-6).

It shows the silliness of men when they say, 'Where is God?' It shows the foolishness of atheist that say 'there is no God.'

Verse 7: "Where shall I go from Your Spirit? Or where shall I flee from Your presence? If I go up into heaven, You are there; if I make my bed in the grave, behold, You are there. If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the farthest parts of the sea, even there Your hand shall lead me, and Your right hand shall hold me. If I say, 'Surely the darkness shall cover me, and the light around me shall be night'" (vs 7-11).

That reminds me of a little boy or girl when they got caught doing something and mommy said to them, 'God sees everything.' *How can God see, there's a ceiling up there? How can God see? God can know everything!*

Verse 12: "Even the darkness does not hide from You, but the night shines as the day; as is the darkness, so is the light to You, for You have possessed my reins; You have knit me together in my mother's womb. I will praise You, for **I am awesomely and wonderfully made**; Your works are marvelous and my soul knows it very well. My substance was not hidden from You..." (vs 12-15).

That's what they call a newly begotten life within the mother's womb—*substance*—until it forms an embryo. So, this is very scientific and up-to-date.

"...when I was made in secret and intricately formed in the lowest parts of the earth.... [that's talking about the womb] ...Your eyes did see my substance, yet, being unformed; and in Your book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet, there were none of them" (v 16).

Quite a thing! They call that today, with all of our scientific knowledge and everything, *the human genome*. In other words, from the time of conception you are who you are, and you develop in your mother's womb according to the things that God has put in, by number—the DNA and RNA—so

that when it comes time for you to be born, voila! there you are! God knows all of it. God is so great that no two human beings—not even identical twins—are the same. That's something!

Verse 17: "How precious also are Your thoughts to me, O God! How great is the sum of them!.... [that's why God's Word is *living and powerful*, always working] ...If I should count them, they are more than the sand; when I awake, I am still with You" (vs 17-18). That's quite a thing! That's how powerful it is! That is why there is not a created thing that is not laid bare before God. God knows everything.

That's why we are to confess our sins to God; *to no man!* I remember watching something on TV and it had to do with a Catholic priest. The first thing they ask you, if you go to confession, is when was your last confession. That already puts you under fear. When people confess to a man they really don't tell the truth. That's why when God says, 'When you pray, go to a private place and pray to your Father, which is in secret.'

We'll see how we are to pray to God. That's directly between you and God. What we are going to see is that we have the greatest and most fantastic High Priest that could ever, ever be. No system of 'religion' on earth can substitute for the High Priesthood of God, being Jesus Christ. That's why there is not to be a priesthood over the people of God. Why does there have to be a priesthood when Christ is the High Priest over all? *There doesn't need to be one!* God never intended it to be! The whole thing of the Catholic Church with its priesthood is antichrist, using the name of Christ in the place of Christ.

Here's why, and this is put here deliberately, because when we go through everything that is stated up to this point—Heb. 4:13—there's a reason why we come to the High Priesthood of Jesus Christ, and that He—and He alone—qualifies. This is going to be quite a thing, and this also sets the stage for all the rest of the book of Hebrews.

The High Priesthood of Christ:

Let's take the next section: 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, but *One Who* was tempted in all things according to *the likeness of our own temptations*; yet, *He was* without sin. Therefore, we should come with boldness to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in

time of need" (vs 14-16).

Hebrews 5:1: "For every high priest, being taken from among men to act in behalf of men, is appointed to serve in *the* things pertaining to God in order that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins."

This is talking about the Levitical priesthood or Aaronic priesthood, and then we begin to compare that with the Priesthood of Christ.

Verse 2: "And he is able to deal gently with those who sin in ignorance and those who have been led astray, since he himself is also encumbered with many weaknesses. And because of these *weaknesses*, he is obligated also to offer *sacrifices* for his own sins, exactly as *he does* for the people. Now, no man takes the honor of *the high priesthood* upon himself, but *only* he who is called by God, in the same way as Aaron also was *called*. In this same manner also, Christ did not glorify Himself to become a High Priest, but He Who said to Him, '**You are My Son; today I have begotten You.**' Even as He also says in another *place*, '**You are a Priest forever according to the order of Melchisedec**'; Who, in the days of His flesh, offered up both prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears to Him Who was able to save Him from death, and was heard because *He feared God*. Although He was a Son, *yet*, He learned obedience from the things that He suffered; and having been perfected, He became *the* Author of eternal salvation to all those who obey Him, after He had been designated by God *as* High Priest according to the order of Melchisedec" (vs 2-10).

Let's go back and we'll begin going through verse-by-verse. He interjects right here that we have such a High Priest as Christ, but let's review the buildup to that point. All of this is laying the groundwork for the greatest High Priesthood, the superior covenant of the New Covenant with Jesus Christ Who is superior to the angels (Heb. 1:1-9). Who also came in the flesh (Heb. 2). This is important for us to understand why Jesus Christ is High Priest, and why God has given all those that He calls direct access to God the Father through Him. That's why it's so important, brethren, that we understand this. Let's also realize, too, that just as Paul was writing the book of Hebrews to prepare the people for the troubled times ahead. Actually, the troubles had already begun.

The troubles where we see that they were on the verge of committing the unpardonable sin was because they began to refocus on the priesthood of Aaron and the physical priests. They began to focus on the physical things that they could do. They

began to focus in on the Pascal lamb and the sacrifice of Judaism, rather than the Lamb of God being Jesus Christ.

They were on the verge, because Christ did not return in the time that they figured, of going right back into Judaism and rejecting the priesthood of Christ for the physical priesthood of men that they could see. Paul was preparing them for the destruction of that priesthood. He is building this up to show the greatness of Christ and His priesthood. Compared to the priesthood of Aaron—which was the old priesthood—to the priesthood of Christ, no priest of Aaron could have done what Jesus did. Jesus was God before He became human and then He suffered these things for the very purpose of making Him the kind of High Priest that we need to have.

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**... [the very death for all the sins of all mankind] ...in order that by *the* grace of God He Himself might taste death for everyone; because it was fitting for Him, for Whom all things *were created*, and by Whom all things *exist*, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Author of their salvation perfect through sufferings" (vs 9-10).

Even God in the flesh—Jesus Christ—was perfected by the things that He suffered. That's quite a thing to understand, brethren. No priesthood of the order of Aaron could ever have done this!

Verse 14: "Therefore, since the children are partakers of flesh and blood, in like manner He also took part in the same, in order that through death He might annul him who has the power of death—that is, the devil; and *that* He might deliver those who were subject to bondage all through their lives by *their* fear of death. For surely... [see how Paul is building up here to where we come to Heb. 4:14] ...He is not taking upon Himself to help *the* angels; but He is taking upon Himself to help *the* seed of Abraham. For this reason, it was obligatory for *Him* to be made like *His* brethren in everything that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest *in* things pertaining to God, in order to make propitiation for the sins of the people. For because He Himself has suffered, having been tempted *in like manner*, He is able to help those who are being tempted" (vs 14-18).

Then Paul goes one step further, Heb. 3, he compares Christ to Moses. Then he builds all the way through Heb. 4:14, 'having a great High Priest who has passed into the heavens.'

Hebrews 4:15: "For we do not have a High Priest Who cannot empathize... [this actually means *to share in compassionate feeling*] ...with our weaknesses, but *One Who* was tempted in all things according to *the likeness of our own temptations*; yet, *He was without sin.*"

What we need to understand is this: I've read where some men say that Jesus had to sin in order that He could understand. But it says here that 'He was without sin.' That's a contradiction. How is it that Jesus understands:

1. He was made flesh
2. He took on human nature

It says there in Hebrews that it was *obligatory, mandatory*, that He be made like His brethren. He partook of flesh and blood. That means He took on all the humanness that all human beings have. In other words, He took on human nature. This is a very profound thought:

God is Creator; He created all things through Jesus Christ. Because of sin, man was given the *law of sin and death*. Who sentenced man to that but God. We're going to see that Christ took that same nature upon Himself. That's how He knows what it's like to be tempted. If He didn't have that same nature, yet being filled with the Spirit of God to give Him the power to not sin, Satan the devil's temptations would have been nothing.

Let me give you an example: Suppose that you were behind a clear, visible barrier, but it was absolutely impenetrable to any weapon whatsoever that man could devise. Someone came up with whatever kind of weapon you want to say—machine guns, howitzers, recoilers, rifles, atomic bombs, whatever—and you could sit back there behind this visible barrier and nothing would touch you.

- Would you be fearful?
- Would you worry about whether you could be touched by any of these things or not?
- *No!*

So likewise, if Christ did not take on human nature the way we have human nature, He could not be tempted in the same way that we are.

- How could it be the same temptation as we have if He did not have complete human nature as we do? *Could not have been!*

Read that section in *The Christian Passover—The Nature of Man* and *The Nature of God*.

Philippians 2:5: "Let this mind be in you, which *was* also in Christ Jesus; Who, although He existed in *the* form of God... [existing as God] ...did

not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but **emptied Himself...**" (vs 5-7)—divested Himself of being a spirit being, God. Can God do that? *Yes, He can! **Nothing is impossible for God!***

"...and was made in *the* likeness of men, and took the form of a servant" (v 7). Quite a profound thing! How did God make us? *God said, 'Let Us make man in Our image, after Our likeness,'* for the very purpose that Christ could do this.

"...and being found in *the* manner of man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even *the* death of *the* cross" (v 8). If He did not have the law of death in Him, He could not have died.

Verse 9: "Therefore, God has also highly exalted Him and bestowed upon Him a name, which *is* above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of *beings* in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ *is* Lord to *the* glory of God *the* Father" (vs 9-11).

Let's see what kind of flesh He came in. It was in the likeness of human flesh. Some people say His flesh was not like our flesh. Even the Catholics have the doctrine of the immaculate conception of Mary, so she would not have the stain on her soul of Adam's sin. So therefore, Christ could be born without the stain of human nature upon His soul. Well, that's not what the Bible says!

After Paul talks about the *law of sin and death* within our members, Romans 8:3: "For what was impossible for the law to do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, having sent His own Son in ***the likeness of sinful flesh...***" That means in the exact, complete sameness.

That's why He could be tempted. He had all of these pulls. That's why He's able to help us in our temptations and can have sympathetic compassion, because He partook in the same temptations.

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*

Scriptural References:

- 1) Romans 3:31
- 2) Genesis 2:1-2
- 3) 1 John 1:1-3
- 4) Romans 4:1-4, 6-8
- 5) Isaiah 58:13-14
- 6) 1 Corinthians 2:7-10
- 7) Psalm 119:18
- 8) 1 Corinthians 2:10-14

- 9) Hebrews 4:9-13
- 10) Hebrews 1:1-3
- 11) John 1:1-4, 10-14
- 12) Psalm 138:2
- 13) Hebrews 4:12
- 14) Proverbs 14:12
- 15) Jeremiah 17:9-10
- 16) Job 42:1-6
- 17) Hebrews 4:13
- 18) Psalm 139:1-18
- 19) Hebrews 4:14-16
- 20) Hebrews 5:1-10
- 21) Hebrews 2:9-10, 14-18
- 22) Hebrews 4:15
- 23) Philippians 2:5-11
- 24) Romans 8:3

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Genesis 1, 3
- Deuteronomy 28
- Genesis 15
- Romans 1
- Proverbs 8
- 1 John 4
- Proverbs 16:25
- Hebrews 1:1-9; 3

Also referenced:

Books:

- *Code of Jewish Law* by Solomon Ganzfried & Hyman Goldin
- *Interlinear Greek-English New Testament* by George Ricker Berry
- *The Lies We Believe* by Dr. Chris Thurman
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FRC: bo
Transcribed: 4-1-11
Reformatted/Corrected: January/2017

The Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews XIII Christ Our High Priest

(Chapters 4-5)

Fred R. Coulter

Let's understand that the book of Hebrews was written at a time when the Church was beginning to fall apart. That's happened many, many times in history. The reason that God does this—like we've seen in our day—is to scatter the Church. In scattering the Church, God does several things that are very important:

1. those who are false brethren go their way
2. it tests the true brethren whether they believe God or not
3. whether they will stick with God through thick and thin

So, it's really quite a thing when you understand how God does that. It's not a matter that God is weak or impotent, or that God is not able to hold His Church together. Christ is doing it deliberately for the purpose of perfecting the brethren, and that's why the book of Hebrews is so important. There's one thing that's going to really help you

- through thick and thin
- through every trial
- through every apparent contradiction
- through everything that you would go through

is to know and understand that you have a High Priest like Jesus Christ! The whole theme of the book of Hebrews from here on in is about:

- the greatness of Christ
- the superiority of the New Covenant
- how that God's way is so profound

We're here in Heb. 4, and we just finished the section that there is no person that 'is not laid bare before God.' God is a heart-knowing God and knows everything about us. He's the One Who has created us! He's the One Who has made us! We can't fool God!

I suppose we could take Abraham Lincoln's saying: *you can fool some of the people all of the time; you can fool all of the people some of the time, but you can't fool all of the people all of the time.* We can say that ***you can never fool God at any time!***

- God knows
- God is merciful
- God is kind

- God desires that you come to Him and that you pray to Him

Let's understand how this fits in with what Jesus preached. God uses all of these things to His advantage, to further His plan, because He knows those who are His.

Luke 12:1: "During this *time*, an innumerable multitude was gathering, *crowding* so *close* together that they were stepping on one another. First of all He began to speak to His disciples, *saying*, 'Guard yourselves from the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy.'"

The parallel account in Matt. 16 shows it was their doctrine or their teachings. This has been a problem that has had to be purged out of the Church of God time and time again: false religious views creeping into the Church. You can see that as you read the accounts of the seven churches (Rev. 2-3). How that at various times they are confronted with those who deliberately come in:

- to destroy
- to tear down
- to confuse
- to bring false doctrine
- to take away faith

All of those people are the *agents of Satan the devil to draw people away from God!* That's why he gave the warning here. And the Pharisees in this case represent all the 'religious' factions of the world down in prophecy, because they're really not much different.

Verse 2: "For there is nothing covered that shall not be uncovered, nor hidden that shall not be known. Therefore, whatever you have spoken in the darkness shall be heard in the light; and what you have spoken in the ear in closed rooms shall be proclaimed on the housetops" (vs 2-3)

Enron should have read this before they did what they did, because it is being proclaimed from the housetops; likewise, everything else! That's why we have such things as the *Vatican Assassin* and *My 50 Years in the Church of Rome*. That's why we have the histories—though they try to be suppressed by the agents of Satan the devil—show the hatefulness that they have toward God. They don't want to admit that what Christ has is greater than

anything that can do or produce. Therefore, there is that hatred.

There is another hatred that is there, because now there needs to be *no man* as a high priest between you and Christ. Christ is our High Priest; you need *no man*! You need someone to teach you how to have contact with God, to teach you the Scriptures. But your spiritual relationship is with God the Father and Jesus Christ. It's not dependent upon a man.

Verse 4: "But I tell you, My friends, you should not be afraid of those who kill the body, and after that are not able to do anything more."

If you die in the faith—whether peacefully in old age or you're martyred—there's no more that any man can do to you at all; you have it made! The promise of God is sure! What this does, this takes away the grip of fear that 'religionists' hold over people. God doesn't want us to be fearful of a hierarchical system that holds power over us. The power over us is Christ and God the Father—there is none greater! We do not have to fear. That's why the Psalm says, 'I will not fear what man can do to me.' You may have pain or suffering for a while if you're martyred. Or if you're coming close to the end of your life, you may have pain and suffering and struggle.

- God knows that
- He designed it to bring you to that point
- it's no surprise to God
- God understands it
- God knows it
- He's purposed it

We don't have to be afraid.

Verse 5: "But I will show you Whom you should fear. Fear Him Who, after He has killed, has authority to cast into the *fire of Gehenna*.... [the second death] ...Yes, I tell you, fear Him! Are not five sparrows sold for two coins? And not one of them is forgotten before God. But even the hairs of your head have all been numbered. Therefore, do not be afraid; you are of greater value than many sparrows" (vs 5-7).

When we come before God—God knows everything! God understands everything! He wants us to come before Him realizing that, because God is 'heart-knowing' God.

Verse 8: "And I tell you, everyone who shall confess Me before men shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God; but the one who has denied Me before men shall be denied before the angels of God" (vs 8-9).

This is the whole basis of what the book of Hebrews is for, so that they do not commit the unpardonable sin. There were some powerful forces going on.

Verse 10: "And everyone who shall say a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him; but the one who has blasphemed against the Holy Spirit shall not be forgiven. But when they bring you before the synagogues and the rulers and the authorities, do not be anxious *about* how or what you should reply in defense, or what you should say; for the Holy Spirit shall teach you in that same hour what needs to be said" (vs 10-12).

God knows that when we come before God in prayer, it is a tremendous and fantastic thing, brethren. You can truly confess your sins to God, because He knows and understands. Many times we don't like to admit, even to ourselves, what we have done, or how we are as human beings. *But God knows!*

Hebrews 4:14—this is the whole key of the rest of the book of Hebrews: "Having therefore a great High Priest, *Who* has passed into the heavens..."

- where no man can do anything
- where no man can corrupt
- where no man can take away
- where no man can defeat

"...Jesus the Son of God, we should hold fast the confession *of our faith*" (v 14). You stop and think how many times in Heb. 2-3 where it says:

- hold fast
- don't give up
- don't rebel
- believe
- obey

So, we should hold fast; here's the reason why, v 15: "For we do not have a High Priest who cannot empathize with our weaknesses..." This means not only to sympathize, but have compassion; have the understanding. No human being can do the same as Christ. Why? *Too many times we will have the attitude of the Pharisees!* Remember the Pharisee that prayed?

I just wonder what it is like for a Catholic priest to sit there in the confessional booth and there is this little screen and the person comes in and the priest says, 'When was the last time you confessed?' It already puts them on the defensive, puts them in a position of shame. Then they tell it to a man! I wonder how many of them really hold the people in contempt when they confess their sins. I'm sure they don't fully confess all of them, because no man

wants to tell another man; no woman wants to tell another woman or man everything that are the secrets of her or his carnal nature. Just does not want to do it. Why? *Because you're fearful that it will be used against you!* That's why!

And, yea, when you read *Vatican Assassin* they do use it against you, especially political people, to get them to do the political will of the Catholic Church. *We don't go before a man*, because too many would be like the Pharisee. I wonder how many Catholic priests, when they hear a confession, are like this Pharisee here:

Luke 18:9: "And to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others, He also spoke this parable."

That's the way human beings do. Even when you see somebody in trouble or see a problem that they have, or see a difficulty that they are going through, it is very easy to despise that person. It is very easy to say, 'Thank you, God, I'm not like that person.' Well, that's what the Pharisee was doing.

Verse 10: "Two men went up into the temple to pray..." That is coming right into the presence of God. Today we have access to the temple in heaven above, and we come before God the Father and Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is our High Priest and everyone who comes before Him it is open and laid bare.

"...the one *was* a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood and prayed with himself in this manner..." (vs 10-11). He wasn't really praying to God, he was bragging on himself to God. This is no prayer to God. This is a way of relating to God of 'how good I am.'

"...‘God, I thank You that I am not like other men—extortioners, unrighteous, adulterers—or even as this tax collector’" (v 11). The thing is, God expects everyone to obey the commandments of God.

- if you're not an extortioner, *you haven't done anything special*
- if you're not unjust, *you haven't done anything special*
- if you're not an adulterer or adulteress, *you've done nothing special*

God expects that! Or even as this publican.

The publican is a tax collector. Of course, the IRS is the most despised to this day—are they not? You love to get your tax bill in the mail? When the tax bill comes you say, 'Oh thank you, tax man, you are so good.' Then you read it and you think **THIS IS OUTRAGEOUS!** What are they doing with

all the money? Tax collectors are the most easy to hate and the most invariably being hated down through the centuries.

Notice, he's still bragging on himself, v 12: "I fast twice in the week... [Hooray! Give him another merit badge!] ...and I give a tithe of everything that I gain."—which he should.

Now the publican, v 13: "And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat himself on *the* chest, saying, 'God, be merciful to me, a sinner.'"

Before God, in his own eyes, he was *the* sinner! Not there was only one sinner in the world, but he viewed himself from that point of view.

Verse 14: "I tell you, this man went down to his house justified, rather than the other. For everyone who exalts himself shall be humbled..." God does not want anyone to take the Word of God, *create* a 'religion' and exalt yourself over other people. Or, to make a 'religion' where *you exalt yourself* over other people. The whole basis of hierarchical churches is that.

The one who is abased, his day is coming; remember, it may come in a way that you would never expect.

"...and the one who humbles himself shall be exalted" (v 14). Who was one man—a boxer—who went around and said, 'I'm the greatest!' they even made a movie about him. *Muhammad Ali!* How was he abased? Was he struck down and killed? *No!* *God just allowed the punishment of his sport*—where he had his head beaten to a pulp so many times—that now he has Parkinson's disease so bad that it's hard for him to even function. I really feel sorry for him. I don't say that in a way of condemnation. I say that in a way of observation that the Word of God is true and those who do so will be taken care of.

Was not Adolph Hitler taken care of? Did he not exalt himself? Remember when he came to Paris and signed the peace treaty and he jumped up and clicked his heels just before he went into the railcar where they signed the Armistice of 1918? What was his death? *Ignominious! Alone!*

So, you can take this verse and apply it many, many different ways. Remember, what does the Scripture say, that *you receive back into yourself the things that you've done in your life!* Those things happen! Those things are automatic! God is there! God's Word is true!

But, "...the one who humbles himself shall be exalted" (v 14). That's why what's so important,

brethren, in this day an age, because we live in an age where we have everything physical that we could ever want, and we are deprived of nothing! As you probably have commented and others have commented, we truly live in a Laodicean age. We're rich and increased with goods. If you don't believe that, compare your living standards with Afghanistan, and you'll have a good comparison.

Also, concerning the Word of God, we have more knowledge and understanding of the Word of God than at any time in the entire history of the Church. We are living a time where, at the end of the age that even Daniel was not given the blessing to understand the things that he prophesied. He was told, 'Go your way. At the time of the end, the wise shall understand, the wicked shall do wickedly and shall not understand' (Dan. 12)

We're living in that age. We're living in that time. We have so much of the understanding of the Word of God that we need to be very, very careful that we do not treat it in the same way that we do the physical blessings that we have—that we just take them for course, we take them for granted—because there will be a greater penalty for doing that than putting physical things before God.

That's why the book of Hebrews was written; to inspire you to want to maintain your relationship with God the Father, through Jesus Christ, because you have the greatest gift of High Priest and relationship with God the Father. There is nothing in this life *anywhere* that can be compared to it. That's the whole purpose of it!

When we come to Christ, we have One Who knows. He knows everything about us, even the hairs on our head. He knows every thought if He needs to know it. Every thought that we've ever thought is recorded somewhere in our brain. *God knows!*

- this is why Christ came
- this is why God divested Himself of being God to become a human being

So that not only could He be the perfect sacrifice, but also He could experience the full range of human existence. Therefore:

- He took upon Himself human nature
- He took upon Himself the *law of sin and death*
- He took upon Himself and subjected Himself to the temptations of Satan the devil
- and even the cruelty of the death of the cross inflicted by Satan the devil

—yes *He did!* Not only can He sympathize with our

weaknesses, He can have compassion and understanding of our weaknesses.

Hebrews 4:15: "For we do not have a High Priest Who cannot empathize with our weaknesses..." The *King James* says 'infirmities'; but that sounds like 'sickness' today. It really means 'weaknesses.' Human nature has a lot of weaknesses. You end up doing a lot of things that you really don't want to do. Every one of us has to do like Colombo does when he forgets something, he hits the top of his forehead with his hand. We all do our little Colombo's—don't we? *Yes!*

"...but *one Who* was tempted in all things according to *the likeness of our own temptations*; yet *He was without sin*" (v 15). That wasn't because He could not sin. That was because *He yielded to God!*

Hebrews 5:7: "Who, in the days of His flesh, offered up both prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears to Him Who was able to save Him from death, and was heard because *He feared God*. Although He was a Son, *yet*, He learned obedience from **the things that He suffered**" (vs 7-8). Christ was without sin with great difficulty, but:

- by the power of God's Holy Spirit!
- by determination of serving God in the right way!
 - ✓ knowing His purpose
 - ✓ knowing why He was here
 - ✓ knowing that He was the Creator and Savior of mankind

He was able to be without sin! That's really quite a thing. The whole operation is summarized in 2-Cor. 5. God thinks the opposite of the way human beings think. God does things differently. No one would think that God would do this, and that's why He did it.

2-Corinthians 5:21: "For He [God the Father] made Him Who knew no sin [Jesus Christ] *to be sin* for us, so that we might become *the righteousness of God in Him*." He did become the spiritual personification of sin. *Have to have been! He knew no sin!*

Job certainly was not willing to admit that he was a sinner! He looked at his behavior—how good he was compared to other men, and indeed, in the flesh he was righteous—but wasn't willing to admit that he was a sinner. Do you think that Job would have taken the sins—he wouldn't have anyway—of his three friends who were just sitting there and say, 'I'm a miserable mess, go ahead and heap it on me. I'll take all your sins'? *NO!* But *Christ did for the whole world!* So *He was literally made sin!*

“...Who knew no sin *to be* sin for us, so that we might become *the* righteousness of God in Him” (v 21).

That’s a profound statement! That’s why we have the time to grow and overcome, that we might be *made* “...*the* righteousness of God in Him.” It’s a process! So that when God looks at us, when we come before Him, we need to always acknowledge that *we have nothing we didn’t receive!* Every single thing that we have—and this, brethren, is the key—

- to where we don’t get lifted up
- to where we don’t get lukewarm
- to where we don’t get complacent

—is when we realize that *everything we have has come from God!*

- everything physical
- everything spiritual

and yes, in the trials and difficulties that we go through

- that He might test us
- that He might prove us
- that He might give us the conflict so that we can overcome

Christ had that conflict within Him, too; much more profoundly than we do. Then He was without sin!

Here’s how we are to approach God. Hebrews 4:16: “Therefore, we should come **with boldness** to the throne of grace...” Don’t be afraid! Don’t be fearful! If you have sinned, immediately run to the throne of God and repent!

This also has the meaning of *being very frank with God:*

- coming to God
- asking Him to hear
- asking Him to help
- claiming the promises of God

In claiming the promises of God it’s very important, if God has given the promise, on whom then does it depend for the fulfillment of that promise, according to His will? *It depends upon God to do it, and you to believe it!* That’s why we have to come to the point of really knowing and understanding and believing. That’s their whole purpose of overcoming. When we doubt, we’re like James said, ‘just like the water tossed to and fro with the wind.’ Water is very volatile.

When I do my water therapy I get in the pool, no one has been there for a while and it’s just perfectly still. The only thing that gives you a hint that there’s some motions is when the heater pumps in the warm water. Then you get in and you start

making waves and the water is completely subject to whatever force there is against it. Whether it’s the wind, or whether it’s the motion of something, it has no stability of itself unless it’s frozen solid. It’s so temporary that even that will melt and it’s so temporary that it can evaporate and be mist in the air.

Can you imagine what kind of faith that people would have if they had faith like water? One time they’d be frozen cold, not believe God at all. Other times they’d be driven to and fro like the waves. Other times it would just sort of disappear like a mist. *No!* We have to come with **boldness!** Remember this: *If you know, God knows!* Never forget that! If Christ is in you, *He does know* when you sin! Yes, He does! That’s why you have a portion of the Holy Spirit. He does know.

That’s why we need to come frank “...boldness to the throne of grace...” (v 16). It is a gift! You don’t deserve it! You don’t come like the Pharisee and say, ‘God, here I am, I’m so good.’ Watch out! Job’s punishment may be coming upon you!

“...so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need” (v 16).

Let’s see how this operates. We do have the things that we need to be doing, no question about it! No one can have a relationship with God the Father and Jesus Christ unless they keep the commandments of God as Jesus said, ‘If you love Me, keep My commandments.’ And the relationship that we have with God is a love relationship, a one-to-one relationship.

1-John 1:3: “That which we have seen and have heard we are reporting to you in order that you also may have fellowship with us; for the fellowship—indeed, our fellowship—is with the Father and with His own Son Jesus Christ.” That is a relationship.

I know that it is a tremendous and fantastic thing, brethren, but in the book of Hebrews God wants us to understand how great this is. Remember this: *You have been given the blessing of the greatest thing that you can receive in this life with the Holy Spirit and access to God the Father and Jesus Christ!* There is nothing greater! That means:

- you have passed from death unto life
- you have the gift of eternal life
- you will live forever

There is no money; there is no position; there is no power on this earth that can do that! Many men have tried to live beyond their physical lives: witness all the mummies of the Pharaohs, but they’re still dead.

Though they stowed it away in their pyramids, they didn't take it with them. Like the old saying when they're at the funeral: *How much did he leave?* they ask of the rich man they were burying, Someone says, *All of it!*

God has called us the 'lowly' of the world—which we are, lest we get exalted and think we're not—to give us this great blessing. He does it in such a way that He wants us to have fellowship with Him. He wants us to be in right standing with Him. He wants us to be in instant communication with Him at any time. That's our relationship and fellowship with God the Father and Jesus Christ.

Verse 4: "These things we are also writing to you, so that your joy may be completely full. And this is the message that we have heard from Him and are declaring to you: that God is Light, and there is no darkness at all in Him. If we proclaim that we have fellowship with Him, but we are walking in the darkness, we are lying to ourselves, and we are not practicing the Truth" (vs 4-6).

Showing here that you cannot have part of the world and part of the Word of God. You cannot fellowship at the table of demons and the table of the Lord. That's walking in darkness.

Verse 7: "However, if we walk in the Light..."

- the commandments are a light and a lamp
- His Word is a Light
- Christ is the Light
- Christ is the Word

"...as He is in the Light..." (v 7).

How can we walk in the Light as He is in the light? *That means we are coming to Christ continually!* Then we will be in the Light as He is in the Light. If we're walking in the Light and we're covered by the grace of God and have the righteousness of Christ imputed to us, are we not walking in the way that Christ walked? *Yes! No doubt about it!*

John 3:18: "The one who believes in Him is not judged, but the one who does not believe has already been judged..." How many times have you heard people say, 'I don't believe in Christ'? Or the Muslims say they don't believe in Christ the Son of God. The Jews say they don't believe in Christ as the Son of God. They've already condemned themselves.

"...because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God" (v 18). That's how powerful this is that we're dealing with here.

Verse 19: "And this is the judgment: that the Light has come into the world, but men loved

darkness rather than the Light because their works were evil."

They want to keep their own evil deeds. They want to have as much Christ as they can to make them feel good. Or, as much religion as they can to make them feel good, so that they can have a life which appears before men, to be righteous, which it's not. If it's righteousness before men it's not righteous before God. "...their works were evil."

Verse 20: "For everyone who practices evil hates the Light..." They don't like the light shining in on them. Like going down into a dark sewer and you don't know that it's full of rats and rotten putrefaction until you turn the light on and they all scatter away.

"...and does not come to the Light... [they don't want to come to Christ] ...so that his works may not be exposed; **but the one who practices the Truth...**" (vs 20-21). This is how you walk in the Light as He is in the Light: *if we're practicing the Truth*. What is Truth? *The Word of God is Truth!* We're to live by *every Word of God!*

"...comes to the Light..." (v 21)—constantly coming to Christ; constantly coming to God on an ongoing basis—*everyday*—constantly coming to the Light.

"...so that his works may be manifested, that they have been accomplished by *the power of God*" (v 21).

That's how we "...walk in the Light as He is in the Light." It's quite a marvelous thing! Therefore, let's understand how God wants us to come to Him with boldness. Here's how we are to do it.

1-John 1:7: "However, if we walk in the Light, as He is in the Light, *then* we have fellowship with one another... [with God the Father and Jesus Christ and each other as brethren] ...and the blood of Jesus Christ, His own Son, cleanses us from all sin."

Not some of them, *ALL of them!* You have to understand, your individual sins. Christ died for you individually! He didn't come to just forgive *some* of your sins and then will throw you into purgatory and will let your relatives pay the high cost of masses until the priest determines that you're out of purgatory. The question is, how does he know? Or, does he declare it after he produces enough money? *No!*

Christ came to forgive you *all* your sins, every one of them! *Not one is left unforgiven!* There's a way you can have all your sins put back upon you, but you don't want that to happen.

Christ "...cleanses us from all sin. If we say that we do not have sin... [that means we have not done sin or we don't have a sinful nature] ...we are deceiving ourselves... [Who is the only one without sin? *Christ!*] ...and the Truth is not in us." (vs 7-8).

Like most people say, 'Well, God knows my heart; I'm a good person; I go to church every Sunday.' Mention to them about the Sabbath and they get angry. When a little light is brought on them they're exposed, they don't like it. Or with the Muslims: 'I pray five times in the day; I bow to Mecca and I go to the mosque on Friday; aren't I good and righteous?' Or the Jews who reject Christ would say... Even the Jew who is devout. What is a 'devout' Jew? *A non-believer!* We need to understand these things.

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Here is how we come to the throne of God, v 9: "If we confess our own sins..." We have to do that; it doesn't say to a priest, because we're going to see that we have a High Priest Who is greater than any man could possibly be on this earth.

"...He is faithful and righteous, to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (v 9). That is a tremendous, marvelous blessing! We stand before God that way! Not because of what we do.

Let me just mention here something that is important: ***No law of any kind can make you justified before God!*** Because the function of law—in relationship to God—is to show what righteousness and sin is. The law of itself has absolutely no power to do anything except define for you the transgression of the law and sin. The Law cannot forgive sin! The Law cannot justify you from sin! No religion, no work of law, that any man can do can substitute for the sacrifice of Jesus Christ! You are justified by Christ—His sacrifice, His blood and His alone—***but, He requires your obedience!***

Verse 9: "If we confess our own sins, He is faithful and righteous, to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

No Catholic priest, no Protestant minister, no imam of the Muslims or Buddhist priest or Hindu priest or shaman of any religion anywhere in the world can forgive your sins. Sin is against God and ***only God can forgive sins—through Christ***—and that is the only means of forgiveness. People go through a confessional and the priest says your sins are forgiven, after you've done a hundred 'hail Marys' and two hundred 'our fathers.' You see how men do it? *They do it with a condition so they can hold you in their control.* Christ says they're all forgiven! But like He told the woman caught in the

act of adultery—when no one came forth to condemn her because they didn't bring the man as well as the woman—"Where are those who condemn you? Does no man condemn you?" *No man, Lord.* 'Neither do I, go and sin no more.'

Verse 10: "If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His Word is not in us." That's a pretty powerful thing if you make God a liar. How many people do that with the Word of God? How is that Protestants make God a liar? *By misinterpreting the Scriptures!*

Romans 9:30—there's a very instructive lesson here: "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, 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 becomes very important in interpreting Rom. 10:4. Also note that in the *King James* the insertion of the definite article of ***the* works of *the* law** is not correct. Those two definite articles are not there in the Greek. Not having to do with the Ten Commandments, because God requires that we keep those. And even though we keep them, that doesn't forgive sin!

How many times have I mentioned the *Code of Jewish Law* where they have *works of law*? One of the works of law of Catholicism is after you confess your sins you do 'hail Marys' and 'our fathers' or you do other charitable works. Those are *works of law*. I don't know what *works of law* that the Muslims have, but I also know that they use beads for their prayers and things like this.

"...for they stumbled at the Stone of Stumbling [Christ]" (v 32). What happens? When you come to Christ you give up all your works, all of your works of righteousness. Even if they did follow everything that God said in the Old Testament, and of the rituals to be performed at the temple—even if they did all of those—they still cannot substitute for the sacrifice of Christ. That didn't get them beyond being justified in the flesh to the temple. Here we're talking about being justified to God the Father in heaven above. Remember the phrase: *works of law*.

Verse 33: "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.'"

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).

That applies to all Israel—whether they are Jewish, of the ten tribes—which most of them are Protestant and Catholic. **"...they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge."** We saw that happen with the 9/11 event. They go on their way, but as soon as trouble comes they come back and they *mouth* the name of God. Yes, **"...they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge."** They didn't repent! They didn't change! They came back and said how *good* they are. How much they deserve 'You help us, God.' "...not according to knowledge"—and that means not according to the knowledge of God and not according to the knowledge of Christ.

Verse 3: "For they, being ignorant of the righteousness *that* comes from God, and seeking to establish **their own** righteousness... [as we saw by *works of law*] ...have not submitted to the righteousness of God."

The *King James Version* of v 4, is the biggest violation of the Protestants. Here's where they go to bring in a lawless grace: "For Christ *is* the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believes." Therefore, they proclaim there is no law that you have to keep. All you have to do is believe in Christ and you are saved and anything you do after that time, as long as you feel good about it, that's just fine.

- that is making Christ a minister of sin
- that is making the grace of God lawlessness

That is not what that verse means. What is the subject? *Rom. 9:32, works of law!* And by extension, since it goes right on, v 4 should read:

Verse 4: "For Christ *is the end of works of law* for righteousness to everyone who believes."

He ended the *works of law*. Everything else that we have covered in the *Code of Jewish Law*, all the human traditions which the Jews follow, all the human traditions of the Catholics, the Orthodox, the Protestants, the Muslims, the Hindus and the Buddhists. Because we live in a diverse society, we've got to include all of them. God's controversy is not just with the Protestants and Catholics, it's with the whole human race and all of their religions. It is with the harlot Babylon, the mother of harlots and all of her daughters. They're all the religions of this world.

You have to include all of them. If a person comes to Christ who has been in the steeps of satanic superstition and religion in the darkness of

whatever country they may live in—whether it be in the rain forest of Brazil or Africa or Southeast Asia, whatever it may be—they have to give up their *works of law* or their own righteousness or superstition.

Let me give you an example of how some people do today: People are superstitious so they have little idols and crucifixes. They used to have the so-called St. Christopher, because he was to protect you. Then the Vatican declared that Christopher was not a saint. What's going to happen to all those people who were depending upon him. So, if you have a little statue or idol or cross on the front of your car, on the dashboard, thinking that God is going to protect you because you have it, that's a *work of law*. That is a superstition. That is an idol and it doesn't come from God.

Rather, if you want to be protected while you're traveling, pray in belief to God the Father and Jesus Christ that They will place the angels about you when you travel, and have faith when you drive and you'll be fine. The idol isn't going to do anything. Is the idol going to stop a car that comes smashing into you? Is your rosary, hung around the rearview mirror, going to give you any greater protection because there's superstition there? *NO!*

Those are *works of law!* Just like the Hindu men who wear turbans; they have long hair and that's one of their *works of law*. God says it's 'a shame for men to have long hair.' Look what happened when some people retaliated against someone with a turban after 9/11. Indignation and wrath, because it's against one of their *works of law*. Listen, all the stupid religious practices by men are nothing more than *works of law*. People walk into a Catholic cathedral and they have to genuflect before the idol because 'Christ is in the bread.' *NO!* Christ is in heaven! Christ didn't come to do away with the laws and commandments of God! *No way!*

What did He say, Matthew 5:17: "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish, but to fulfill." So, every Protestant minister, or every minister who goes here to Rom. 10:4 and proclaims that Christ ended the Law and we don't have to keep the commandments is a liar! That's not what it means. It means that Christ brought an end to the *works of law* for righteousness. What were they doing? *They weren't seeking the righteousness of God* and being ignorant of that through Christ. If you don't believe in Christ you have to have some religion, so you create your own.

Romans 10:3: "For they, being ignorant of the righteousness *that* comes from God, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not

submitted to the righteousness of God.”

That’s a very profound thing, brethren. You need to understand that. The only way you have forgiveness of sin is through Christ, that’s it!

- Will He forgive you over and over again? *Yes! As many times as you repent and ask Him to forgive you!*
- What if you have weakness that just drags you down?
- Will He forgive you? *Yes!*
- Does He understand the weakness? *Yes!*
- Does He know it’s a temptation? *Yes!*
- Does He throw you out, or kick you out, because of it? *No!*
- Does He want to punish you because of it? *No, if you repent and sincerely ask God to give you the strength, through His Holy Spirit, to overcome!*

If you do that continually, lo, I guarantee you the day will come that you will say to yourself: ‘Thank you, God, I have overcome it.’ You can be guaranteed that will happen.

1-John 2:1: “My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin.... [we don’t *want* to sin] ...And *yet*, if anyone does sin... [which we will] ...we have an Advocate...” Our great High Priest that is passed into heaven is *advocating*. Not condemning! Not finger-pointing! *Advocating!*

“...with the Father... [the Sovereign God of the whole universe] ...—Jesus Christ *the* Righteous—and He is *the* propitiation... [meaning the *continual* Source of forgiveness or mercy seat] ...for our sins... [lest we get conceited he writes the following]: ...and not for our sins only, **but also for the sins of the whole world**” (vs 1-2).

Of course, we know in God’s plan, as it unfolds through the Holy Days, how He’s going to bring it to the world. It’s a marvelous plan, brethren. Just realize how few really understand it. It’s the most precious, greatest knowledge you can have.

He makes it very clear, v 3: “And by this *standard* we know that we know Him...” God wants you *to know* that you know Him; He doesn’t want you to be in doubt. He wants you *to know* that you know. If you really have doubts then what you need to do is take it to God and say, ‘God, I believe, but help my unbelief.’ He will help you.

“...**if** we keep His commandments. The one who says, ‘I know Him,’ and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the Truth is not in him” (vs 3-4). It sure shows there are a lot of liars out there.

Here’s our obligation, v 5: “On the other hand, *if* anyone is keeping His Word... [live by every Word of God! Live by every Word of Christ] ...truly in this one the love of God is being perfected....” That’s the whole goal of:

- growing
- overcoming
- confessing sin
- being cleansed from all unrighteousness

“...By this *means*... [by the process of perfection] ...we know that we are in Him. Anyone who claims to dwell in Him is obligating himself also to walk even as He Himself walked” (vs 5-6).

Now, *show me one place* in the New Testament or in the Gospels:

- where Christ broke one command
- where Christ broke the Sabbath
- where Christ broke the Holy Days
- where Christ transgressed any commandment of God

He didn’t, did He? *No!*

So therefore, what is our obligation? The Greek means it is ‘*obligatory*’ for you to walk as He walked.’ We do that! That’s why we have to have the throne of grace. That’s why we have to go before the throne of grace, receive the mercy, forgiveness and kindness that comes from God. That’s how you maintain your relationship with Him.

Get out your concordance and go through the Psalms and look up all things where the word ‘hear’ is: ‘hear Me’; come to God—and sometimes in coming in boldness toward God you just have to say, ‘God, hear me’—like David did. Just look up all of those in the Psalms and I think that will really help you understand how you need to come to God to pray, to understand the things that are there.

Here is the comparison, Heb. 5. We have the comparison, which is really quite profound, quite good. We’re talking about the old office of the high priest.

Hebrews 5:1: “For every high priest, being taken from among men to act in behalf of men, is appointed to serve in *the* things pertaining to God in order that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins; *and* he is able to deal gently with those who sin in ignorance...” (vs 1-2)—*gently* in an understanding way, but not as compared to Christ Who sympathizes and has compassion with us.

“...and those who have been led astray, since he himself is also encumbered with many weaknesses. And because of these *weaknesses*, he is obligated also to offer *sacrifices* for his own sins,

exactly as *he does* for the people” (vs 1-3).

You can read of that in the books of Leviticus, Exodus, Numbers and Deuteronomy. You can see that he has to give those sacrifices, especially on the Day of Atonement. He has to offer all those sacrifices before he can dare enter into the Holy of Holies.

Verse 4: “Now no man takes the honor of *the high priesthood* upon himself...” We have combined with this the high priesthood. He’s to act on behalf of the people. And because he has weaknesses and sins, he has his own humility.

“...but *only* he who is called by God, in the same way as Aaron also was *called*” (v 4). That’s why God put it by bloodline; to end all arguments.

Remember Num. 12 where they had the rebellion of Korah. They said, ‘Who are you to set yourself up, Moses and Aaron, to be rulers over us?’ *Well, God set it up by bloodline to end the dispute!* Any man that would come in there would be encompassed with his own weaknesses and sin. So, God ended the debate! There was no oath that was given; it was by appointment.

Christ we look at and it starts out here, v 5: “In this same manner also, Christ did not glorify Himself to become a High Priest, but He Who said to Him, ‘You are My Son; today I have begotten You.’” In other words, God did it by proclamation; by begettal.

Verse 6: “Even as He also says in another *place*, ‘You *are* a Priest forever according to the order of Melchisedec’” Now we have for the very first time the introduction of Christ as High Priest.

“...according to the order of Melchisedec”: The order of Melchisedec’s priesthood was so much greater, and the whole purpose of the rest of the book of Hebrews is to show how much greater the priesthood of Christ in the order of Melchisedec was than the order of Aaron.

Verse 7 shows Christ humiliation; Christ Who gave up being God to become a human being to suffer these things. No priest on earth ever suffered these things. That’s why we have a greater High Priest.

Verse 7: “Who, in the days of His flesh, offered up both prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears to Him Who was able to save Him from death, and was heard because *He* feared *God*. Although He was a Son, *yet*, He learned obedience from the things that He suffered” (vs 7-8). He understands how hard and difficult it was for human beings.

Verse 9: “And having been perfected...” As a human being, then He was perfected as High Priest; fighting off all the sins; overcoming all the flesh; overcoming Satan the devil. You go back and you read in the Old Testament, even David—who was a man after God’s own heart—was provoked to number Israel? Who provoked him? *Satan did!* Was he subject weakness and sin? *Yes, he was!* Was he a bloody man? *Yes, he was!* Christ then:

Verse 9: “And having been perfected, He became *the* Author of eternal salvation to all those who obey Him, after He had been designated by God *as* High Priest according to the order of Melchisedec” (vs 9-10). That’s really quite a thing!

Let’s see where this is given. It’s really quite a very interesting Psalm; Psalm 110:1 “The LORD said unto my Lord...” Jehovah says to Adonai—there’s only one vowel point difference between Jehovah and Adonai, so it would not be wrong to say, ‘the Lord [Jehovah] said to my Jehovah.

“...‘Sit at My right hand until I make Your enemies as Your footstool’” (v 1). Here we have the revelation of the Father. There are very few revelations of the Father in the Old Testament. Here’s one of them.

Remember when the Pharisees were confronting Jesus and Jesus said, ‘I want to ask you a question: Who is the Christ?’ *The Son of David!* ‘Tell Me, how is it then that David calls Him *LORD* if He is the Son?’ They couldn’t figure it out, because they didn’t understand the Scriptures. This is a prophecy. The first LORD is the Father; the second one is the Son.’ Let’s also ask, Who was David’s Lord? Was it another man? *NO!* It was God! “...‘Sit at My right hand until I make Your enemies as Your footstool.’”

We have a reference of this in 1-Corinthians 15:23, and here we have this spoken of by Christ: “But each in his own order: Christ *the* Firstfruit; then those who are Christ’s at His coming. Afterwards the end *comes*, when He shall have delivered up the kingdom to Him Who *is* God and Father, when He shall have put an end to all rule and all authority and power. For it is ordained that He reign until He has put all enemies under His feet” (vs 23-25). That’s taken right from Ps. 110.

Verse 26: “*The last enemy to be destroyed is death*. For He has put all things in subjection under His feet. But when it is said that all things have been put in subjection, *it is* clearly evident that *it does* not include Him Who put all things in subjection under Him. But when He has put all things in subjection to Him, then shall the Son Himself also be subject to Him Who put all things in subjection to Him, so that

God may be all in all” (vs 23-28).

That’s why the New Testament greater than the Old Testament. You need both of them, no question about it, but the New Testament is greater than the Old Testament because the New Testament interprets the Old Testament, and shows the fulfillment of the things in the Old Testament.

Psalm 110:4: “The LORD has sworn and will not repent, ‘You are a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec.’.... [a prophecy of Christ] ...The LORD at Your right hand shall strike through kings in the day of His wrath.... [the second coming of Christ] ...He shall judge among the nations, He shall fill them with dead bodies... [the seven last plagues] ...He shall shatter chief men over the broad earth. He shall drink of the brook by the way; therefore He shall lift up the head” (vs 4-7).

Showing the fulfillment of the coming Kingdom of God. That’s quite a thing: *After the order of Melchisedec*. This is the first place that that is mentioned.

It’s important for us, brethren, to understand and realize that that’s the kind of Priest that we have. Let’s also see something else that’s important, that Christ did not glorify Himself to make Himself a priest. He didn’t come to do His own will, but the *will of the Father* that sent Him.

John 5:19: “Therefore, Jesus answered and said to them, ‘Truly, truly I say to you, the Son has no power to do anything of Himself...’” He didn’t do one thing contrary to the *will and purpose and leading* of the Holy Spirit of God the Father.

“...but only what He sees the Father do. For whatever He does, these things the Son also does in the same manner. For the Father loves the Son, and shows Him everything that He Himself is doing. And He will show Him greater works than these, so that you may be filled with wonder” (vs 19-20).

Verse 30: “I have no power to do anything of Myself... [that’s a profound statement] ...but as I hear, I judge; and My judgment is just because I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father, Who sent Me. If I bear witness of Myself, My testimony is not true” (vs 30-31).

He didn’t come to glorify Himself. He asked the Father to glorify Him with the glory that He had with Him before the world was. That means *before the world existed!*

John 17:4: “I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work that You gave Me to do. And now, Father, glorify Me with Your own self, with the glory that I had with You before the world existed” (vs 4-5). So, He didn’t seek to glorify Himself. He didn’t seek to exalt Himself.

You read of all the other mythical gods of the Greeks and the other pagans, and every one of those counterfeit, ‘divine’ births as it were, were of men who bragged on their abilities because they were conceived of god.

- Christ did not!
- He didn’t glorify Himself!
- He did not exalt Himself!
- But, He did the will of God!

That’s why He is designated as a Priest forever after the order of Melchisedec!

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*

Scriptural References:

- 1) Luke 12:1-12
- 2) Hebrews 4:14-15
- 3) Luke 18:9-14
- 4) Hebrews 4:15
- 5) Hebrews 5:7-8
- 6) 2 Corinthians 5:21
- 7) Hebrews 4:16
- 8) 1 John 1:3-7
- 9) John 3:18-21
- 10) 1 John 1:7-10
- 11) Romans 9:30-33
- 12) Romans 10:1-4
- 13) Matthew 5:17
- 14) Romans 10:3
- 15) 1 John 2:1-6
- 16) Hebrews 5:1-10
- 17) Psalm 110:1
- 18) 1 Corinthians 15:23-28
- 19) Psalm 110:4-7
- 20) John 5:19-20, 30-31
- 21) John 17:4-5

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Matthew 16
- Revelation 2; 3
- Hebrews 2; 3
- Daniel 12
- Job 31:1
- Numbers 12

Also referenced: Books:

- *Vatican Assassin* by Mike Luoma
- *My 50 Years in the Church of Rome* by Charles Chiniqy
- *Code of Jewish Law* by Solomon Ganzfried & Hyman Goldin

FRC: bo
 Transcribed: 5-1-11
 Reformatted/Corrected: January/2017

The Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews XIV The Operation of Christ as High Priest

(Chapters 4-5)

Fred R. Coulter

Hebrews is one the most important books in the New Testament. Let me just review a couple of things here that are very important for us to realize. Let's cover concerning the Sabbath:

- the Sabbath is a point of belief
- the Sabbath is a point of turning from false Christianity to true Christianity

That is the seventh day of the week called 'Saturday' today.

Hebrews 4:9: "There remains, therefore, Sabbath-keeping ['Sabbatismos'] for the people of God." We went into great detail concerning that. Let's understand that it does not say Sabbath-keeping for the Jews. The Jews today claim that Sabbath is only for the Jews not for anyone else. Yet, we find in the Bible that that is not true. We find that the Bible tells us and shows us that the Sabbath, beginning in Genesis, *was made for man*, according to what Christ said there in Mark 2:27.

The Sabbath commandment itself does include the 'stranger.' Exodus 20:8: "Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it Holy." Let's just reiterate and review a few things here that are very important for us to understand.

1. only God can make something Holy; man cannot declare anything Holy
2. once it is made Holy it is to be kept Holy

Verse 9: "Six days you shall labor and do all your work. But the seventh day *is* the Sabbath of the LORD your God. In it you shall not do any work, you, nor your son, nor your daughter; your manservant, nor your maidservant, nor your livestock, **nor the stranger within your gates**.... [the whole reason for it is so that we understand]: ...for *in* six days the LORD made the heaven and the earth, the sea, and all that *is* in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore, the LORD blessed the Sabbath Day and sanctified it" (vs 9-11). Those who refuse to keep the Sabbath are rejecting what God has blessed.

Let's come to the book of Isaiah and let's see something very important also concerning 'strangers.' This is an important verse because this is a prophecy of the return of Christ. This tells us what God desires at the time that Christ returns.

Isaiah 56:1: "Thus says the LORD, 'Keep

justice and do righteousness; for My salvation *is* near to come, and My righteousness to be revealed. Blessed *is* the man who does this, and the son of man who lays hold on it..." (vs 1-2).

The Protestants would say, cursed is the one who keeps the Sabbath; but that is not true! God says blessed—who are you going to believe? God? or man?

"...who keeps the Sabbath from profaning it, and keeps his hand from doing any evil.' And do not let the son of the stranger, who has joined himself to the LORD..." (vs 2-3).

The reason that I'm covering this is because you could say that Exo. 20—within your gate—could mean within your house, if you're talking about an individual, or within your country if you're talking about a country. Here in Isa. 56 there is no restriction to it.

Verse 3: "...speak, saying, 'The LORD has **utterly separated me from His people.**' And do not let the eunuch say, 'Behold, I *am* a dry tree'" Why would a stranger say you've "...utterly separated me from His people..."? *Because the Sabbath separates from the practices of the Gentiles!*

Verse 4: "For thus says the LORD, 'To the eunuchs who keep My Sabbaths, and choose things that please Me, and take hold of My covenant; even to them will I give within My house and within My walls a place and a name better than of sons and of daughters; I will give them an everlasting name that shall not be cut off. Also the sons of the stranger, who join themselves to the LORD to serve Him, and to love the name of the LORD, to be His servants, everyone who keeps from profaning the Sabbath, and takes hold of My covenant" (vs 4-6). That's very important. We have two things here:

1. the Sabbath at the end-time, just before Christ returns
2. the 'strangers' who join themselves to the Lord, not having to do with becoming a proselyte citizen of Israel, or a proselyte citizen of Judaism

There's something else we need to understand concerning the Sabbath. The Sabbath's function, though it is a law—you shall remember the Sabbath to keep it—is of grace and faith. It takes *faith* to

keep the Sabbath, and God blesses you with *His grace* for keeping the Sabbath. How does He bless you with His grace?

1. by His presence
2. by His Spirit
3. by His blessings

Any blessings you get from God are then graces, because they are a gift. As I mentioned before, it takes no faith to keep Sunday. It takes no grace to keep Sunday. You can go anytime you choose. You can go to any church you want to. You can follow any 'religion' you want to that keeps Sunday, and *it requires no faith!* It requires *faith* to not work on the Sabbath! That's what's so important. *You have to believe God!*

Hebrews 4:10: "For the one who has entered into His rest, he also has ceased from his works... [you enter into the *rest of the Sabbath*] ...just as God *did* from His own works.... [when He rested on the Sabbath] ...We should be diligent, therefore, to enter into that rest..." (vs 10-11).

The rest of the Sabbath! Some people would like to say that means 'entering into the Kingdom of God.' Well, let me just tell you, you're not going to get into the Kingdom of God at the return of Christ if you're not keeping the Sabbath.

"...lest anyone fall after the same example of disobedience" (v 11)—disbelief. What was it that they disbelieved? *The Sabbath!* What was it that they did not follow? *The ways of God!* So, they fell.

Today we are in what you would call the 'opinion' mode and the 'discussion' mode. Remember that every single individual's opinion is equal in belief and force to everybody else's opinion. That's why you have talk radio, discussion panels on television and so forth. However, when it comes to the Word of God, it is not an opinion. That's what's important to remember. People can have all the opinions they want to about the Word of God and it means nothing to God. All their opinions notwithstanding, the Word of God is not going to change for them, and *God is not going to change His laws or His commandments for them!* Here's what Hebrews says the Word of God is:

Verse 12: "For the Word of God is living..." That's what Jesus said, 'The words that I speak to you, they are Spirit and they are Life.' That's what's so important. That means that in any age and at any time, as long as the earth exists, Jesus said, 'Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away. Think not that I've come to destroy the Law or the Prophets, I've come to fulfill. For verily, heaven and earth shall pass away

before one jot or tittle of the Law shall pass away.' Therefore,

- it is living
- it is spiritually based
- it applies to all human beings

—at all times, everywhere in the world. That's the power behind the Law of God. Whenever you watch any of these documentaries on forgotten or lost civilizations of the world where they go out into the Amazon or into the deep, dark jungles of the various countries of the world, and they show how these people live. If you watch any of those—any documentary about any country or religion—analyze it from the point of view of how many of the commandments of God do they keep.

God will judge all the nations of the world based upon how they keep the commandments of God. Obviously, since they are cut off from God, He is going to look to the inner relations of human relations as a primary thing. When we come to the case of the Jews, we are dealing in an entirely different proposition; that is those Jews who have rejected Christ also have put themselves into a position that they are adversaries of Christ. Their keeping of the commandments for them has very little affect. The truth is they do not keep the commandments of God, rather they keep the traditions. So, they have a double, two-edged sword against them. Jesus said, 'The one who believes Me, believes in the One Who sent Me. And the one who rejects Me, rejects the One Who sent Me.'

When you come to that, that's another thing that needs to be understood, and that's why all down through history the Jews had always had problems getting along with anybody else in the world. That's why they do not have the blessing of God upon them. All you need to do is look at the situation in the Middle East today and understand that that is true. They are blinded and hard-hearted, both the Palestinians and the Jews, and they are at each other's throats and it isn't going to stop until there's more killing and death. That's because both of them live by the sword and they're going to die by the sword. That's exactly what the Word of God says.

The Word of God has another aspect of it, which is very important for us to understand, v 12: "For the Word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of both soul and spirit, *and* of both *the joints* and *the marrow*, and *is* able to discern *the thoughts* and *intentions of the heart*"—only book in the world that does that.

When we understand that the Word of God also means Christ. 'In the beginning was the Word,

the Word was with God and the Word was God' and so forth. This doubly compounds everything.

Verse 13: "And there is not a created thing that is not manifest in His sight... [no one's going to hide anything from God] ...but all things *are* naked and laid bare before the eyes of Him to Whom we must give account."

Everyone is going to come before the judgment seat of God. We're going to have to give an account. Not only that, this means that when we are confronted with the fact of sin and death and the human condition, it also tells us the only way out of this is through Christ. God has not given His Word just to condemn. God has given His Word, also, to show that there is a way out through Christ by grace.

That's why right after this point, it begins from here on a whole new phase in the book of Hebrews, which is it begins to introduce Christ as High Priest. He was a unique High Priest Who also fulfills not only the priesthood, but also being King, which is a very important thing to understand.

Verse 14: "Having, therefore, a **great High Priest**... [not just an ordinary high priest; not like a man] ...*Who* has passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, we should hold fast the confession of *our faith*. For we do not have a High Priest Who cannot empathize with our weaknesses, but *One Who* was tempted in all things according to *the* likeness of *our own temptations*; yet, *He* was without sin. Therefore, we should come with boldness to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need" (vs 14-16).

This tells us an awful lot here. Let's first of all understand very profound in v 15: "For we do not have a High Priest who cannot empathize with our weaknesses..." In the Greek this is a double negative. When you have a double negative, it is very emphatic, meaning that we have a High Priest Who does sympathize/empathize with our weaknesses—and we will see why, because of what He did.

To sympathize means more than just empathy or compassion. It means *experiential*; He experienced everything that all human beings go through. That's why it's so profound and important that we understand that and that we realize that now God has the absolute best system in place with Christ being the High Priest at the right hand of God. "...but *one Who* was tempted in all things according to *the* likeness..." (v 15).

This also ties in with our relationship with God through Jesus Christ; 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."

That's important to really grasp. There is no condemnation. If you have God's Spirit and if you are walking in the way of God, God knows you're going to sin, because you have the *law of sin and death* within you. But God does not condemn you for that because of the grace that He has given, which does not mean it gives us license to go out and sin because we have this available to us. It means that it helps us draw close to God so we can:

- change
- grow
- overcome
- walk in the Spirit

Verse 2: "Because the law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus has delivered me from the law of sin and death." Which Paul says in Heb. 7 is 'in his members.' In other words, conversion becomes *a work*. Conversion is a change, which is also a process. That's why we are to grow and overcome and it takes time to do it.

Here's what God did, v 3: "For what *was* impossible for the Law to do..."

1. no law can forgive sin
2. no law can justify

Justify means *to be put in right standing with God the Father* in heaven above. The function of Law is to show what sin is and to show, by obedience to *the* Law, how we are to walk. It does not do any forgiving; it does not do any justifying, because that:

- is the *operation of Christ* Who is our High Priest
- is the *operation of forgiveness*, which is a judgment by God
- is an *operation of grace*, which does not come by law
- is an *operation of the Spirit*

Verse 3: "For what *was* impossible for the Law to do, in that it was weak through the flesh..." All have sinned and have come short of the glory of God, so, what did God do?

"...God having sent His own Son in *the* likeness of sinful flesh..." (v 3). You can read in *the Christian Passover* book The Nature of God and The Nature of Man, and note the sermon: *What Kind of Human Nature Did Jesus Have?* If He did not have the exact same kind of human nature that we have, His temptations would have been meaningless. The Greek is very unusual, it says 'in the likeness of sin of flesh.' It's very unusual the

way it's put there.

"...and for sin... [this can also mean *a sacrifice* for sin] ...condemned sin in the flesh" (v 3).

That's why we have a High Priest Who can sympathize with every one of our feelings, because He was tempted in every way that we are, yet, without sin. Therefore, this is the whole **operation of Christ as High Priest**. When we go to God and confess our weaknesses. When we say this temptation has come upon us, He knows, He understands—He's been through it. That is necessary for Him to be High Priest. Not only can He sympathize with our weaknesses, but this means He has a shared experience in it.

- He knows what it's like to be tempted
- He knows what it's like to be confronted with sin
- He knows what it's like to have the *law of sin and death* within Him
- He had to fight that all of His life

Another thing that is important in the relationship concerning Christ being High Priest, with Him being in heaven. You don't have to go to a temple. You don't have to wait to go to Jerusalem. You don't have to wait to go to Mecca. You don't have to wait to go to wherever the Hindus have or the Buddhist have. You can have contact with God and receive forgiveness immediately upon repentance. That's why He is there! That's why He was made in the same likeness and so forth.

Let's understand that the whole book of Hebrews is showing the greatness of Christ. Remember how it started out? **Christ was the Son of God and He spoke to us!** We've got all those words recorded. That's why we have the New Testament. Not just a prophet, not just a man, **but the Son of God, Who was God!** Then we find out where it talks about in John 1 that the Word was made flesh, we find it here in Heb. 2.

Let's see what Jesus went through. Let's understand that God came to the earth as a human being, not as God, and talked to His creation. We have the essential words of salvation in the New Testament. But here is the whole point of understanding why we have a High Priest Who can sympathize and feel and understand the things that we go through.

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...**" That's what it is in the Greek, meaning it was a profound one death for all.

"...in order that by *the* grace of God He Himself might taste death for everyone; because it was fitting for Him, for Whom all things *were created*, and by Whom all things *exist*..." (vs 9-10)—showing the magnitude of what God has done.

This is why rejecting Christ becomes such a terrible, terrible sin and brings, automatically, curses upon anyone who does.

"...in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Author of their salvation perfect through sufferings" (v 10). **All the sufferings that Jesus went through!** He *knew* that He was going to go through them! He *knew* what He was going to suffer!

Verse 14: "Therefore, since the children are partakers of flesh and blood, in like manner He also took part in the same, in order that through death He might annul him who has the power of death—that is, the devil; and *that* He might deliver those who were subject to bondage all through their lives by *their* fear of death. For surely, He is not taking upon Himself to help *the* angels... [He was made lower than the angels] ...but He is taking upon Himself to help *the* seed of Abraham" (vs 14-16). Of course, that is if you are Christ's then you are the seed of Abraham.

Verse 17: "For this reason, it was obligatory for *Him* to be made like *His* brethren in everything..."

Therefore, you cannot have God coming down here, appearing to be in the flesh, but not be in the flesh. You cannot have Docetism, where it's just a spirit apparition that looks like flesh. That's what John was writing about in 1-John 4. He says that 'if any confess not that Jesus has come in the flesh, he is antichrist.' It was so profound what God did. In *everything* He was made like His brethren.

"...that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest..." (vs 17). This is the first time that Paul mentions 'High Priest' in the book of Hebrews. When we get into finishing chapter four and on in to chapter five clear up to the end of chapter ten, we are talking about **the function of the Priesthood of Christ**.

"...that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, in order to make **propitiation** for the sins of the people" (v 17)—*continual atoning; continually coming to God as a Source of help, forgiveness and grace!*

Verse 18: "For because He Himself has suffered, having been tempted *in like manner*, He is able to help those who are being tempted."

As we saw in Heb. 3, we have the comparison between Christ and Moses, and how much greater Christ was than Moses. Those who reject Christ, as the Jews have said, 'We follow Moses.' Well, that creates problems. Moses was not God in the flesh. It's very interesting, those who do not believe that Jesus was God before He came to the earth, but He was just an ordinary human being, then Moses could have been the man when you stop and think of it, but he wasn't!

Hebrews 4:16: "Therefore, we should come with boldness to the throne of grace..." Don't be afraid! God loves you. He has called you! Mercy and grace are functions of God's love, and that's why we have to understand: Not only in our loving God, but God loves us and gave Himself up for us! We should come with boldness! It also means that we should come with frankness. In other words, knowing Christ *knows everything* and we're laid bare before Him and we come before God in that way.

"...so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need" (v 16).

Of course, all of these things are reflective upon how much we need Christ and how much we need Him in everything that we do. Here's the important thing concerning it, and why it is absolutely the best system that can be. Man cannot devise a better system. God devised the best system.

You come before the throne of grace. How do you do that? ***We have immediate access to God! Immediate access!*** Anyone who will repent to God will receive forgiveness upon that repentance. We need to understand that. Even people in the world that don't know Christ, ***IF*** they repent, God will forgive them in the letter. But for those who have the Spirit of God, here is what we have:

Hebrews 10:14: "For by one offering He has obtained eternal perfection *for* those who are sanctified.... [it is a process; being sanctified or being made Holy] ...And the Holy Spirit also bears witness to us; for after He had previously said" (vs 14-15).

- this is the covenant that we are in
- this is why our relationship with God is so profound and important
- this is why there is no turning back on it
- this is why when we enter into the baptismal covenant, we are immersed in water because it is symbolic of death

Verse 16: "'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..."

So, the whole process of growing and overcoming is to have the laws written into our hearts and inscribed into our minds. That, through the Spirit of God, produces the mind of Christ; as Paul said, 'Let this mind be in you which was in Christ Jesus.'

- this is how conversion takes place
- this is why we need to come boldly before the throne
- this is why we need the help of the Holy Spirit continuously
- *this is what God is doing*

Now then, here's another promise, *when your repent your sins are forgiven!* You get up off your knees and you say, 'I wonder if God has forgiven me.' Well then, you're doubting God.

Here's a promise, v 17: "...their sins and lawlessness I will not remember ever again" That's profound.

God does not want us to abuse it by going out and willfully sinning; obviously not. But this is the best system; this is the greatest system short of the rule of the Kingdom of God on earth with Christ and all the saints. We have direct access to God the Father at any time—immediate access by saying, 'Our Father.' You don't get a busy signal. No one has come and told me: 'I've tried praying, but I got a busy signal.' *No!* And the phone can't be disconnected. You're not relying on an orbiting satellite like the cell phone that can be knocked out. ***You have direct access to God who lives forever; Christ at His right hand Who's our High Priest!***

Verse 18: "Now, where remission of these *is*, it is no longer *necessary to offer* sacrifices for sin." That means animal sacrifices. What greater thing could man do? *Nothing!* If God the Father, through Jesus Christ, in heaven above forgives your sin, or sins, then what good is an animal sacrifice? *None! It's worthless!* It accomplishes nothing!

Verse 19: "Therefore, brethren, having confidence to enter into the *true* Holiest by the blood of Jesus." It has to be ***through Christ, His blood, His priesthood, His suffering*** and all of that.

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

for He Who promised *is* faithful” (vs 19-23).

This reminds me of the incident where the disciples couldn’t cast the demon out of the young son, and the father said, ‘I came to Your disciples, they couldn’t cast them out.’ And Jesus said, ‘Come here. How long will I have to deal with a faithless and perverse generation? All things are possible to him who believes.’ The man said, ‘I believe, help my unbelief!’ This is why it’s very important that “...He Who promised *is* faithful.”

(go to the next track)

- His faithfulness never waivers, because He is God
- it never fails, because He’s our High Priest

If we go to God and we have a lack of faith, the first thing to do is confess our faithlessness and say, ‘God, help my unbelief.’ This is why faith comes by the ‘hearing of the Word’; that’s why we need Sabbath services. So:

- you can *hear* the Word
- you can *read* the Word
- you can *study* the Word
- you can *believe and know* the Word

Therefore, when we come to God, we can have the faith, and we are to have the faith of Christ. So, *if* He is faithful, and we are to have Christ’s faith, that’s a tremendous thing!

Let’s see how this operation works; what we’ve been talking about is the whole basis of Galatians 2:12: “For before certain *ones* came from James, he was eating with the Gentiles. However, when they came, he drew back and separated himself *from the Gentiles*, being afraid of those of *the circumcision party*.”

Following a law of Judaism—it was not a Law of God—a manmade law. It was not a law to be written in their hearts and minds, as the laws and commandments of God are to be in ours. It was something that Christ came to break. That’s why it is put here, and I don’t think we understand how much in jeopardy that Peter and those from James put the ministry of Paul in, by coming down and doing this; then the other preachers out there going to the churches in Galatia and doing the same thing.

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**...” (vs 15-16). The Jews felt that by separating themselves from Gentiles—because they considered Gentiles unclean or common—therefore, they were in better standing, or justified before God by that action of separating themselves. That is a *work of law*!

“...man is not justified by **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**... [that’s what justifies us] ...and not by works of law; **because by works of law shall no flesh be justified**” (vs 16-16).

Any work of any law cannot substitute for the sacrifice of Jesus Christ and His blood for the forgiveness of sin. If you keep Sunday—which is a work of law—you are not justified before God! That doesn’t make you better, though most Protestants believe it does. You are not justified if you keep the Sabbath—even though the Sabbath is required—because the Sabbath is not the sacrifice of Christ. So, ***no work of any law can justify you to God!*** It is an action that is spiritual. It is an action by done by:

1. you repenting
2. God forgiving

That is not a law! That is ***an operation of faith and an operation of the heart!***

Verse 17: “Now then, if we are seeking to be justified in Christ...”—which we all are; this is very profound and very interesting, and we can just put in there: ‘at a different way to it,’ which then becomes a *work of law*, of example:

- confessing to a priest, doing ‘hail Marys’ or ‘our fathers’
- as the Buddhists going to the sacred city in Tibet and on the way they take so many steps and pray, then they fall down on their knees and prostrate themselves flat on the ground, get up and say a prayer, take so many steps and fall down on their knees and flat on their face and stretch themselves out on the pavement and say a prayer and get up do this all the way to the Buddha temple.

That is a *work of law*! Anything that you add to the process of justification as defined in the Bible, you are creating a *work of law*! When you create a *work of law* then you are sinning. Why are you sinning? *Because you say that what you’ve added to it makes it better than what God has provided!*

That’s why Paul says, v 17: “...and we ourselves are found to be sinners, *is* Christ then *the* minister of sin? MAY IT NEVER BE!.... [Any sin that we do. *God is not the minister of sin!*] ...For if I build again those things that I destroyed... [Paul is talking about Judaism] ...I am making myself a transgressor” (vs 17-18).

- God has nothing to do with it
- Christ is not compelling it

- He is not requiring it

Verse 19: “For I, through law... [the wages of sin is death] ...died to *works of law*... [seeking to do it on his own] ...in order that I may live to God. I have been crucified with Christ, yet, I live....” (vs 19-20). That’s how we need to look at our lives before God—*jointly crucified with Christ*.

“...*Indeed*, it is no longer I; but Christ lives in me....” (v 20). That is why the whole process of the New Covenant and New Testament is so profound and important. It is not an exterior religion out here that has nothing to do with God. It is Christ in you. It is interior with the Holy Spirit, and it is of the heart and it is of your whole being.

Verse 20: “I have been... [jointly] ...crucified with Christ, yet, I live. For *the life* that I am now living in *the flesh*, **I live by faith**—that *very faith* of the Son of God...”

It is Christ’s own faith. Why is that? What are some of the gifts of the Holy Spirit? *Faith, love, hope, joy, and all the fruits of the Holy Spirit!* Faith is something that is given by Christ. You live by that faith which comes from the Son of God.

“...Who loved me... [this ties right in with what we are dealing with in Heb. 4-5] ...and gave Himself for me. I do not nullify the grace of God; for if **righteousness** is through *works of law*, then Christ died in vain” (vs 20-21). Righteous means the *ultimate* righteousness. The *ultimate righteousness* is right standing with God; counted righteous before God. You can’t have any greater righteousness in this life than being in *right standing with God!*

Commandment-keeping without the Holy Spirit of God, without the justification of Christ, is not as great as righteousness as the ultimate righteousness of being put in right standing with God.

Palm 119:172: “...all Your commandments are righteousness.” That is true! There is a righteousness of the law. That is true! But this is not the righteousness that we are talking about. We’re talking about the righteousness that puts you in right standing with God the Father in heaven above:

- through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ
- by the forgiveness of sin
- through the operation of grace

That’s what we’re talking about here in Gal. 2 and in Heb. 4. Let’s understand something here that is really important for us to realize. This is why Heb. 4:16 is so profound and important. Since God has done this:

- Christ has died for your sins

- He’s the *ultimate* sacrifice
- He’s the *ultimate* High Priest in heaven right now
- He is there as the *propitiation* for our sins
- He is there to *intercede* for us
- He is there to *bring forgiveness* from God the Father

That’s why we should come with boldness to the throne of grace, and that’s why we should do so immediately. We have direct access!

Heb. 5 begins by showing the comparison between the priesthood of Aaron and the priesthood which is now going to be called *of the order of Melchisedec*.

Hebrews 5:

Hebrews 5:1: “For... [because it connects, meaning a comparison] ...every high priest, being taken from among men to act in behalf of men, is appointed to serve in *the* things pertaining to God...” Talking about the temple service and everything that God ordered.

“...in order that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins; *and* he is able to deal gently with those who sin in ignorance and those who have been led astray, since he himself is also encumbered with many weaknesses. And because of these *weaknesses*, he is obligated also to offer *sacrifices* for his own sins, exactly as *he does* for the people. Now, no man takes the honor *of the high priesthood* upon himself, but *only* he who is called by God, in the same way as Aaron also was *called*. In this same manner also, Christ did not glorify Himself to become a High Priest, but He Who said to Him, ‘You are My Son; today I have begotten You.’ Even as He also says in another *place*, ‘**You are a Priest forever according to the order of Melchisedec**’” (vs 1-6).

Now we have the first place in the book of Hebrews where the priesthood of Christ is connected with Melchisedec. Let’s go back and look again at the verses leading up to this.

Verse 2: “...he is able to deal gently with those who sin in ignorance...” He, the ordinary high priest (v 1), is not required, nor does He have the capacity to sympathize on an experiential way the same way that Christ did. It’s impossible! He is only required to deal gently with those who sin in ignorance. Those who sin deliberately, willfully, what was the penalty for them? *Death!* There was no sacrifice for blood guiltiness. The actual sacrifice was the death of the person. Their blood was required. It’s completely different here. You have two categories of sin:

1. those in ignorance
2. those who have been led astray

We do the same thing today, but now we have a High Priest who understands. The human high priest, since he himself also has many weaknesses, this, in a sense, is to bring a humility to the high priest, that he also is human and encompassed with weaknesses. Also the same thing for those who are ministers today. They are encompassed with weaknesses, but their function is different than a priest.

- they do not offer sacrifices
- they offer prayers
- they do not stand between God and the people
- they point people to the High Priest in heaven above: Christ and God

Whereas the high priest, under the system that God gave of the Old Covenant, stood between the people and God. We won't get into a great detail concerning this because we'll cover that in later chapters. What was the humility of Christ? *Christ's humility was entirely different!* The humility of the human high priest was that he had human weaknesses like everyone else. So therefore, he was not be exalting himself over the people. He also had to offer the same sacrifices, and this is especially noted on the Day of Atonement.

Let's see what he had to do before he could go in and make any sacrifice for the people. Also, they had a lot of rules that they had to follow, to show the complete difference between the priesthood of the Old Testament and the priesthood of the New Testament.

Leviticus 16:2: "And the LORD said to Moses, 'Speak to Aaron your brother, that he does not come at all times into the sanctuary within the veil before the mercy seat, which is on the ark, so that he does not die, for I will appear in the cloud over the mercy seat.'"

What do we have today? We can, at any time, immediately have access to God the Father through Jesus Christ in heaven above, *any time!* So, here's was a restriction: Common people could not even have a clue as to what was on the inside of the temple, except what they were told. They couldn't go into the Holy part; they couldn't go into the Holy of Holies; they couldn't offer sacrifices, and so forth.

Verse 3: "Aaron shall come into the sanctuary this way..." Here's what he was to do, because of his weakness, because of his human

nature, because of the limitation that he is encompassed with, he shall come:

"...with a young bull, for a sin offering, and a ram for a burnt offering. He shall put on the Holy linen coat, and he shall have the linen breeches on his flesh, and shall be girded with a linen girdle, and with the linen miter he shall be dressed. *These are* Holy garments. And he shall wash his flesh in water and put them on. And he shall take from the congregation of the children of Israel two kids of the goats for a sin offering, and one ram for a burnt offering" (vs 3-5). Then it goes on to show what he should do with all of the offerings that he was to offer.

Verse 11: "And Aaron shall bring the young bull of the sin offering which is for himself, and shall make an atonement for himself and for his house, and shall kill the young bull of the sin offering which is for himself. And he shall take a censer full of coals of fire from off the altar before the LORD, and his hands full of fragrant incense beaten small, and bring it within the veil" (vs 11-12). Then what he was to do was to put in the incense on the coals.

When he went into the Holy of Holies, it was absolutely pitched dark, couldn't see anything. This must have been quite a profound experience. Later they had this: The Jews tied a rope around the waist of the high priest. Since only the high priest could go in there, the question was: What if he died? How are we going to get him out? So, they tied this rope around him, so if he didn't come out they could pull him out. This also illustrated something very profound: They had very limited access to God. Only one day of the year—the Day of Atonement—could the high priest go into the Holy of Holies. It was pitch black and he had to take in the censor of coals and incense and he had to sprinkle the incense on there. So, you had the smoke, you had the smell, you had all of this so it was absolutely impossible to see anything in there.

Spiritually, God put His presence there! But they couldn't see God, because no man has seen God. That's why Christ was sent. When it talks about that he had to offer sacrifices for himself and for his own weaknesses, this is what it's talking about, and in particularly concerning the Day of Atonement. See the difference? Paul is going through this to help us establish the superiority of Christ as our High Priest and help pave the way for the kind of worship that God wanted when the temple in Jerusalem would be destroyed.

Hebrews 5:4: "Now no man takes the honor of the high priesthood..." Remember what happened. I tell you, that's quite an account in Num.

16_[transcriber's correction].

“...upon himself, but *only* he who is called by God, in the same way as Aaron also was *called*” (v 4). This shows us what happened when Korah and different ones wanted to take over the priesthood. They came upon it with the same reason that human beings do with each other: *you’re no better than me*.

Numbers 16:1: “Now Korah, the son of Izhar, the son of Kohath, the son of Levi... [so he was a Levite] ...took both Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab, and On, the son of Peleth, sons of Reuben; even they rose up before Moses with some of the children of Israel, two hundred and fifty leaders of the assembly, chosen men of the congregation, men who were well-known.... [here we have an official committee] ...And they gathered themselves against Moses and against Aaron, and said to them, ‘*You take too much upon you since all the congregation are Holy, every one of them, and the LORD is among them. Why then do you lift yourselves up above the congregation of the LORD?*’” (vs 1-3).

Of course, this is absolutely not true. God is the One Who *appointed* Moses. Moses didn’t really want to go—did he? *No!* He didn’t even want to speak. He said, ‘Okay, I’m going to send your brother Aaron.’ In Exo. 21 we find that Aaron was selected as the high priest. God did the selecting!

Verse 4: “And when Moses heard *this*, he fell on his face.... [just fell over in praying to God] ...And he spoke to Korah and to all his company, saying, ‘Even at daybreak the LORD will show *who is His*, and who is Holy, and will cause him to come near to Him; even him whom He has chosen will He cause to come near to Him. Do this. Take censers...’” (vs 4-6). I like the way that God inspired Moses to do this: *let’s have you go ahead and try!*

“...Korah and all your company, and put fire in them, and put incense in them before the LORD tomorrow. And it shall be the man whom the LORD chooses, he *shall be* Holy. You take too much upon you, sons of Levi” (vs 6-7). The Levites were the ones who were to assist the priests. The Reubenites had nothing to do with it whatsoever. So, we have both cases.

Verse 8: “And Moses said to Korah, ‘Hear now you sons of Levi: *Is it* too little a thing to you that the God of Israel has separated you from the congregation of Israel to bring you near to Himself to do the service of the tabernacle of the LORD and to stand before the congregation to minister to them? And He has brought you near, and all your brothers the sons of Levi with you. And do you seek

the priesthood as well?’” (vs 8-10). You want to get promoted above that?

Verse 11: “Therefore, you and all your company *are* gathered against the LORD. And what is Aaron, that you murmur against him?’ And Moses sent to call Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab. And they said, ‘We will not come up’ (vs 11-12). We’re not even going to do that, Moses.

Verse 13: “*Is it* too little a thing that you have brought us up out of a land that flows with milk and honey to kill us in the wilderness, but must you *also make* yourself a prince over us?

So, they said they’re not going to do it. The rest of the story is this: They all came together the next day and God said, ‘Separate yourselves.’ What happened? *God opened up the earth!*

Verse 28: “And Moses said, ‘By this you shall know that the LORD has sent me to do all these works, *and that I have not done them* from my own heart. If these men die the common death of all men, or if they are visited according to the fate of all men, the LORD has not sent me. But if the LORD creates a new creation, and the earth opens her mouth and swallows them up with all that they have, and they go down alive into the pit, then you shall understand that these men have provoked the LORD’” (vs 28-30).

What happened? *As soon as Moses finished saying that*, v 31: “And it came to pass, as he had made an end of speaking all these words, the ground under them split apart. And the earth opened her mouth and swallowed them up, and their households, and all the men who *were* for Korah, and all *their* goods. They and all that they had went down alive into the pit, and the earth closed upon them. And they perished from among the congregation” (vs 31-33). Think what it is going to be to the *one who proclaims himself* to be God.

Not only are we talking about the priesthood, but Moses was the ‘general.’ He was a priest, but Aaron was the high priest. So, we have a similar setup with *the beast* and the *false prophet* at the end of the age. What do you suppose is going to happen to this man?

2-Thessalonians 2:3—he is called: “...and the man of sin shall be revealed—the and the man of sin shall be revealed—the son of perdition, the one who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God... [we saw what happened to Korah and his crew there] ...or that is an object of worship; so that he comes into the temple of God and sits down as God, proclaiming that he himself is God” (vs 3-4).

He's going to go right into the Lake of Fire. No man is going to set himself up and say he is God and get away with it. Look at all these false prophets who have come along to proclaim different things. Look at what happened to Jimmy Jones down in this area of San Francisco. Now we have another one rising up and calling himself an apostle.

Whenever anyone exalts himself to take an office of God, or a prerogative of God, then God is going to deal with him. This is why Christ did not exalt Himself. Rather, though He was the Son of God, He had His own humiliation to go through.

Hebrews 5:5: "In this same manner also, Christ did not glorify Himself..." It's interesting that the Greek has *the Christ*, meaning *the anointed One of God*.

"...to become a High Priest, but He Who said to Him, 'You are My Son; today I have begotten You'" (v 5). The whole purpose of Christ coming into the world was to be the High Priest and the King. It's interesting where this is taken from. I think it's profound that they're beginning with the introduction of Melchisedec as High Priest.

Psalms 2:1: "Why do the nations rage and the people plot in vain? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against the LORD and against His Christ, saying, 'Let us break Their bands asunder and cast away Their cords from us.' He who sits in the heavens laughs; the LORD scoffs at them. Then He shall speak to them in His wrath, and in His fury He terrifies them. 'Yea, I have set My King...' (vs 1-6).

Here we have the beginning of the introduction of Christ and Melchisedec as King and Priest.

"...upon Zion, My Holy mountain. I will declare the decree of the LORD. He has said to Me, 'You are My Son; this day I have begotten You'" (vs 6-7).

As we explained in *The Christian Passover* book, there was a time when the two of Elohim were neither the Father nor the Son. But the One Who became the Son then became the Son at the point that He was begotten in the virgin Mary. He was not perpetually the Son forever up to that point. Then the One of Elohim Who remained in heaven was the Father. He has begotten Him. We see two things here:

1. For a King

When Pilate asked: Are you a king? Jesus said, 'For this end was I born; for this reason I came

into the world.' So, now we have "...set as a King..." Also, on the day that He was begotten it was determined also that He would be

2. High Priest

Hebrews 5:6: "Even as He also says in another *place*, 'You are a Priest forever according to the order of Melchisedec.'" We have the Son Who is *the King*; now we have *High Priest* after the "...order of Melchisedec."

Psalms 110:1—this is a very interesting Psalm: "The LORD [Jehovah] said unto my Lord [Adonai]..." The Rabbinic text says 'Adoni' meaning like you would say of an ordinary man *my lord*, as you would to a king.

- Who gave this Psalm?
- Who wrote this? *David did!*
- Who was the Lord of David besides God?
- Was there another man over David?
- Was there another king over David that you would call 'Adoni'—or another man? *No!*

So this is actually the first LORD [Jehovah]—and that's why the booklet *The Two Jehovah's of the Psalms; the Two Jehovahs of the Pentateuch*. That is actually the Father saying to the One Who became the Son (Adoni)

"... 'Sit at My right hand until I make Your enemies as Your footstool'" (v 1).

And you can go through the New Testament and see over and over again that that means that Christ is the One Who is going to give it all back to God the Father. Could this not be God the Father in glory in heaven saying to Christ on earth, the Son of God? *Yes, it could be!*

We also find, v 4: "The LORD has sworn and will not repent, 'You are a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec.'" This has to be the Father saying to the Son.

That's what we have in Hebrews 5:6: "Even as He also says in another *place*, 'You are a Priest forever according to the order of Melchisedec.'" This has got to be the One Who became the Father saying to the One Who became the Son, "... 'You are a Priest forever according to the order of Melchisedec.'"

- Was David ever a priest? *No! So, He could not be saying it to David.*
- Was He saying it to any of the sons of Aaron? *No, He was not!*

This is a distinct thing in the Old Testament, which is a prophecy fulfilled in Heb. 5:6.

Matthew 22:41: “While the Pharisees were assembled together, Jesus questioned them, saying, ‘What do you think concerning the Christ? Whose son is He?’ They said to Him, ‘*The Son of David.*’ He said to them, ‘How then does David in spirit call Him Lord, saying, “The LORD said to my Lord, ‘Sit at My right hand, until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet’”? Therefore, if David calls Him Lord, how is He his Son?’” (vs 41-45)

This was very perplexing to them, because they understood at this time that ‘The LORD said to My Lord’ they’re talking about the One Who became Christ Who also was God before He became Christ. They could not understand ‘the LORD said to My Lord.’ They could not understand that He could be the son of David, because they knew that this conversation, this swearing, had to do with God telling another One Who was God what He was going to do. And they didn’t answer back, did they? So, it shows they understood the Scriptures a little better after the rabbis got done with them 200 years after Christ. That left them very perplexed.

The whole point of it here is that we see that ***Christ is destined to be King and High Priest!***

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*

Scriptural References:

- 1) Hebrews 4:9
- 2) Exodus 20:8-11
- 3) Isaiah 56:1-6
- 4) Hebrews 4:10-16, 15
- 5) Romans 8:1-3
- 6) Hebrews 2:9-10, 14-18
- 7) Hebrews 4:16
- 8) Hebrews 10:14-23
- 9) Galatians 2:12, 15-21
- 10) Psalm 119:172
- 11) Hebrews 5:1-6, 2
- 12) Leviticus 16:2-5, 11-12
- 13) Hebrews 5:4
- 14) Numbers 16:1-13, 28-33
- 15) 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4
- 16) Hebrews 5:5
- 17) Psalm 2:1-7
- 18) Hebrews 5:6
- 19) Psalm 110:1, 4
- 20) Hebrews 5:6
- 21) Matthew 22:41-45

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Mark 2:27
- Hebrews 7
- 1 John 4

- Hebrews 3
- Exodus 21

Also referenced:

Book: *The Christian Passover* by Fred R. Coulter
Articles: [Nature of God](#) and [Nature of Man](#)

Booklets:

- *Two Jehovahs of the Psalms*
- *Two Jehovahs of the Pentateuch*

Sermons: *What Kind of Human Nature Did Jesus Have?*

FRC: bo
Transcribed: 5-1-11
Reformatted/Corrected: January/2017

The Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews XV How Christ Qualified to be Our High Priest

(Chapter 5)
Fred R. Coulter

We're here in Hebrews 5, and from Heb. 4:15 all the way to Heb. 10:22 has to do with our High Priest Jesus Christ Who is a Priest after the order of Melchisedec. What Jesus did to be our High Priest is really a fantastic thing. With the religions of the world, there are various myths of heroes and sufferers, but none of them compare to what Jesus did.

Hebrews 5:1: "For every high priest, being taken from among men to act in behalf of men, is appointed to serve in *the* things pertaining to God in order that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins; *and* he is able to deal gently with those who sin in ignorance and those who have been led astray, since he himself is also encumbered with many weaknesses" (vs 1-2).

This is a different kind of humility that a physical priest would have, but now we're dealing with a spiritual priest, Jesus Christ Who is at the right hand of God in heaven above at the throne of grace where we can come at all times. Never forget that! ***You can come before God at all times, any time, any place, anywhere!***

Jesus had a different humiliation. He is able not only to deal tenderly, or gently with those who sin, but He is able to fully understand and empathize and have experiential compassion with them, because He was tempted in every point like all human beings, and yet, *without sin!*

Verse 3: "And because of these *weaknesses*, he is obligated also to offer *sacrifices* for his own sins, exactly as *he does* for the people." We will see the concluding remarks in Heb. 10, that all these sacrifices never really took away sin before God the Father in heaven above. It only justified them to the temple.

Verse 4: "Now, no man takes the honor of *the high priesthood* upon himself, but *only* he who is called by God, in the same way as Aaron also was *called*."

You can go through and see when the priesthood was challenged by those, how God deal with them. We have a principle today that is really being abused by many people: ***You don't appoint yourself to an honor such as this, or to appoint yourself as a teacher!***

I don't know how many of you get *The*

Journal, but it is a hodge-podge of all kinds of doctrines and teachings by many, many different men who purport to be teachers in the Church of God. Today, with the convenience of the computer and the convenience of setting up an e-mail site, you can have a teacher, a website, all of those things instantly. So, as a result, false teachings and heresies spread very far, very quickly and affects a lot of people.

This thing was actually beginning to occur before Paul died. Here is the big problem, and it's rooted in human nature. That's why in order to control ***carnal people***, various churches—in particularly the Catholic Church as well as many of the sister churches of the Catholic Church—have created a hierarchy to run and govern the people. Instead of having false teachers out here running all over, you've got them within the hierarchy and you've got them with aberrant behavior, as you see within the hierarchy. You have that evil on one hand, then you have the evil on the other hand—which is from those who perhaps may be converted, or perhaps think they are converted, or have a certain knowledge of the Word of God—because of one thing or another, they decide to appoint themselves as teachers.

So, whoever sets himself up as a teacher, God has several ways of handling it in what is called 'judgment.'

James 3:1: "My brethren, do not many of you become teachers, knowing that we will receive more severe judgment." That happens on a day-to-day basis because *judgment is now on the house of God*.

Those who are teachers put themselves under a stricter and higher condemnation of judgment when they do wrong than the average brethren they're trying to serve. They assume to speak for God! That's quite an assumption. In doing so, if they do not know the Scriptures or handle the Word of God deceitfully—as we've seen so many times—what happens? You can take the Truth of the Word of God and you can handle it deceitfully, and you can create

- error
- heresy
- false doctrine

Also, if they do not understand the true grace of God

and the love of God and commandment-keeping, and they get enamored with Jewish ritual and tradition, then they end up making Christ *Moses* and the Gospel *the law*. All of these problems are out there. If you have *The Journal* all you have to do is go through it and look at it and you can see all of these things are an ongoing problem. And not only do we have men doing it, we also have women preachers within the Church of God.

The fascination of the lust of being a teacher, to be in authority, strikes a lot of people. That's why we have the example of Christ and the humiliation that He went through, lest anyone assume to take upon themselves being a priest. That's why there are no priests today.

Verse 2: "Because we frequently offend, everyone of us. If anyone does not offend in what he says, this one *is* a perfect man *and is* able also to hold in check the whole body."

We've seen that, too. In a hierarchy, when sins and troubles and difficulties occur, what do they do? *They always cover it up!* No question about it! The hierarchy assumes a position of God. The Catholic hierarchy has the pope as the 'vicar of Christ,' which is antichrist. The cardinals are the princes of the church designed to support the pope to the point of death. The bishops are the presence of God in the church. All of those things are very blasphemous; the end result when people take upon themselves something that God never gave them.

The presence of God in the Church is the Holy Spirit in everyone that God has called, is converted and has given the Holy Spirit to. That's the presence of God in the Church, within the individual. Then the presence of God within the Church when we assemble together is that Spirit of God in us and the Spirit of God that He sends to be with us to help us fellowship with Him, to fellowship with each other and to learn and study His Word.

We've gone over this many times, but I tell you what, after watching some of these sessions on television—CSPAN—about the bishop's conference concerning pedophilia in the Roman Catholic Church priesthood, what they have done is voted God out of any part of what they are doing, because they have set their own standard, their own word, their own agenda, and they do not follow the Bible. They give it lip-service, but they don't preach it, they don't teach it, and that's generally what ends up happening with almost every false prophet—whatever degree: greater or lesser. That's why Paul gave this charge to Timothy.

2-Timothy 4:1: "I charge you, therefore, in

the sight of God, even the Lord Jesus Christ, Who is ready to judge *the* living and *the* dead at His appearing and His kingdom: Preach the Word!...." (vs 1-2). That is what is to be taught. To preach it honestly and to preach it truly, because these are the words of God.

"...Be urgent in season and out of season..." (v 2)—showing they kept the Holy Days, without a doubt. There's no use saying that unless it were true.

"...convict, rebuke, encourage, with all patience and doctrine" (v 2). That is 'rightly dividing' the Word of God (2-Tim. 2:15) to come up with the right doctrine.

For example: We constantly get a question similar to this: If Jesus said that 'not one jot or tittle shall in any way pass from the Law till all be fulfilled,' why should we not put blue threads in the borders of our garments? That's in the book of Moses. *Yes, it is! It's in the Law!* They don't read any further, because it says, 'so that when you see it you will remember the commandments and statutes of the Lord.' *Jesus fulfilled that and gave us a higher standard, and that higher standard is they're to be written in our hearts and our minds!* We don't need blue threads to remind us. We have it within us.

Not being able to discern the physical from the spiritual, there are false teachers who say that we have to have all of our garments with blue threads. The reason that happens is because they don't 'rightly divide the Word of God.' They don't understand the doctrine. A lot think they do; they think they're experts in it. Like one of the latest rages we have today with the calendar is everybody goes to the Holy Land and they look for the ripe barley. They don't have the wit to understand that the climate is not the same that it was when they did that. That's why God gave the Calculated Hebrew Calendar.

They get all enamored with this, and they get their minds off Christ, they get their mind off the Word of God, and they get caught up in these little silly things. Here's the reason:

- Do they have people that will listen to them? *Of course!*
- Do they have people who will follow them? *Yes!*

Even P.T. Barnum of Barnum & Bailey said, 'A sucker is born every minute.'

Verse 3: "For there shall come **a time when they will not tolerate sound doctrine**... [they want to have their own] ...but according to their own lusts... [that's where all of this is conceived, in

personal lust] ...they shall accumulate to themselves *a great number of teachers*, having ears itching to *hear what satisfies their cravings*; and they shall turn away their own ears from the Truth; and they shall be turned aside unto myths” (vs 3-4).

Whenever someone takes to himself that kind of thing to be a teacher or to be a priest then great trouble happens. We have seen it; the judgment’s going to come!

- Let’s understand about Christ!
- Let’s understand what He went through!

Hebrews 5:5: “In this same manner also, Christ did not glorify Himself to become a High Priest, but He Who said to Him, ‘You are My Son; today I have begotten You. Even as He also says in another *place*, ‘You *are* a Priest forever according to the order of Melchisedec’; Who, in the days of His flesh, offered up both prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears to Him Who was able to save Him from death, and was heard because *He* feared God. Although He was a Son, *yet*, He learned obedience from the things that He suffered; and having been perfected, He became *the* Author of eternal salvation to all those who obey Him, after He had been designated by God *as* High Priest according to the order of Melchisedec” (vs 5-10).

This quote, v 5: “...‘You are My Son; today I have begotten You,’” is taken from Psa. 2. A very interesting Psalm and a very interesting translation of one particular verse in the *Geneva Bible*.

Psalm 2:1: “Why do the nations rage and the people plot in vain?” This is an end-time prophecy, right here. This is what is happening today.

Verse 2: “The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against the LORD and **against His Christ**... [the Anointed]... [Who is the ‘Anointed One’? *Christ!*] ...saying, ‘Let us break Their bands asunder and cast away Their cords from us.’” (vs 1-3). ‘We are free, we have free moral agency, we can do whatever we want to do.’ Is that not the philosophy of today? *No doubt about it!*

Verse 4: “He who sits in the heavens laughs; the LORD scoffs at them. Then He shall speak to them in His wrath, and in His fury He terrifies them. ‘Yea, I have set My King upon Zion, My Holy mountain. I will declare the decree of the LORD. He has said to Me, “You are My Son; this day I have begotten You.”’” (vs 4-7). That is the day that He was conceived in the womb of the virgin Mary.

Then it goes on showing how Christ is going to come and take over the world, v 8: “Ask of Me... [here we have the Lord being the Father, the

Anointed One or the Christ being Christ] ...and I shall give the nations for Your inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Your possession. You shall break them with a rod of iron; You shall dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel” (vs 8-9). We find that in Rev. 2 about Shepherding the nations; He shares that with the saints.

Verse 10: “Now therefore, be wise, O kings; be admonished O judges of the earth. Serve the LORD with fear and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest He be angry and you perish in the way, for His wrath can flame up in a moment. Blessed are all who take refuge in Him” (vs 10-12).

Here we have a prophecy of Christ being appointed. We have the work that He is going to do, not only as a Priest, but also as a King. That becomes very important because under the Old Covenant no king could become a priest, and no priest could become a king. There was a division. But under the order of Melchisedec we will see—especially in Heb. 7—that it is *one*.

Hebrews 5:6: “Even as He also says in another *place*, ‘You *are* a Priest forever according to the order of Melchisedec.’” We find this in Psa. 110.

{note booklets: *The Two Jehovahs of the Psalms* and *The Two Jehovahs of the Pentateuch*} This establishes very important things here in the book of Psalms. I might just mention concerning the text of the Old Testament, that there is a rabbinical text called *A Masoretic Text* and there is a Levitical text called *A Masoretic Text*. The rabbinic text did a lot of juggling through the vowel points. They did so in Psa. 110. There are two words in the Old Testament for Lord:

1. YHVH—Jehovah
2. Adonai—‘adoni’ can apply to a man, ‘my lord’—the only difference is a vowel pointing

What has been done in last couple hundred years with the Hebrew text is the rabbis have gone through and have systematically eliminated any reference to anything other than one God. So, when a person goes back and looks into the Old Testament, they will say, ‘Oh, there’s only one God.’ But it is not numerically one single God. It is the One Who became Christ and the One Who became the Father—two of Elohim. There are two. They, as Jesus said, are ONE! Not meaning one person, but:

- one is spirit
- one in mind
- one in heart
- one in purpose
- one in work
- one in family

—and we are to become one with Them! So, when I did the series *Who was Jesus?*

Psalm 110:1 “The LORD said unto my Lord...” I said both of these meant YHVH or Jehovah, and at that time we were still using the term Yahweh. So, here’s the whole plan of God revealed right here, a prophecy of Christ. This was used by the apostles in preaching Christ more than any other section of the Old Testament to begin with.

“...‘Sit at My right hand until I make Your enemies as Your footstool.’” Notice how closely that ties in with Ps. 2; 1-Cor. 15.

Verse 2: “The LORD shall send the rod of Your strength out of Zion *saying*, ‘Rule in the midst of Your enemies.’” Isn’t that true? Does Christ rule in the midst of His enemies though they don’t understand it? *Yes, He does!*

Simply because every time you transgress a commandment of God His judgment is ruling over you. Let’s take it one step further, He rules over everyone. *He’s Creator!* So, whether men and women want to admit it or not, God is ruling over them, whether just through the physical creation that He has created in which they live and exist or whether they are called to repentance and come to God and let Christ be in them and rule over them, *God is ruling!* In the midst of the enemies, God will make it profound. What is the greatest example of that happening? *The book of Esther!* In the example of Esther and Mordecai and the proposed annihilation of the Jews, God turned that completely around because *He* rules “...in the midst of your enemies.”

Verse 3: “Your people will offer themselves in the day of Your power, in the beauties of Holiness from the womb of the morning: Yours is the dew of Your youth. The LORD has sworn and will not repent ... [there is no changing this]: ...**‘You are a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec’**” (vs 3-4).

In Heb. 7 we will cover more on Melchisedec. That is our priesthood today. That’s why any other priesthood is contrary to the will of God, and they have placed themselves in place of God.

Hebrews 5:7: “Who, **in the days of His flesh...**” This tells us that there was also a time when He was a *spirit being*.

John 1:14: “And the Word became flesh...”

Hebrews 5:7: “...**offered up** both prayers and supplications... [the Greek word here is the

same as ‘to offer up sacrifices’] ...with strong crying and tears to Him Who was able to save Him from death, and was heard because *He feared God.*”

We’ve got a whole chapter in *The Christian Passover* book about the nature of Christ in the flesh {Chpt. 26 The Meaning of the Body of Jesus Christ}. There were two things of death that He was saved from:

1. He would not sin and incur the death penalty
2. having died for the sins of the world, He would be resurrected from the dead

He did it with prayers and supplications and strong crying and tears. This was a great and a mammoth, profound struggle, fight, however you want to put it. For Christ to go through everything that He did and qualify to be a High Priest forever after the order Melchisedec, and He took upon Himself all of these things. This is why when we come through the book of Hebrews we find:

- chapter 1—Paul talks about the function of Christ, Who was the Son of God, purged our sins
- chapter 2—Paul talks about the suffering of Christ; being made like us
- chapter 3—Paul shows that Christ is greater than Moses
- chapter 4—What Christ went through because He now is our High Priest

Then, in this section, it brings it out in such a way to show that everything that He did was part of the sacrifice, meaning more than just the time when He was crucified on the cross and beaten with a scourge prior to that.

Let’s look at some things in the New Testament and let’s see part of the things of death that He was saved from. Matt. 2—the account of Herod wanting to know where the Christ was born. The wise men came and he talked to them; he asked where He was born. He called all the priests and scribes together and they said, ‘In Bethlehem.’ You know the story. They went down and they found the Christ, they gave the offerings that they had brought.

Matthew 2:11: “And when they had come into the house, they found the little Child with Mary His mother, and they bowed down and worshiped Him... [***You only worship God!***] ...then they opened their treasures *and* presented their gifts to Him—gold and frankincense and myrrh.”

God had to intervene and send the wise men home a different way and not go back to Herod. And He had to intervene and tell Joseph that Herod was going to come and try and kill the Child. Here we

find that God saved Him from death before He could even utter a prayer. They went on down to Egypt and then came back.

Part of what Jesus went through, and one of the most important things as far as a living sacrificial effort was the temptation that He went through enduring with Satan the devil and overcoming him. We will cover this at a later time, but needless to say that that was quite a thing, and He had to overcome Satan the devil while He was in the flesh as a human being; not God confronting Satan; not another angel confronting Satan, but God—as a man—overcoming Satan the devil.

Then we find this: Jesus came into Nazareth on the Sabbath Day and stood up to read and He read, Luke 4:21: “Then He began to say to them, ‘Today, this Scripture is being fulfilled in your ears.’” And they wondered who this was (v 22), and then He told them the truth:

Verse 24: “But He said, ‘Truly I say to you, no prophet is acceptable in his *own* country. For in truth, I say to you, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the heavens were shut up for three years and six months, and there was great famine upon all the land; and Elijah was not sent to any of them, but only to a widow in Sarepta, *a city* of Sidonia. There were also many lepers in Israel in the time of Elisha the prophet; and none of them were cleansed, but only Naaman the Syrian.’ Now, all in the synagogue who heard these things were filled with indignation” (vs 24-28)—not getting the point.

The difficulty that we see here and Jesus had to endure, He came unto His own and His own didn’t receive Him.

Verse 29: “And they rose up *and* cast Him out of *the* city, and led Him to the edge of the mountain on which their city was built, in order to throw Him down headlong; but He passed *safely* through their midst *and* departed” (vs 29-30). He escaped; there again He was saved from death. He was not to die until *the time*; yet, He had to be saved from death.

We will see that Christ had to always be weary of men. This is after He came to the temple, cast out the moneychangers and so forth.

John 2:23: “Now, when He was in Jerusalem at the Passover, during the Feast, many believed on His name, as they observed the miracles that He was doing. But Jesus did not entrust Himself to them, because He knew all *men*; and He did not need anyone to testify concerning man, for He Himself knew what was in man” (vs 23-25). You can just plug in there all the things we know of human nature

(Jer. 17:9; Rom. 8:7).

When He did another miracle, what did they want to do? And all the way through Jesus had to escape death. This is the account of the man who had the infirmity for 38 years; Jesus healed him.

John 5:14: “After these things, Jesus found him in the temple and said to him, ‘Behold, you have been made whole. Sin no more, so that something worse does not happen to you.’.... [that’s a very profound Scripture for us all to understand] ...The man went away and told the Jews that it was Jesus Who had made him whole. And for this cause, the Jews persecuted Jesus and sought to kill Him, because He had done these things on a Sabbath. But Jesus answered them, ‘My Father is working until now, and I work.’ So then, on account of this *saying*, the Jews sought all the more to kill Him, not only because He had loosed the Sabbath, but also *because* He had called God His own Father, making Himself equal with God” (vs 14-18).

They knew and they understood that He was the Son of God. Every time this came up they wanted to lay hands on Him and kill Him. Let’s see this again:

(go to the next track)

John 8:52: “Then the Jews said to Him, ‘Now we know that You have a demon....’” Not only did He suffer the persecution and false accusation and everything like that, remember what Jesus told the disciples: ‘If they call Me Baalzebul, think of what they’re going to call you.’ Now is not the time for salvation of the world, and that’s the whole point of the Day of Atonement.

“...Abraham and the prophets died; yet, You say, ‘If anyone keeps My words, he shall not **taste of death forever**’” (v 52). It doesn’t say that a person can’t die, but he won’t “...taste of death forever”—pointing to the resurrection

Verse 53: “Are You greater than our father Abraham who died? And the prophets, *who* died? Who do You make Yourself *to be*?” Jesus answered, ‘If I glorify Myself, My glory is nothing. It is My Father Who glorifies Me, *of Whom* you say that He is your God. Yet, you have not known Him...’” (vs 53-55).

Remember that Scripture whenever you’re confronted by someone who says that the God of the Old Testament was the Father.

“...but I know Him. And if I say that I do not know Him, I shall be a liar, like you. But I know Him, and I keep His Word. Abraham your father was overjoyed to see My day; and he saw *it*, and rejoiced.” Then the Jews said to Him, ‘You are not

even fifty years *old*, and You have seen Abraham?" Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly I say to you, before Abraham was born, I AM" (vs 55-58).

Now, we'll get a little Greek here: 'genesthai'—which means an aorist past tense infinitive *to be*. 'before Abraham *came to be*, I AM'—'ego-emi' {note sermon: *I AM That I AM*} and this is a name of God. He was clearly revealing to them that He was God.

Here again He was saved from death, v 59: "Then they picked up stones to throw at Him. But Jesus concealed Himself and went out of the temple, passing through the midst of them, and in this manner departed."

Here we've got the same thing. They came to Jesus and said to Him, 'Who are You?' He said, *The One I've told you all along*. 'If You're the Son of God, tell us.' *I have, but you didn't believe Me!*

John 10:27: "**My sheep hear My voice...**" Go back to the first part of John 10, *the sheep do not hear the voice of a stranger*. So, when you truly have the Spirit of God and you understand the Word of God sufficiently, what is it you are able to do? *You're able to discern whether a preacher is teaching Truth or not!* Whether it is really the words of Christ or not! What has to happen is that in your relationship with God, which is with God the Father and Jesus Christ, you have God's Spirit in you. You have a relationship based upon prayer and study and living God's way. When anything comes along from a teacher who is not teaching the Word of God, you recognize it immediately.

Another thing that is profound is this: We have the written Word; we have it recorded here. These were once spoken. So, if you read these words and you understand these words and you live by these words, ***then you are hearing the voice of Christ!*** That's why He said, "My sheep hear My voice and I know them, and they follow Me" (v 27). Very important! You follow Christ! Paul said, 'Follow me as I follow Christ.' He also said, 'Be followers of God as dear children.'

We are to follow Christ. This way then no man, no organization can presume to take eternal life from you—period! Regardless of what they may do to you, they cannot take that away. We're living in a time right now where now is the time to be building that up and storing that up and using that, because we're going to be confronted—however long down the road it's going to take, we don't know—with the most horrific events in the entirety of the history of the world. ***We'd better be following Christ! We'd better be filled with the Spirit of God and know the Truth of God!***

Verse 28: "And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish... [this always got under the skin of the Jews] ...and no one shall take them out of My hand. My Father, Who has given *them* to Me, is greater than all; and no one has the power to seize *them* from My Father's hand. I and the Father are one" (vs 28-30).

Here's a case when again He had to be saved from death, v 31: "Then the Jews again picked up stones so that they might stone Him. Jesus answered them, 'Many good works I have showed you from My Father. For which of them are you about to stone Me?' The Jews answered Him, saying, 'We will not stone You for a good work, but for blasphemy, and because You, being a man, are making Yourself God.' Jesus answered them, 'Is it not written in your law... [which you never study] ..."I said, 'You are gods'?" If He called them gods, to whom the Word of God came' (and the Scriptures cannot be broken)" (vs 31-35).

That does not mean *judges* because the word there is Elohim in the Hebrews, showing the destiny of what human beings are to become.

Verse 35: "'If He called them gods, to whom the Word of God came' (and the Scriptures cannot be broken)... [How about that! New Testament Scripture!] ...'why do you say *of Him* Whom the Father has sanctified and sent into the world, "You are blaspheming," because I said, "I am *the* Son of God"? If I do not do the works of My Father, do not believe Me. But if I do, even if you do not believe Me, believe the works; so that you may perceive and may believe that the Father *is* in Me, and I in Him.' Then they again sought to take Him; but He escaped out of their hands" (vs 35-39).

We know that He was then given over into their hands all the suffering and everything that Jesus went through.

Let's look at a couple of Psalms which then helps bring about these things and expand it for us even more. We're going to get into the things that He suffered leading up to His physical death. This shows us the kind of mind, heart and attitude that we need to have.

Psalms 116:1: "I love the LORD because He hears my voice and my prayers." It said Jesus was heard. What did Jesus say when He was asking God to raise Lazarus from the dead? *Father, I thank You that You have heard Me, for You always hear Me!* We need to have that confidence in our prayers, too, brethren. God always hears us! He gives according to His will! This is a direct prophecy of what we are reading the fulfillment of in Heb. 5:

Verse 2: "Because He has bowed down His

ear to me, therefore, I will call upon Him as long as I live. The sorrows of death hemmed me in, and the pains of the grave took hold upon me; I found trouble and sorrow. Then I called upon the name of the LORD: ‘O LORD, I beseech You, deliver my soul.’.... [of course, God did] ...Gracious is the LORD, and righteous; yea, our God is merciful. The LORD preserves the simple; I was brought low, and He saved me” (vs 2-6). In other words, helped him up. Yes, God heard him!

All of this then becomes part of the sacrifice of Christ. Not just the physical things that happened to Him, but His state of mind, His prayers, His yielding to God—everything that He went through was part of that sacrifice.

Psalm 55:1: “Give ear to my prayer, O God, and hide not Yourself from my supplication. Attend to me, and answer me; I am distraught in my trouble and moan in my complaint because of the voice of the enemy; because of the oppression of the wicked—for they cast mischief upon me, and in anger they hate me.... [Jesus had to live with hatred all His life] ...My heart is pained within me; and the terrors of death have fallen upon me. Fear and trembling have come upon me, and horror has overwhelmed me” (vs 1-5).

I’m sure that these are some of the thoughts that He had while He was going through scourging. Scourging was meant also to kill. As a matter of fact, most of those who were scourged died of the scourging. They didn’t have to crucify them. So, what happened with Jesus, he took two things of death:

1. the scourging
2. the crucifixion

That’s all a part of why Christ is the High Priest that He is. That’s all a part of why we can go to God at any time, through Christ, and know that:

- He hears us
 - He understands us
- and with His Spirit in us:
- He is living in us and experiencing those things yet again within us
- that we can have full confidence and trust and faith in Christ as our High Priest.

With that, you don’t need a man for a high priest. You don’t need a man to go confess your sins to. What can he forgive that God cannot already forgive? *Nothing!* Let’s see what Jesus experienced when He went through this.

- He did this for us!
- He did this to be our Savior!
- He experienced this to be our High Priest!

This is why Christ is so great, and the New Testament and New Covenant is so supreme! It is the greatest thing that God could do.

Psalm 69:1: “Save me, O God, for the waters have come in upon my soul! I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing; I have come into deep waters, where the floods overwhelm me” (vs 1-2).

This is the feelings of emotions, just completely overcoming. He wasn’t in some river. He wasn’t in some mud-bog. This is how He felt on the inside as He was experiencing these things.

I saw a special on people who have panic attacks. There are a lot of people who have such insecure things and panic attacks; they’re afraid of everything. Christ died and experienced those things similar to what those who have panic attacks go through so that He can save those who have that from it. That’s why the place to turn in all of these things is to Christ. That’s why it says:

- He knows!
- He experienced!
- He lived it!

Verse 3: “I am weary with my crying; my throat is parched... [Remember when He was on the cross? He said, ‘I thirst!’] ...my eyes fail while I wait for my God. Those who hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of my head; those who would cut me off are mighty being wrongfully my enemies. Should I restore what I did not take away?” (vs 3-4).

Now it blends back down into David’s prayer, v 5: “O God, You know my foolishness, and my sins are not hidden from You.” Who took all that upon Himself? *Christ did!* Though He never sinned, He never was foolish, He took all of that upon Himself—all the foolishness and stupidity of men. Isn’t that something? *Yes, it is!* Christ also had to experience something that many, many people go through, and that is they don’t know where God is. Though they cry out to God, He doesn’t hear, He doesn’t answer, so therefore they feel as though God has forsaken them.

I think one of the most tragic things that I recall is a true story of a man who was in combat and he was praying, ‘Oh, God, deliver me out of this mess, don’t let me die, and within a few seconds a bullet went right through his head.’ I imagine that he felt, while he was praying, desperate, that he was alone. Some of the men who saw him praying and then die a few seconds after he prayed, they didn’t believe God. ‘God didn’t hear him. Where is God?’ Christ also had to take that upon Himself. That’s

why He had to, as it is prophesied in Psa. 22, and this is what He said when He was on the cross:

Psalms 22:1: “My God, my God, why have You forsaken Me...” There will be times in the lives of every human being that they will feel that God has forsaken them. But God hasn’t! God won’t! But when you are at this point like Christ was:

- Will you still *trust* in God?
- Will you still *believe* God?
- Will you still *hold fast* to the Truth?

—even though the whole world is against you! That’s what Christ had to go through.

“...and *why are You* so far from helping me, and from the words of my groaning?” (v 1).

I tell you, that’s something! It got so bad, v 6: “But I am a worm, and no man...” That’s how low Christ got! You talk about a humiliation. And all of these things, brethren, qualified Him to be our High Priest. Everything that He went through and endured and suffered His whole life then all culminated in the crucifixion and that’s why He’s our High Priest.

I heard of a man who some years ago renounced Christ and now he’s on his deathbed. A friend of mine called me and asked me if I would call him. I called and he wouldn’t even answer. I tell you what, ***we need to trust God at all times!*** That’s why it’s so important, brethren, to know and understand the Word of God and live by it and believe it. ***Don’t let any man, don’t let anyone, don’t let anything come between you and God!***

Though you get down as low as feeling like you are a worm, and the “...reproach of men and despised by the people. All who see Me mock Me... [H was on the cross and they came by taunting Him] ...they shoot out the lip; they shake the head, saying” (vs 6-7).

You will be taunted this way; Christ was taunted this way, yet, He was faithful. That’s all a part of the suffering and things that He went through. This is how Christ was perfected. God Who is up here as a Spirit Being. I don’t know how God experiences suffering of people when He’s viewing it, or knowing that it’s happening, but it is an entirely different thing for God to become a man and to suffer all of these things in the flesh, and to do so at the hands of His own creation.

Verse 8—despite everything that was going on, they taunted Him and said, “He trusted on the LORD; let Him deliver Him; let Him rescue Him, since He delights in Him!” And they said, ‘Look, if you be the Christ, prove it right now; come down off

the cross, then we will believe You.’ Then He would be disobeying God. So, what did Christ do? *He thought clear back to the time of when He was made a human being!*

Verse 9: “For You are He who took Me out of the womb, causing Me to trust while on My mother’s breasts. I was cast upon You from birth; You are My God from My mother’s womb” (vs 9-10).

Remembering the whole experience. Our lives are such that we have virtually no conscience memory of anything beyond going back to two-years-old, if that much. But here Christ had the conscience memory of when He was begotten. So, that strengthened Him.

Verse 11: “Be not far from Me; for trouble is near, for there is none to help. Many bulls have encircled around Me...” (vs 11-12). This is referring to all the demons. I imagine that Satan and the demons were out there circling around the cross with all of their hideousness and all of their laughing. It reminds me of when I hear a hyena. That’s what I have in mind when I think of this time when they were out there circling. Of course, the people couldn’t see them, but they were there circling the cross thinking that, yes, if He dies ‘We’ve got Him! We’ve killed the Messiah! We have done Him in!’ This is what it’s talking about here.

Verse 12: “Many bulls have encircled around Me; strong bulls of Bashan have surrounded Me. They opened wide their mouths at Me, like a ravening and a roaring lion.... [this has got to be the demons out this doing this] ...I am poured out like water, and all My bones are out of joint; My heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of My bowels” (vs 12-14).

He could just feel life coming right out of Him. Quite a thing, brethren, what Christ did. This is all a part of *why* He is our High Priest. Of *why* you can have full faith and confidence always in Him!

Verse 15: “My strength is dried up like a potsherd, and My tongue clings to My jaws; dogs have surrounded Me; a band of evildoers have encircled Me; they have pierced My hands and My feet; and You have brought Me into the dust of death. I can count all My bones...” (vs 15-17).

He could look down and the flesh was off His ribcage and He could look down and see His ribs.

“...they look and gloat over Me. They divide My garments among them and cast lots upon My vesture. But You, O LORD, be not far from Me; O My strength, hasten to help Me! Deliver My soul

from the sword, My precious *life* from the power of the dog. Save Me from the lion's mouth; yea, and from the wild ox's horns. You have answered Me" (vs 15-21). Right from the altar of God!

Then because of this, v 22: "I will declare Your name to My brethren..." You are the brothers of Christ! Christ came down and did this:

- He emptied Himself of being God
- became a human being
- lived a perfect life

—though He was tempted in every way such as we are—

- then was crucified in this horrendous way
- died this horrible death

and God heard His prayers; God resurrected Him from the dead. That's why He is such a great, marvelous and supreme High Priest! That's why He's greater than any priesthood of a man. No human being can understand that! No human being can empathize with that! But Christ can, because He went through it.

Hebrews 5:7: "...[He] offered up both prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears to Him Who was able to save Him from death, and was heard because *He feared God*."

This Godly fear means that He always understood and recognized the will of God and the sovereignty of God and everything that has to do with the power and love and being of God.

Luke 22—this was a prayer, but it was also conversation with God. This shows Christ's yieldedness to God, His fear of God, and why He was heard.

Luke 22:39: "Then He left *the house and* went, as He was accustomed, to the Mount of Olives; and His disciples also followed Him. And when He arrived at the place, He said to them, 'Pray *that you* do not enter into temptation.' And He withdrew from them about a stone's throw; and falling to *His* knees, He prayed, saying, 'Father, if You are willing to take away this cup from Me... [if this is not it, save Me from it] (but if this is it): **...nevertheless, not My will, but Your will be done.**'" (vs 39-42).

Isn't that the way it is when we get in a tight bind? We always look to our own will. Too many times we look to our own devices, our own schemes, rather than trusting God; rather than yielding ourselves to the will of God. He knew this was it!

Verse 43: "Then an angel from heaven appeared to Him, strengthening Him.... [He had the weakness of flesh] ...And being in agony..." (vs 43-44). That's part of what it's talking about here:

strong crying and tears, in agony, because He knew all the prophecies that He had given in the Old Testament showing how He would die. All of these things were flooding into His mind at this time, I'm sure. That's why He was in agony.

"...He prayed more earnestly. And His sweat became as great drops of blood falling down to the ground. And after rising up from prayer, He came to *His* disciples *and* found them sleeping for grief" (vs 44-45).

Isn't that always true? Somehow it's a quirk of human nature, because the trouble is so bad, what human beings try to do is block it out of their minds. Part of the way of doing that is becoming sleepy. That's what happens to these people who have these panic attacks. It gets so much upon them that they just stay in their houses. Then they withdraw in depression so much that all they do is sleep. Not just for a physical reason because they're tired—that may happen to some people who have physical problems—but because they are so wrapped up in fear that it puts them to sleep.

Here are the disciples—and remember, this happened three times—'can't you even watch for an hour.'

Verse 46: "Then He said to them, 'Why are you sleeping? Arise and pray, so that you do not enter into temptation.'" I think that when we come to the disasters at the end, I wonder how many people are going to be sleeping at the switch. Just makes you wonder, because that's a weakness of human nature. But not of Christ!

Hebrews 5:8: "Although He was a Son, *yet*, He learned obedience from the things that He suffered." This doesn't mean that He ever transgressed or was disobedient. This means all of the different situations where He was confronted with saving His own neck, or trusting God to keep Him from death. He had different situations of *how* to be obedient. That's what it's really talking about. So, "...He learned obedience from the things that He suffered"—everything He went through!

Likewise, we go through similar things. How are we obedient? In what circumstances? And in this circumstance, how do we obey God? In another circumstance, how do we obey God? We learn obedience that way! That's what Christ also learned.

Verse 9: "And having been perfected..." That's a profound statement, because God is perfect. And Christ coming in the flesh had perfect obedience. How was it then that He was perfected? *By being in the flesh and going through all of these circumstances and going through the scourging and*

crucifixion and everything that means! That perfected Him

- in His love for His creation
- in His love for God the Father
- in His love for human beings

He had to go through this to be perfected in this way: *that He might save us!* Therefore, v 9: "...He became *the* Author of eternal salvation to all those who obey Him."

- ✓ *Two Jehovahs of the Psalms*
- ✓ *Two Jehovahs of the Pentateuch*
- Sermon Series: *Who was Jesus?*
- Sermon: *I AM That I AM*

FRC: bo
Transcribed: 4-22-11
Reformatted/Corrected: January/2017

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*

Scriptural References:

- 1) Hebrews 5:1-4
- 2) James 3:1-2
- 3) 2 Timothy 4:1-4
- 4) Hebrews 5:5-10, 5
- 5) Psalm 2:1-12
- 6) Hebrews 5:6
- 7) Psalm 110:1-4
- 8) Hebrews 5:7
- 9) John 1:14
- 10) Hebrews 5:7
- 11) Matthew 2:11
- 12) Luke 4:21, 24-30
- 13) John 2:23-25
- 14) John 5:14-18
- 15) John 8:52-59
- 16) John 10:27-39
- 17) Psalm 116:1-6
- 18) Psalm 55:1-5
- 19) Psalm 69:1-5
- 20) Psalm 22:1, 6-22
- 21) Hebrews 5:7
- 22) Luke 22:39-46
- 23) Hebrews 5:8-9

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- 2 Timothy 2:15
- Revelation 2
- Hebrews 7
- 1 Corinthians 15
- Luke 4:22
- Jeremiah 17:9
- Romans 8:7

Also referenced:

- Book: *The Christian Passover* (Chpt. 26 [The Meaning of the Body of Jesus Christ](#)) by Fred R. Coulter
- Booklets:

The Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews XVI Going Backward Spiritually

(Chapter 5)
Fred R. Coulter

Let's go back and review just little bit here. I think this is really something that we need to understand of God and Christ.

Hebrews 5:8: "Although He was a Son, yet He **learned** obedience..." There is a difference between being God in spirit—you are righteous, righteous by nature—and you give that up and become a human being and take on human nature. He *learned* how it is for human beings to be obedient. That is all a very important part of being a High Priest Who can understand and have compassion and sympathize with those that He is High Priest for—**us!** That's quite a thing!

- Does God have all knowledge? *Of course!*
- With all that knowledge can He still learn?
- Why not?
- Does that mean that He's deficient because He learns? *No!*

Verse 9: "And having been perfected..." In spirit, as a spirit being, God is perfect. *No question about it!* But when He gave up being a spirit being to become a human being, He was *spiritually perfected* by the things that He did. Though God is perfect, can He become more perfect? *Yes!* It's the same with us, and this is given to us as an example that since Christ learned—and He was God—and in the flesh He was perfected:

- that helps us to understand that we can be perfected
- that helps us to understand that God wants us to become one as Christ was

Let's see where this is carried through:

Hebrews 6:1: "Therefore, advancing beyond the beginning principles of the doctrines of Christ, we should go on to perfection..." Christ is the example. That's why we have the Gospels telling all about His life, what He did, how He did it and so forth. All of this then relates to our salvation.

Hebrews 5:9: "And having been perfected, He became *the* Author of eternal salvation to all those who obey Him." Let's just plug some Scriptures in here for this:

John 14—here we find exactly the same thing; it reiterates that Jesus is the Author of salvation and it also reiterates obedience to Christ. Here's a basic, fundamental Scripture in which the

whole New Testament is built upon:

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.**'" As we've seen in the past, that's a very exclusive statement:

- it excludes everything else
- it excludes all other religions
- it excludes all other beliefs
- it excludes all of those who use the name of Christ, but preach lawlessness

When we put these verses together with Heb. 5:9, then it has even more power and understanding. As we go through here, what we are learning is that the reason that they became sluggish in understanding and dull of hearing is because they were not doing the things in Isa. 28: 'precept upon precept; line upon line.'

Verse 15: "If you love Me, keep the commandments—namely, My commandments." That is basic and fundamental. People can talk about love all they want, but lawless love is *you love the Lord and whatever you do is okay!* He understands and you have grace and forgiveness. That's not what He's saying. Then other people will say, 'Keep My commandments.' Those are the commandments of Jesus. Those are not the Ten Commandments in the Old Testament.

When they don't know that Christ was the Lord God of the Old Testament, they don't understand that He's the One Who gave the Ten Commandments. Let's just give them the benefit of doubt and say, 'All right, Jesus' commandments.' Which commandment did Jesus give which is contrary to any of the Ten Commandments? *Not a one!* That's very important for us to understand and realize, especially when we come to a couple more verses later where it says the time ought to be that you be teachers. Now, that doesn't mean that you're going to be teachers in a pulpit or anything like that necessarily. But it means all of those who are the disciples of Christ or the believers in Jesus Christ for salvation. They ought to be able to explain the Scriptures to other people; to '*give an answer to the hope that lies within them.*' These things are very important.

Now we come down here to the real nitty-gritty, v 21: "The one who has My commandments..." Not only do you know them, but

you have them, indicating that you understand that it's a way to live.

"...and is keeping them, that is the one who loves Me..." (v 21).

1-John 2:3: "And by this *standard* we know that we know Him: if we keep His commandments. The one who says, 'I know Him' and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the Truth is not in him" (vs 3-4). When we put all the Scriptures together then it agrees completely.

John 14:21: "...and the one who loves Me shall be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will manifest Myself to him." Judas (not Iscariot)... [did not understand that] ...said to him, 'Lord, what has happened that You are about to manifest Yourself to us, and not to the world?'" (vs 21-22). It's a spiritual process by the Spirit of God, by the Word of God.

The world doesn't know it or understand it. It's not that He's going to appear in vision, or He's going to appear in person. He's going to manifest Himself through the Spirit of God, and through the love and commandments of God. Notice how He answers:

Verse 23: "Jesus answered and said to him, 'If anyone loves Me, he will keep My Word... [that's everything that Jesus said, *every* word] ...and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him. The one who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the Word that you hear is not Mine, but the Father's, Who sent Me'" (vs 23-24).

He gave commandment to Christ, what He should say and what He should do. If you reject the New Testament as well as the Old Testament, Who are you really rejecting? *You're rejecting God the Father, the Sovereign of the universe; the greatest being that there is!* This shows that He gives eternal salvation to those who obey Him and then obedience and love go hand-in-hand.

Matt. 7 is another basic Scripture. If you don't understand these basic Scriptures, then it's impossible for you to go on to perfection as Paul says in Heb. 6:1. You will be hung up on 'should I' or 'shouldn't I' and which commandment and which commandment not. Then when you're hung up on that and you don't have enough spiritual understanding, then you end up being just like the one's noted here who became false prophets.

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. Many will say to Me in

that day ... [we're going to see this more and more] ...'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?' And then I will confess to them, 'I never knew you. Depart from Me, you who work lawlessness.'" (vs 21-23). This tells us that there is no salvation without obedience (Heb. 5:9). There is no salvation with lawlessness.

Verse 24: "Therefore, everyone who hears these words of Mine and practices them, I will compare him to a wise man, who built his house upon the rock." Christ is the Rock. 1-Cor. 3:9-12 about building on the foundation of Christ. We're all going to have difficulties. I don't think a one of us who's been converted would raise a hand or say 'since I've been baptized I haven't had a single trial and that's been 20 years. *No!*

Verse 25: "And the rain came down, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house..." This is likened to everything in the world. What does Satan send out after those who were escaping he sends out water; He sends out a flood (Rev. 12). This is likened to the trial. Who is the 'prince of the power of the air'? So, we have wind.

"...and beat upon that house..." There are times when you feel *beat upon!* There are trials and difficulties that you will go through and you will feel that way. Sometimes they will come one after another just like gusts of wind, in waves!

"...but... [if you're built on the Rock] ...it did not fall, for it was founded upon the rock" (v 25). That's what all of the book of Hebrews is about; that you stay founded on Christ all the way through. You understand that He is a great and fantastic and marvelous High Priest Who is interceding for us, Who is our propitiation. He sends the Holy Spirit to comfort us in all circumstances and He is there concerned for us day and night. That's what's important. That's why we have the Sabbath and study the Word of God on the Sabbath. When we come to Sabbath services:

- we can be strengthened spiritually
- we can be reinforced with the Word of God
- we can go out and beat upon this next week and make it back here next Sabbath

It happens to every single one of us! I don't say much of the trials and difficulties that I go through, but I go through plenty. Maybe of a little different nature than yours; many of them maybe of the same kind of nature as yours. It involves not just myself, but other people. We're all together; that's why we're brethren, and we can be rest assured that's

why Christ went through everything that He went through and suffered.

Hebrews 5:10: “After... [these things that He had gone through] ...He had been designated by God *as* High Priest according to the order of Melchisedec.”

Nearly all the rest of Hebrews thru chapter 10 has to do with the priesthood of Melchisedec. It has to do with showing a very important thing: that the New Covenant is *superior* to the Old Covenant. The priesthood of Christ is *superior*; you can't get anything greater or better than the High Priesthood of Jesus Christ after the order of Melchisedec. Can a man, as high priest, be as effective as God as High Priest? Maybe put in those terms it's easier to understand. *Of course not!*

Verse 11: “Concerning Whom we *have* much to say and hard to explain, since you have become dull of in hearing.... [understanding or dull] ...For truly, by this time you ought to be teachers, *but instead* you need to have *someone* teach you again what *are* the beginning principles of the oracles of God, and have become those in need of milk, and not of solid food. For everyone who is partaking of milk *is* unskilled in *the* Word of Righteousness because he is an infant. But solid food is for those who are fully grown... [spiritually mature] ...who through repeated practice have had their senses trained to discern between good and evil” (vs 11-14).

Hebrews 6:1: “Therefore, advancing beyond the beginning principles of the doctrines of Christ, we should go on to perfection...”

Let me give you an example of what it is to stay with the beginning principles, and I'll use the example of the Baptist Church: Every Sunday when they get together they have an *altar call*. Everything stays at that elementary level. Then they keep themselves at that elementary level because they have a licentious, lawless grace. Therefore, once they've 'given their heart to the Lord'—as they have it; and once they have come forward to confess Christ publicly, then it's a *completed work*. Everything is done, and from that time forward all you have to do is have a 'good feeling' in your heart, and that tells you that what you're doing is right. So, they have just entered into the sandbox and haven't even gotten down to play in the sand.

Can you learn how to be a full, mature human being—even in the world—if you stay in grades one, two and three. You go to school 12 years and four times you go 1, 2, 3. By time you have gone through it you know what's going to be said, and if you know what's going to be said, what

happens? *You've heard it before so you don't listen!*

Just like when I travel on a plane, what do the stewardesses instruct the passengers all the time? Just look around and you can see all the 'seasoned' travelers. The stewardess is up there explaining it and demonstrating—they have it now on a little video projected screen—and they tell you about the basics of the plane. Here is the plane and here are the emergency exits, the lights, the white lights lead to red lights and the red lights lead to the exits and look at the exits in front and look at the exits behind and find out where it is. In case of air pressure loss; the masks will come down and put it on yourself first, and even though the bag is not blown up there is oxygen flowing and then you put it on someone else who is in need of you. And in case of an accident, you bend over and grab your knees and hold on tight. If you need to have a flotation device, there's one under the seat and you can pull the cord and blow it up, and all of us know that.

All of those who are travelers who have heard this over and over again, what do we do? *We're sitting there reading or writing or doing something else!* Likewise, when it comes to 'religion,' and if they hear the same thing over and over again, it's just like I reiterated with what the stewardesses do. They also show you how to put on the seatbelt. I mean, that's elementary. How did we get there? *Most people drove in a car!* What did we wear? *A seatbelt!* Listen, if we don't know how to put on seatbelts... But, what happens? I'll give you another example: Driving in the car you get so use to the seatbelts that many times you don't even use it. Why? *Because it's there!*

This is what happened to those that Paul wrote the book of Hebrews to. They just stayed with the basics and got so dull of hearing that in Heb. 2 it says, 'you're in danger of slipping away.' And then all the warnings—chapters 2-4—now into chapter five he's explaining how it came about.

They're "...dull of hearing" What happens when that occurs? If you're not constantly learning and growing and maturing, what happens? What happens if you become dull or sluggish of hearing? *You begin to lose it!* That's what happens, and then:

Matthew 13:14: “And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah, which says, 'In hearing you shall hear, and in no way understand... [they're sluggish in hearing] ...and *in* seeing you shall see, and in no way perceive.'”

Isn't that true with the Word of God; *especially* with the Word of God. Many people have the Bible—the Word of God—but they don't perceive what it is, or understand what it is. And it's

the greatest book in the world, which tells you about eternal life!

Yet, isn't it incongruous that the same people who have closed their eyes and their ears to it and don't understand it, what do they want? *They want peace, God's blessing!* You know they do because they don't want God's cursing. I have yet to hear anyone say, 'Oh, God, please curse me.' Of course, that's incongruous! Yet, they have the Word of God, and because they won't read it—and more particularly because they won't obey it—and if they're a religious person and then they hear the same thing over and over again, they just become dull of hearing and they shut their ears and close their eyes just like this:

Verse 15: "For the heart of this people has grown fat, and their ears are dull of hearing... [just like Heb. 5] ...and their eyes they have closed... [it's something *they do*] ...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."

If you are in the category then of sluggish of hearing and 'dull of hearing' and so forth, then pretty soon you're going to get to the point that you just even forget that. I wonder how many millions of 'marginal Baptists' are out there who have gone to church so many times and they've heard the same thing over and over again that they could pay very little attention to it and don't even go to church, even on Sunday, likewise with the people in the Church of God. This is where it's very important in knowing, learning and understanding the Word of God. That if the one who is doing the teaching does not increase in his knowledge and understanding, how can he increase the knowledge and understanding of the brethren?

Here's a very profound principle for those who are teachers, because we have to be learning all the time, too. When we teach and preach, we should also be doing so to ourselves. Not only can the hearers become dull of hearing and dull of understanding and sluggish, mentally, but also those who are teaching. If they get themselves so busy in doing so many activities that they have no time for prayer or study, no time for really thinking, no time for preparation, then what do you think they're going to give to the congregations that they teach? *Milk toast!* And if they get milk toast what's going to happen? *They will stay babes forever!*

How would like to have a diet of just milk and pabulum your whole life? *You talk about dull and uninteresting!* You could never have a nice juicy steak, never have a nice breakfast of eggs. No, just milk and pabulum! If you had that everyday, you'd

be bored stiff, plus you'd be malnourished!

Paul is chiding the Jews because they thought themselves to be teachers, but they were the ones who were violating the ways of God, because they weren't teaching and they weren't doing:

Romans 2:17: "Behold, you are called a Jew..."

Verse 29: Rather, he *is* a Jew who *is one* inwardly... [we can apply this to ourselves if we are converted and we have the Spirit of God] ...and circumcision *is* of *the* heart, in *the* spirit *and* not in *the* letter..." If we have received the Holy Spirit and have had our hearts circumcised by that.

Then this applies to us, v 17: "Behold, you are called a Jew, and you yourself rest in the law, and boast in God, and know *His* will, and approve of the things that are more excellent, being instructed out of the law; and are persuaded *that* you yourself are a guide of *the* blind, a light for those in darkness, an instructor of *the* foolish, a teacher of babes, having the form of the knowledge and of the Truth *contained* in the Law" (vs 17-20).

That's all well and good. We find another principle here, which we already covered back in Matt. 7—*why call Me, 'Lord Lord' and do not the things which I say*. Likewise, Paul is taking that principle and expanding it here even more, and applying it to those who are teachers.

Verse 21: "You, then, who are teaching another, do you not teach yourself also?...." That's very important, very profound. A teacher—whether a minister, elder—if he doesn't teach himself... In other words, if he says one thing to the congregation or brethren and does something opposite himself, he falls into the same category of hypocrisy as the scribes and Pharisees, *because they say and do not!* Sooner or later that's going to take a toll on:

- his understanding
- his relationship with God
- on those who listen, because they are not activating the Spirit of God
 - ✓ to know
 - ✓ to study
 - ✓ to realize the things that need to be

You become dull and bored! He really gets them, v 21: "...You who preach, 'Do not steal,' are you stealing? You who say, 'Do not commit adultery,' are you committing adultery? You who abhor idols, are you committing sacrilege? You who boast in law, are you dishonoring God through your transgression of the Law?" (vs 21-23). That's quite a thing! Paul was in the category of one who did what?

- taught himself
- let Christ teach him
- studied
- grew in grace and knowledge and understanding

—so he could teach the brethren! I'm sure as did all the other apostles. So, that's an example for any of us who are teaching. Here's what happens when you find hypocrisy within the ranks of the teachers:

Verse 24: "For through you the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles, exactly as it is written." I tell you what, the movies today really depict all of the Protestant ministers as stupid, sinning oafs! What does it do? *It turns people off toward finding out anything about God the Father and Jesus Christ!* I don't know about you, but when I was a youngster, my few encounters with religious people did that to me. It turned me off and I wanted to run the other way as fast as I could.

As a matter of fact, when my folks wanted me to—at that time they started attending the Lutheran Church for a while—take confirmation. Well, you have to go to the minister's house and study. I think I was about ten or eleven and my mom would drive me up and drop me off. I'd wave goodbye and start walking up toward the porch, making sure she had already left, and I'd walk up on the porch, jump down on the side and I'd run off and go play someplace. I was so turned off by these sickly, sweet ministers that it was unreal!

So, the conduct of many of those ministers in the world—and would have to include at least some within the Churches of God today in what they have done in throwing away doctrine and Truth—that they are causing the rest of the world to blaspheming against God because of their conduct and their lack of teaching.

Let's put it this way: If you're going to be a teacher, then you cannot be living on milk yourself. It won't work!

(go to the next track)

Let's talk about those who are in need of milk. Who needs milk? A lot of the things that we teach here, and learn here, would be like giving a newborn babe an un-ground piece of meat. Who needs the milk? *These are the ones who are beginning!*

1-Peter 2:1: "Therefore, having put away all wickedness, and all deceit, and hypocrisies and jealousies, and all slanders, as newborn babes... [we're not to stay that way, because Heb. 5 tells us that we're to grow up and become mature] ...yearn after the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may

grow" (vs 1-2).

That is to start you out, and it is the milk of the Word, not the teachings of men. We can liken the milk of the Word to mother's milk. If babies are breast-fed with mother's milk they are more intelligent, more healthy, become stronger, have a greater immune system. We can liken the other—the formula and Similac and all of those artificial things—to *insincere* milk of the manufacturers. What happens to children reared on that? *Well, I think the jury is still out, but I think a lot of the evidence is in:* the babies are not as healthy. They also know that they're not as intelligent. They also know it creates havoc with their digestive system because it's too hard for their little systems to digest. Mother's milk is the perfect formula, because God made it. You don't have to have any great knowledge to do that. We can liken to it, but you are to grow.

Verse 3: "If you yourselves have indeed tasted that the Lord *is* gracious." We have to grow beyond that, so we have the admonishment by Peter. He's talking about the Epistles of Paul:

2-Peter 3:16: "As *he has* also in all *his* epistles, speaking in them concerning these things; in which are some things *that are* difficult to understand..." That doesn't mean they can't be understood, but you have to apply yourself to them.

"...which the ignorant and unstable are... [as they do the other Scriptures] ...twisting *and* *distorting*, as *they* also *twist and distort* the rest of the Scriptures to their own destruction. Therefore, beloved, since you know this in advance, be on guard against *such practices*, lest you be led astray with the error of the lawless ones, *and* you fall from your own steadfastness; rather, be growing in *the* grace and *the* knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him *be* glory both now and into *the* day of eternity. Amen" (vs 16-18). We are to grow!

Let's see the process from milk to growth. This is not only for growth for individuals, but it is also growth for those who are teaching, because it says, 'the time that you ought to be teachers.' We could look at some of the ministers that we knew in the Church of God and we could also look at what happened to them as teachers. They did not apply themselves in all these things, too. It's quite an interesting process that God has. This whole process that we are talking about works two ways:

1. for the good for those who love God and keep His commandments, that they can grow and understand
2. the opposite way for those who reject God's way or are the spiritually drunk

We can tie that in with Rev. 17, *drinking out of the goblet or cup of Mother Babylon!*

Isaiah 28:7: “But they also stagger through wine, and reel through strong drink... [talking about *spiritually*] ...The priest and the prophet... [they’ve gotten off of the Word of God and gotten into ‘religion’] ...stagger through drink; they are confused by wine; they reel through strong drink...”

What is the way? *The way of the Lord!* They’re out of it! They don’t know it! They’re not teaching it!

“...they err in vision, they stumble in judgment, for all tables are full of vomit and filthiness; no place is *clean*” (vs 7-8). If that does not describe the Roman Catholic Church! That’s something else!

God asks the question in the midst of all of this drunkenness and vomit and spiritual confusion; v 9 “Whom shall He teach knowledge?...” How is anyone going to learn anything in this kind of environment?

“...And whom shall He make to understand doctrine? *Those* who are weaned from the milk and drawn from the breasts” (v 9).

That’s why He says in Heb. 6:1 we’re going to advance beyond the beginning principles of Christ. In other words, we’re going to go beyond the milk. You have to come to the point that you are weaned from the milk, and when you’re weaned from the milk you can begin to eat solid food.

Here is how you put together the Truth of the Bible, v 10: “For precept *must be* upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, there a little.’.... [that’s how you understand it (on the other hand): ...for with stammering lips... [drunken spiritual stupor we just read about; they don’t understand] ...and foreign tongue He will speak to this people” (vs 10-11). That’s the way they view it.

Verse 12: “To whom He said, ‘This *is* the rest He gives to the weary’ and ‘This *is* the refreshing’...” In other words, if you are drawn from the breast and weaned, if you learn ‘precept upon precept and line upon line’ then it will cause the *weary to rest* in the Word of God and it is a *refreshing* because it renews you and converts you.

“...yet, **they were not willing to hear**” (v12). Just like we’re talking about in Heb. 5 and Matt. 13.

Then what happens? Just like we’ve been discussing, v 13: “So then the Word of the LORD was to them... [in the same way] ...precept upon

precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, there a little; that they might go, and fall backward, and be broken and snared and taken.”

The Word of God being a two-edged sword works both ways. You can grow to spiritual maturity by using it properly. You can end up in spiritual destruction if you are in a spiritual drunken stupor and misuse the Word of God. Pray tell, what other book in the world could do that? *No other book! None whatsoever!*

This also tells us that only the mind of God and the Spirit of God could have inspired and put together the Bible this way, through the Holy men moved of the Holy Spirit, to write it the way that He wanted it written, so that it would have the effect that God designed it to do, which then is another miracle, indeed! It tells us then that the longer we’ve been in the Church and the more that we understand, the more awesome and fantastic the Word of God becomes. The more that we can approach God in this way, the more that He is going to lead is in understanding and Truth!

Let’s see that. What we just read here is a *spiritual* operation. It cannot be accomplished without the Spirit of God.

John 16:13: “However, when that one has come, **even the Spirit of the Truth, it will lead you into all Truth...**” How? *Precept upon precept, line upon line, here a little and there a little as you put the Word of God together!*

“...because it shall not speak from itself...” (v 13). Because it’s going to convey the words of God through the power of the Holy Spirit; it’s going to convey His thoughts and His Truth to those who have the Holy Spirit.

“...but whatever it shall hear, it shall speak. And it shall disclose to you the things to come. That one shall glorify Me because it shall disclose to you *the things that* it receives from Me. Everything that the Father has is Mine; for this reason, I said that it shall receive from Me and shall disclose *these things* to you” (vs 13-15).

2-Tim. 2 applies not only to brethren, but this also applies to anyone who is a teacher. When it says that ‘they are not skilled in the word of righteousness.’ Why? *Because they’re not doing it the way that we just read!*

2-Timothy 2:11: “This is a faithful saying: If we have died together with *Him*... [through baptism (Rom. 6)] ...we shall also live together with *Him*... [by the power of the resurrection] ...if we endure, we shall also reign together with *Him*; if we deny

Him, He will also deny us; if we are unfaithful, He remains faithful—He cannot deny Himself... [because God is!] ...See that *they* remain mindful of these things, earnestly charging *them* in the sight of the Lord not to argue over words that are not profitable in any way..." (vs 11-14). If you want an example about striving about words to know profit, take a look at *The Journal*.

Let me give you an example: An evangelist in the Church of God who said that after he studied it, anointed cloths are not Scriptural; shouldn't use them. It's the striving over words, "...*but which lead to the subverting of those who hear*" (v 14).

He says now that when someone is sick that he doesn't send out anointed cloths, he just has them call and they pray for them. Well, pray tell, why did Paul send out 'anointed cloths or handkerchiefs' to those that were sick or had demons? And they were healed! Some people have said, 'Well, that's not just for healing, that's for a special miracle.' *Of course!* Is there anything wrong with anointing a cloth and asking God to perform a special miracle because you can't be there? *Of course not!* But it's subverting a lot of people! And 'striving of words'; boy, I tell you, *The Journal* is full of it!

Here's what we need to do, v 15: "Diligently *study* to show yourself approved unto God... [How do you do that?] ...a workman who does not *need to be* ashamed, **rightly dividing the Word of the Truth.**" How? As we've already covered: *precept upon precept; line upon line; here a little, there a little!* Properly put together "...**rightly dividing the Word of the Truth.**"

Because, if you don't *rightly divide the Word of Truth*—if you wrongly divide it—then you can make it say something that it really doesn't say, and yet, claim that you're using the Scriptures. Isn't that what most of the ministers of the world do with the Word of God?

Verse 16: "But avoid profane and vain babblings because they will *only* give rise to more ungodliness... [that is self-evident and we have seen that through the years] ...and their words will eat away at the body like gangrene..." (vs 16-17)—like a cancer.

It is will come in unknown, unawares and begin to eat away. Then what happens? *You get into a spirit of criticizing the Word of God!* Rather than looking into it to see what it says that you ought to do and you ought to teach and how you ought to live, you take the Bible as a task or a project to tear it apart, to pull it down, to make it say something that it doesn't say!

Here's an example here, v 17: "...of whom are Hymeneus and Philetus, who have gone astray from the Truth, claiming that the resurrection has already taken place, and are destroying the faith of some" (vs 17-18).

What do we have here? *We have the first beginnings of preaching of going to heaven!* It's always incongruous to go to some of these funerals where there's a Protestant or Catholic minister and they give the nice purring words: 'Well now, so-and-so is up in heaven looking down on us and then you go out to the gravesite and he mentions something about the resurrection. It's incongruous, because if you go to heaven, why is that you need a resurrection?

If you want to read a contorted doctrinal discussion on that, read that in the Catholic catechism sometime. This fits in with 'let the dead bury the dead.' That means let the *spiritually dead leaders* bury the *spiritually dead people*.

Verse 19: "Nevertheless... [in spite of all this that men can do] ...the foundation of God stands firm, having this seal..." That in spite of all of this; think of this with the scattering of the Church of God:

"...*The Lord knows those who are His'...*" (v 19). All of those who have the Holy Spirit of God, ***God knows where they are!*** And He knows them! No doubt about it!

"...and, 'Let everyone who calls upon the name of Christ depart from unrighteousness'" (v 19). So, there we have the solution.

2-Timothy 3:16: "All Scripture *is* God-breathed and *is* profitable for doctrine, for conviction, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." We'll see how righteousness, what the problem is there (Heb. 5) because they are not doing the things that we have just covered.

Verse 17: "So that the man of God may be complete, fully equipped for every good work." This has two applications:

1. to the one who is a teacher
2. to anyone who is of God

—because it says that the Lord knows those who are His. (2-Tim. 2:19).

Hebrews 5:12: "For truly, by this time you ought to be teachers..." Being able to fully explain the Word of God to someone. Haven't we seen this with the breakup of the Church? *Yes!* It is amazing the people that really didn't know anything that you thought really knew something. *Absolutely amazing!*

“...but instead you need to have *someone* teach you again what *are* the beginning principles of the oracles of God, and have become those in need of milk, and not of solid food. For everyone who is partaking of milk *is* unskilled in *the* Word of Righteousness because he is an infant” (vs 12-13).

- doesn't know how to use the Word of God
- doesn't know how to study the Word of God

That's what happens. Remember that Paul is writing this to those who were baptized for a long time. The reason that we're going over this is because in Heb. 6 he talks about the *unpardonable sin*. I know what's going to happen when we get to Heb. 6. Those people who are conscientious and want to serve and love God are going to be worried that they have committed the *unpardonable sin* when they haven't.

The only unfortunate part of that is that the ones who ought to hear what Heb. 6 has about the *unpardonable sin* are not around to hear it! When I get there and I'm preaching on the *unpardonable sin* and you're loving God and trying with all your heart, mind, soul and being to overcome your sins and human nature, and you're very sensitive that you don't want to sin and you want to walk in God's way, ***you are not a candidate for the unpardonable sin!*** But he is leading up to it by showing the process of how a person comes to that state.

- by not hearing
- by not reading
- by not studying

They regress and become an infant!

Verse 14: “But solid food is for those who are fully grown, who through **repeated practice**... [this is where we have the trials and difficulties that we go through; you constantly go God's way] ...have had their senses trained to discern both good and evil.”

That's so when you read something you can see where it is good or you can see where it is evil. You can see the things that are right. You can see the things that are wrong.

Let me give you an example of something of how Satan can use a *hook of Truth* to further deceive people. Sometime back I went to a conspiracy conference. We know that Satan is the great conspirator of the world. We know that he is doing everything he can to deceive the governments of the world. We know that he's trying to form a one-world government. We know what is happening because of the changes in the law. And now with the mammoth reorganization of the federal government under

George W. Bush, it is going to create a police state if they get everything enacted that they want and the United States will be changed from a republic to a dictatorship. The only thing that will be needed will be a dictator! Many people in the world understand that. They write books and articles and they speak about it. They point it out and those things are true.

When I was there I heard the host get up and say, ‘Our next meeting is going to be in Santa Cruz and if all of you want to know how those like Shirley MacClaine and the other have succeeded where others have not, come to this very spiritual meeting.’ That's a good example that you can't have part of the Truth. Satan can use a *hook of Truth*, get these people by exposing what he's doing to ensnare them into something else that he is doing to get them into spiritism and the occult.

I sat there and it about blew me away! Well, the point is, many of those people sitting there, not knowing the Word of God, not understanding that they need to exercise their senses to discern *both* good and evil, couldn't understand that. So, what were they doing? *They were going up and signing up for the event!* Satan's famous saying: *Gotcha!* Get you one way or the other.

Let's see what happens if you don't have your senses exercised to discern good from evil. You will end up thinking that evil is good. It's a progressive thing that takes place. Let's see the progression. Lot's of times we do not connect things that are taking place in the world such as this are resulting in spiritual problems. All you have to do is examine the cities of the world and you will see that that's true.

Isaiah 5:8: “Woe 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!” In other words, there's no place you can get away from it all. If you go to Yosemite to get away from it, half the world is there touring it because they're wanting to get away from it. This is what we're talking about. Look at the cities.

I marvel, even here in Fairfield you have over 100,000 people, and I think you have 200,000 cars on the road. You get people all jammed up together. What does that cause? *That makes sin easy to take place*: kidnapping, sexual abuse, adultery, stealing, breaking and entering—all of those things. To say nothing of being so jammed in and then have your mind's jammed with all of the things that come in the air: radio, television and all that sort of thing. I tell you what, we're living in an age that we have more things against us than perhaps any other people down through history. We ought to be the ones to have our senses exercised to discern good from evil.

Here you see it starts.

Verse 11: “Woe to those who rise up early in the morning to go after strong drink; who continue late into the night *while* wine inflames them!.... [this is literally physical and spiritual] ...And the lyre, and the harp, the drum, and pipe, and wine, are *at* their feasts...” (vs 11-12).

We can just say rock concerts—how’s that? And instead of just wine and strong drink, we can say heroin, cocaine, speed, and methamphetamine. Some supposed famous base guitar player for the group that is called ‘Who’ died at 57-years-old in Las Vegas. Why is that all of these rock stars who just absolutely destroy their lives with the music and the drugs and their absolutely lawless living, die at a young age? What does the world say? *Oh, what a shame! What a loss!* I say, too bad it didn’t happen sooner and to more, so that more people would get the point that that way leads to death.

“...but they do not regard the work of the LORD.... [no, God isn’t in their thoughts at all] ...Yea, they do not see the work of His hands.... [because God’s judgment is coming] ...Therefore, My people are gone into exile because *they have* no knowledge...” (vs 12-13).

See how that ties in with Heb. 5? *You’re dull of hearing!* You can’t discern right and wrong, and people are going to go into captivity because of that.

“...and their honorable men are famished, and their multitude is dried up with thirst. Therefore, the grave has enlarged its appetite, and opened its mouth without limit; and down goes her glory and multitude and brawlers, and he who rejoices in her, shall go down into it. And man is bowed down, and men are brought low, and the eyes of the lofty are humbled. But the LORD of hosts is exalted in judgment, and God, the Holy One, is sanctified in righteousness” (vs 12-16).

In the long run God’s way is going to happen. The truth is, *you can’t get away from God anywhere!* People may think that they can. People may think like Adam and Eve and become their own gods.

Verse 18: “**Woe to those** who draw iniquity with cords of vanity, and sin with cart ropes; 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!’” (vs 18-19).

But they’ve already rejected it. They challenge God! Sooner or later God takes you up on the challenge. Sooner or later God’s judgment comes.

Here’s the thing that’s important; here’s the lesson here: Those that challenge God, because God doesn’t answer immediately—with a thunderbolt or something like that—they think they’re getting away with it. But the truth is, it’s going to come! ***Sooner or later, it will come!***

Here’s what happens when you no longer discern good and evil, v 20: “**Woe to those** who call evil good and good evil... [this all from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil] ...who put darkness for light and light for darkness; who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter!”

So, when we talk about the world that is upside down, that’s exactly what we’re seeing. *No doubt about it!*

Verse 21: “**Woe unto them** that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight! **Woe unto them** that are mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to mingle strong drink, who justify the wicked for a bribe...” (vs 20-23). Hello, Wall Street! Hello, Washington, D.C.!

Yet, they can put a man away on the ‘three-strikes law’ for stealing a piece of pizza. Imagine that! Actually that is double jeopardy because they’re going back and taking past convictions so they can upgrade a misdemeanor to a felony, and actually go in the past and upgrade a past and paid-for crime as a felony and then you have three strikes and you’re in prison for 25 years for stealing of piece of pizza.

And yet, look at all the executives of these corporations that are finally admitting, ‘Well, we fudged a little on our books’—about \$3.5-billion! Now they’re laying off 17,000, so ‘we can balance the books. We’ll do it over the backs of these people and can their jobs.’ Yet, the executives get their golden parachute and leave with millions. It’s amazing!

Verse 24: “Therefore, as the fire devours the stubble, and the flame burns up the chaff... [if you’ve ever seen that, it goes up POOF] ...their root shall be like rottenness, and their blossoms shall go up like dust because they have cast away the Law of the LORD of hosts, and despised the Word of the Holy One of Israel.” They rejected knowledge! They didn’t exercise their senses to discern both good and evil.

Verse 25: “Therefore, the anger of the LORD is kindled against His people, and He has stretched out His hand against them, and has stricken them; and the hills trembled, and their dead bodies *were* as filth in the midst of the streets. In all this His anger is not turned away, but His hand *is* stretched

out still.” Very important thing!

What a shame that a Church of God could get in that state—which it did, and have to suffer those things—which it did.

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*

Scriptural References:

- 1) Hebrews 5:8-9
- 2) Hebrews 6:1
- 3) Hebrews 5:9
- 4) John 14:6, 15, 21
- 5) 1 John 2:3-4
- 6) John 14:21-24
- 7) Matthew 7:21-25
- 8) Hebrews 5:10-14
- 9) Hebrews 6:1
- 10) Matthew 13:14-15
- 11) Romans 2:17, 29, 17-24
- 12) 1 Peter 2:1-3
- 13) 2 Peter 3:16-18
- 14) Isaiah 28:7-13
- 15) John 16:13-15
- 16) 2 Timothy 2:11-19
- 17) 2 Timothy 3:16-17
- 18) Hebrews 5:12-14
- 19) Isaiah 5:8, 11-16, 18-25

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- 1-John 2:3-4
- 1 Corinthians 3:9-12
- Revelation 12; 17
- Romans 6

FRC: bo
Transcribed: 4-22-11
Reformatted/Corrected: January/2017

The Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews XVII The Law of Sin and Death & the Unpardonable Sin

(Chapter 6)
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Hebrews 6 has some very important things after we covered how people

- are sluggish
- had gone backward spiritually
- had need of milk
- weren't skilled in using the Word of Righteousness
- hadn't trained their senses to discern good and evil

That's the whole purpose of using the Spirit of God and growing in grace and knowledge and understanding the things of the Word of God, and understanding how to live in the world while it is evil. Yet, at the same time, you are able to live righteously.

Hebrews 6:1: "Therefore, advancing beyond the beginning principles of the doctrines of Christ, we should go on to perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith in God." Let's just take that one verse and we'll add a few Scriptures to it and expand on it a little bit more.

Here's the way that you grow into perfection, Eph. 4. Growing in perfection is a joint operation of each individual Christian and the ministry. Those that are teaching should also teach themselves. In other words, if the Word of God and the Holy Spirit is able to help each individual Christian grow in grace and knowledge, which it is, then every minister or elder has to diligently apply himself to 'rightly divide the Word of God' and know the Word of God and grow in grace and knowledge himself, and to teach himself so that he can also teach the brethren. The ultimate of what Jesus said is, 'It's sufficient that the disciples become as the teacher.' Since we are all disciples of Christ, what God expects us to do is to grow into the perfection of Christ, Who is the One Who is doing the teaching.

You need a human teacher to teach you, but the One Who is actually doing the teaching is Christ, through His Word and through His Spirit. Therefore, that is why it is a joint operation. If the teachers are not growing in grace and knowledge and teaching the brethren, and also themselves, then you end up in a sandbox situation, and you always stay with just the basics. You can never graduate out of third grade, or never get out of the sandbox!

Ephesians 4:11: "And He gave some as apostles, and some prophets..." Not necessarily foretelling future events. This means they are telling, under inspiration, the Word of God.

"...and some evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers... [here's the only reason for it]: ...**for the perfecting of the saints**... [that ties right in with Heb. 6:1, go on to perfection] ...for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the Body of Christ" (vs 11-12)—for the up-building; from the same Greek word as *to build*, as in build a building.

That's why in Heb. 6 that Paul is using the foundation, the beginning foundations. If you lay the foundation of a house, you only have the foundation. You've got to go on. You've got to frame it, plumb it, wire it, do the interior, the exterior, and put on the roof. Then after you get it done, as you all know, through the years what do you have? *Maintenance! Rebuilding! Remodeling!* All of those things go along with it. All of that is likened unto the edifying of the Body of Christ:

- it has to be built
- it has to be modified
- it has to be proved
- it has to be perfected

Verse 13: "Until we **all**..." I love that, because that shows that the ministers and the brethren are all brethren, and Christ is our older brother.

"...come **into**... [it is a process] ...the unity of the faith... [it's a process, because you don't have unity of faith all at once] ...and of the knowledge of the Son of God... [and you grow in that] ...unto a perfect man... [a perfectly spiritually mature individual] ...unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ" (v 13).

This one verse tells us that growing in Christian grace and knowledge and understanding—and all of the things that are defined there—is a lifelong project. Since it is, God has given us His Word, which is a lifelong study book to understand how we come to eternal life. This ties in with Heb. 6:1, that we go beyond the basic principles.

Verse 14: "So that we no longer be children, tossed and carried about with every wind of doctrine by the sleight of men..."

Let me just say, today we've got more of that than ever before. You've really got to be careful. You have to know! Remember, Jesus said that in the end there would be many false prophets arise, deceive many and even do great signs and wonders insomuch that even the elect might be deceived. That's their whole idea. If you've got the whole world deceived, who does Satan want to go after that he doesn't have deceived?

- those that have the Spirit of God
- those that know the Word of God
- those who are not deceived

Those are the ones he's going to go after. That's why it has to be a constant diligence.

"...in *cunning* craftiness... [they always figure out a new way to do it] (they lie in wait to deceive [KJV]): ...with a view to the systematizing of the error" (v 14). They don't think they're lying in wait to deceive, but they are. They're trying to bring new doctrine and so forth. But if it doesn't square up with the Word of God and if we don't do like the Bereans and 'search the Scriptures whether these things are so,' then deception can creep in, and we've already seen how that has happened.

It's interesting in the Greek—"...with a view to the systematizing of the error" or the deception—which is actually a prophecy of the Christian religious system of this world. Is it not systematized? Is the error not canonized in their own writings and so forth? *Yes, indeed!* This is actually a prophecy of it.

Here's the solution, v 15: "But holding the Truth in love, may **in all things grow up into Him...**"

- to have the mind of Christ
- to think with the words of Christ
- to judge things
 - ✓ by the Holy Spirit of God in you
 - ✓ the Word of God in you

"...Who is the Head, *even* Christ from Whom all the body, fitly framed and compacted together by *that which* every joint supplies..." (vs 15-16).

We all have a part to put in it, every single one of us! If you don't think the smallest part needs care, just break your little toe one time and you'll find out. You'll find out that what you consider the smallest or least is really a problem if you don't have it. Or what if you get a little canker sore in the inside of your mouth and every time you speak you bite down on it and pain shoots up and down the side of your mouth. It's the same way with the Body of Christ. I would have to say a lot of it is in bad shape today. I don't know what we can do to help them. I

don't know how we can reach out to them to show them the right way, but God will have to open the door and make that possible.

Here's the substance of the whole thing, v 16: "...according to *its* inner working in *the* measure of each individual part, is making the increase of the body unto *the* edifying of itself in love."

We can see where Christ laid the groundwork for this right in the Sermon on the Mount, which talks about going on to perfection. This shows the goal not only of Christ, but also of God the Father.

Matthew 5:48: "Therefore, you shall be perfect, even as your Father Who *is* in heaven is perfect." That's a tall order! It's not achievable by your own works, but by:

- the Spirit of God
- the grace of God
- the mercy of God
- the love of God

That's a perfection that we are to reach to.

Paul is telling us back here in Heb. 6 that unless we go beyond the foundation, the beginning principles of Christ, we can't do it. The Apostle Peter in 2-Pet. 1 shows the steps of doing it. I'm not going to expound it because we have the in the sermon series on *The Epistles of Peter*—how we are to grow into perfection. That perfection is stated here by Peter as the Divine nature. We all have human nature. The goal for perfection is to have the Divine nature, which will not be accomplished fully until the resurrection.

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." That's how it is accomplished. That righteousness comes from God the Father and Jesus Christ through:

- repentance
- growing and overcoming
- studying the Word of God

That righteousness then is imputed to us as *a gift!* We will see how important that is when we come to what is committing the *unpardonable sin*. God dealing with us in His graciousness, mercy and love, giving of this righteousness is a fantastic thing!

That's why it's very, very important that in dealing with each other we need to *forgive and forget* just like God does. If you remember past sins and offenses that have been committed against you and the person has changed, then you haven't forgiven. That becomes a stumbling block in your

perfection and your relationship with God.

Likewise with your own sins, those sins, which are repentable, you also need to ask God to give you forgetfulness of that, because every time you think of it again you remind God of it again. God being perfect, He can forget it and put it away and remove it from us as ‘far as the east is from the west.’ That’s the righteousness that Peter is talking about here.

Verse 2: “Grace and peace be multiplied to you in *the* knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, according as His Divine power has given to us all things that *pertain* to life and Godliness, through the knowledge of Him Who called us by *His own* glory and virtue” (vs 2-3). That’s how we’re perfected. So, when Paul says ‘let us go on to perfection’ it has a lot to do with:

- growing
- developing
- using the Word of God
- being led of the Spirit of God

Verse 4: “Through which He has given to us the greatest and *most* precious promises...” Understand that ***no one else in the world has the promises given to them at this time!*** That’s why ‘many are called but few are chosen.’

“...that through these... [promises] ...you may become partakers of *the* Divine nature...” (v 4). That is the ultimate of the perfection that God wants us to have. And obviously being a human being—and as we have learned by going through the book of Job—human works cannot equal Divine nature. The greatest that human works can do are human works. Regardless of how righteous we are, of ourselves we still have sinful human nature. Therefore, there can never be any true perfection by works of themselves. It has to be Christ in you, which is of itself a Divine gift of God.

“...having escaped the corruption *that is* in *the* world through lust. And for this very reason also...” (vs 4-5). He gives a step-by-step way to grow to perfection, and the ultimate of that is Godly love.

“...having applied all diligence besides, add to your faith, virtue... [right behavior] ...and to virtue, knowledge... [grow in grace and knowledge] ...and to knowledge, self-control... [led by the Holy Spirit] ...and to self-control, endurance; and to endurance, Godliness” (vs 5-6). So, there’s a process that takes place.

Verse 7: “And to Godliness, brotherly love; and to brotherly love, the love *of God*.” This is the goal and the agenda that is set out for us on a

lifelong growth in our Christian life and walking in the way of the Lord.

Verse 8: “For *if* these things exist and abound in you... [they are living, acting and growing] ...they *will* cause you to be neither lacking effort nor lacking fruit in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

That’s how to avoid the pitfalls of Heb. 5 of becoming dull of hearing, becoming in need of basic milk and how you learn to exercise your *spiritual* senses to discern good and evil. It reverts right back to what we’re talking about, of what Paul warned of in Heb. 6.

Verse 9: “But the one in whom these things are not present is *spiritually* blind... [sounds a little Laodicean] ...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” (vs 9-10). So, we have an absolute guarantee we won’t fail.

The reason I’m going through this is because we’re going to cover the *unpardonable sin* and I don’t want anyone to think that, or be fearful that you have committed the *unpardonable sin*.

Hebrews 6:1: “...not laying again *the* foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith in God, of *the* doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of *the* resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment” (vs 1-2). I’m going to just briefly review without referring to any Scriptures:

The doctrine of baptisms is plural

- by water
- by fire for the unpardonable sin
- trial by fire
- baptism that James and John said when their mother said, ‘May they sit on My right hand and left hand.’
- Jesus said, ‘Are you able to have the baptism that I’m going to be baptized with?’ They said *yes!* And He said, ‘So be it, you will’—martyrdom. He spared John, but nevertheless, those are the baptisms.

Laying on of hands has to do with the receiving of the Holy Spirit

- ordaining for those to serve as leaders within the Church
- for those who are sick
- for marriage and setting aside
- for blessing of children

Resurrection of the dead

- first resurrection to eternal life
- physical resurrection to physical life
 - ✓ before Christ comes—Lazarus and others that Jesus raised from the dead
 - ✓ second resurrection at the end of the thousand years—the first phase to receive an opportunity for salvation
 - ✓ cast into the Lake of Fire as incorrigible wicked—second phase

Eternal judgment

- for us—judgment is now on the house of God
- final judgment—which will determine our reward; sealed when we die

Verse 3: “And we will do this, if indeed God permits.” God does permit it! He does go on! Then Paul goes on to explain about the *unpardonable sin*!

Verse 4: “For *it is impossible*...” No power available; it’s an impossibility. If you put yourself at odds with Christ and reject Him you are in an impossible situation.

“...for those ^[1]*who were* once enlightened, ^[2]*and who personally obtained the heavenly gift,* ^[3]*and became partakers of the Holy Spirit,* ^[4]*and who have tasted the good Word of God,* ^[5]*and the powers of the world to come*” (vs 4-5).

That’s an awful lot. I mean, *you have to be a full-fledged bona fide, baptized, receiving the Spirit of God Christian, and walking in the way of God* for a substantial period of time in order for all five of these conditions to apply to you.

I. “...for those who were once enlightened...” (Heb. 6:4)

It’s quite a profound thing to be enlightened of God, by the Spirit of God. John shows right there in the beginning {note sermon series: *Was Jesus God?*}. We’ll briefly go over those verses because it flows together and shows what it means to be enlightened.

John 1:1: “In *the* beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” The reason that this being enlightened is so important is because that it comes directly from God. In other words, God has moved in your life and God has done something in your life of a profound nature that He hasn’t done to other people.

Verse 2: “He was in *the* beginning with God. All things came into being through Him, and not even one *thing* that was created came into being without Him. In Him was life, and the Life was the

Light of men. And the Light shines in the darkness...” (vs 2-5)—showing:

- Light equals Truth and the Spirit of God
- darkness equals sin and the world of Satan the devil

“...but the darkness does not comprehend it” (v 5). The reason that the darkness does not comprehend it is because it won’t receive it.

John 3:18: “The one who believes in Him is not judged... [that belief must follow with actions and faith] ...but the one who does not believe has already been judged because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the judgment: that the Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness rather than the Light because their works were evil” (vs 18-19).

But they think their evil deeds are good in many cases. When Satan deceives the people. Let’s use the example of witchcraft, because there are a lot of witches around today: witchcraft and occultism.

Satan doesn’t come along and say, ‘I want you to commit human sacrifice.’ **No!** Most people would reject that automatically. What does he do? *He comes along and says, ‘I’ve got a way that you can have more power.’* How so? *‘I’ve got a way you can control other people!’* I have a way through these rituals that if you do them you can get in contact with the spiritual powers that govern this world! And they will give you more power.’ Then he leads them through the stages of occultism or illuminati or whatever, then they get into human sacrifice at the later stage. That’s where a lot of these missing children go.

Men love darkness because their deeds are evil. Here’s the key, v 20: “For everyone who practices evil hates the Light...” These are the unconverted in the world. They’re not involved necessarily in the *unpardonable sin*:

- they are deceived
- they’re cutoff
- they’re eyes were closed
- they’re ears are stopped
- they can’t see
- God has given them over to this world

They hate the Light! “...and does not come to the Light, so that his works may not be exposed” (v 20).

The difference is this: When you are enlightened by the Spirit of God and you understand the Word of God, and the Law of God and the Word of God convicts you of sin, then you repent and you come to the Light even more so you can have those things removed from you. That’s the difference. So,

the ones that have had this and then reject it, they put themselves in a terrible position with God.

Verse 21: “But the one who practices the Truth... [living by the Word of God] ...comes to the Light...” Constantly coming to Christ because He is the true Light; constantly coming to the Word of God:

- to live by it
- to judge your actions
- to judge your thoughts
- to judge the things that you do

—by the Light of the Word of God!

“...so that his works may be manifested, that they have been accomplished by *the power of God*’ (v 21). They were done by God, not by you. That’s what it has to be for all of us.

1-John 1—We see the same thing here; this defines it further so that we can see the separation and the difference between light and darkness. It is said, ‘If the Light be in you is darkness, how great is that darkness?’ What is even worse is this: ***If you once have been enlightened and then you reject that Light.*** That’s a whole different story. We’re going to see how profound that is.

1-John 1:5: “And this is the message that we have heard from Him and are declaring to you: that God is Light...” If you’re coming to the Light, you’re coming to God. If you’re coming to God, you’re coming to Christ. If you do so, God’s Spirit will reveal to you the things that you have to change and grow and overcome; reveal even more to you about your own human nature and your thoughts and things like that. It’s all a progressive thing in growing and grace and knowledge. Once you have had that and then turn from that, it’s a deliberate thing!

“...and there is no darkness at all in Him. If we proclaim that we have fellowship with Him, but we are walking in the darkness, we are lying to ourselves, and we are not practicing the Truth” (vs 5-6). What is Truth? *Your Word is Truth!*

- you’re not practicing the Truth of God
- you’re not living by the Truth of God
- you’re not living by His commandments

Verse 7: “However, if we walk in the Light, as He is in the Light, *then* we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ, His own Son, cleanses us from **all** sin.” It’s continually cleansing us from sin! That’s why:

- *if* you’re loving God
- *if* you’re keeping His commandments

- *if* you’re confessing your sins
- *if* you are trusting in Christ to forgive your sins and block them out

you have not committed the unpardonable sin! You have your sins forgiven—***all of them!*** There’s no forgiveness for the *unpardonable sin*. We’ll see that’s more than just a slip of the tongue or something like that.

Verse 8: “If we say that we do not have sin, we are deceiving ourselves, and the Truth is not in us.” That is getting close; that’s one of the first steps toward the *unpardonable sin*; saying: ‘Well, I’m good. All people are good. They’re not inherently sinful. We have no sin. All we need to do is just be better.’ That’s the first step toward it.

Verse 9: “If we confess our own sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His Word is not in us” (vs 9-10). What is sin?

- transgression of the Law
- transgression of the Word of God

Let’s see where John shows there’s a difference between a sin that is ***not*** unto death *and* a sin that ***is*** unto death. Here he’s defining sins that are forgivable, which are not unto death vs the unpardonable sin, which is not forgivable.

1-John 5:16: “If anyone sees his brother sinning a sin *that is* not unto death... [that could even be a grievous sin] ...he shall ask, and He will give him life for those who do not sin unto death.... [any repentable sin] ...There is a sin unto death... [the *unpardonable sin*] ...concerning that *sin*, I do not say that he should make *any* supplication *to God*.” When a person has committed the *unpardonable sin*, that’s between them and God, and God is going to judge them. There is no repentance granted to them.

Verse 17: “All unrighteousness is sin, and there is a sin not unto death.... [can’t be repented of] ...We know that anyone who is begotten by God does not *practice* sin; for the one who has been begotten by God keeps himself *by the power of God*, and the wicked one does not touch him” (vs 17-18).

So, if you reject the Light, Hebrews 6:4: “For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened...” Let’s take the definition of the *unpardonable sin* so you’ll know what we are talking about. Sometimes people can be like David. Remember when David deceived himself concerning Bathsheba. That took place over quite a period of time. He did quite evil things; so did Manasseh; so

did Ahab. But they hadn't seared their consciences. So, a person can be a 'backslider' and be a 'backslider' for a considerable period of time, but they haven't committed the unpardonable sin.

Definition of the Unpardonable Sin: *Deliberate, willful choice and rejection of God the Father and salvation through Jesus Christ! Deliberate and willful* is the main thing. Here's a complete definition: ***The unpardonable sin is a deliberate and calculated renunciation of God!***

- It is not an accidental sin
- It is not a sin unto temptation
- It is not a sin through weakness

The *unpardonable sin* is a knowing, determined, calculated, pre-meditated, willful decision and choice arrived at by rejecting any pangs of conscience, leading of the Holy Spirit, pleadings of the Word of God, ministers and brethren. ***It is a willful determination to reject the gift of repentance, hostile contempt for:***

- the commandments of God
- the Spirit of God
- the sacrifice of Jesus Christ
- the salvation of God

That's pretty heavy-duty— isn't it? ***Those who have committed the unpardonable sin have***

- no regrets
- no sorrow
- no conscience

They have turned their back on God the Father and Jesus Christ and the Word of God! It is impossible:

- to renew them to repentance
- for the Holy Spirit to move them to repentance
- for others to move them to repentance
- to move themselves to repentance

They have *seared their consciences with a hot iron* and there is no power—human or Divine—that is able, or has the power, to renew them to repentance.

- Their choice is final!
- Their judgment is final!
- God's judgment against them is final!

That's the full definition of the *unpardonable sin!*

I've had people call me on the phone and say, 'Oh, have I committed the unpardonable sin?' ***No! If you're worried about committing the unpardonable sin, you wouldn't even call to ask!*** What about Catholics or false religions that reject God's way and so forth? ***They were not enlightened***

in the first place!

Matt. 13—let's read the condition of most of the people in the world. There will be some few who will commit the unpardonable sin by their rejection of God—such as *the beast and the false prophet* as we see in the book of Revelation. They will have enough witness by time the two witnesses get done with them. It's very possible that they could commit the unpardonable sin; probably most probable that they will have.

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.'" **That is enlightenment!** Here's a condition of the most of the world. Most of the world cannot commit the unpardonable sin. Only those who have the Holy Spirit of God can commit the unpardonable sin. That's why he's writing this to those who have been in the Church for decades.

Verse 12: "For whoever has *understanding*, to him more shall be given, and he shall have an abundance... [that is if he takes care of it properly] ...but whoever does not have *understanding*, even what he has shall be taken away from him."

That's what has happened to the religions of the world. They don't have. They've never been *enlightened*. Their enlightenment is the darkness of Satan the devil or the occult in most cases, ***not of God!***

Verse 13: "For this *reason* I speak to them in parables, because seeing, they see not; and hearing, they hear not; neither do they understand." So, God has given them over to their own devices.

Verse 14: "And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah, which says, 'In hearing you shall hear, and in no way understand; and *in* seeing you shall see, and in no way perceive; for the heart of this people has grown fat, and their ears are dull of hearing... [Heb. 5] ...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).

In other words to enlighten them, to bring them to repentance and so forth. I don't know how Protestants handle this verse in relationship to God is busy trying to save the whole world. So, #1 is ***you have to be enlightened!*** That is *understand the Word of God and walk in the Light of God.*

II. "...who personally obtained the heavenly gift..." (Heb. 6:4)

1. Repentance

What is the heavenly gift? *The gift of repentance!* God has to grant you that repentance!

Romans 2:4: “Or do you despise the riches of His kindness and forbearance and long-suffering, not knowing that **the graciousness of God leads you to repentance**?” It is *tasting of the heavenly gift*.

2. God’s Calling

After you repent you have answered the call of God. In other words, part of the heavenly gift is *God’s calling* John 6:44: “No one can come to Me unless the Father, Who sent Me, draws him...” That is a gift.

3. Fruits of the Holy Spirit

4. Salvation

Ephesians 2:8: “For **by grace you have been saved** through faith, and this *especially* is not of your own selves; *it is the gift of God*.”

So, if you’ve tasted of the heavenly gift of *having your sins forgiven*; if you’ve tasted of the heavenly gift by *being led to repentance*; if you tasted the heavenly *gift of salvation* through faith—which Christ alone can give—and reject that, then you’re in bad shape.

5. Righteousness

Romans 5:17—let’s see the ultimate of the gift of God—the gift of righteousness. “For if by the offense of the one man [Adam] death reigned by the one... [death passed to all human beings in the nature of sin] ...how much more shall those who receive the abundance of grace and the **gift of righteousness**... [that’s the imputed righteousness that God gives you—*it is a gift!*] ...reign in life by the One Jesus Christ.”

What a tremendous blessing. Understand that when you repent, when you have been baptized, received the Holy Spirit, God the Father imputes to you the **gift of righteousness**, which means that He views you as He views Christ. In other words, since the righteousness of Christ is imputed to you, that is the righteous standing that you have before God. When you reject that, there’s nothing else you can do. You need to understand that.

This is pretty strong stuff: *the rejecting of God and committing the unpardonable sin!*

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III. “...became partakers of the Holy Spirit” (Heb. 6:4)

Actually receive the begettal from God the

Father. That’s what’s so profound! That’s how you partake of the Holy Spirit, if the Holy Spirit is in you. You have the begettal of the Holy Spirit. Jesus told the disciples on that last Passover night that the Holy Spirit was going to come and be *within* them.

John 14:15: “If you love Me, keep the commandments—namely, My commandments. And I will ask the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that it may be with you throughout the age: *Even* the Spirit of the Truth, which the world cannot receive...” (vs 15-17).

Notice that the unpardonable sin applies to those that God has called, that have partaken of the heavenly gift, that have received the Holy Spirit, which the world has not received, and cannot receive it; it’s impossible!

“...because it perceives it not, nor knows it; but you know it because it dwells with you, and shall be **within** you” (v 17).

That’s what is the begettal of the Holy Spirit. Once that takes place, if you reject that... We can use an analogy here: It’s the same as going to an abortion clinic and having it removed. It’s a willful decision. Just like going to an abortion clinic is a willful decision to terminate a pregnancy to kill an unborn life.

We have the Holy Spirit in us. We have been begotten of God and now we are His children. That’s why in 1-John 3 it talks about that we are ‘the children of God’ and how much love God has bestowed upon us.

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

In the *King James Version* v 4 is probably the most misleading verse of all. It’s misled a lot of Protestants in the doctrine of *born again*. The correct translation is:

Verse 4: “Everyone who practices sin is also practicing lawlessness, for sin is lawlessness. And you know that He appeared in order that He might take away our sins; and in Him is no sin. Everyone who dwells in Him **does not practice sin**...” (vs 4-6).

Doesn’t mean it’s impossible to sin. We just read in 1-John 5 that if you ‘see your brother sin a sin not unto death’ that would be a direct

contradiction of this verse if it meant the impossibility of sinning. This means that whoever had Him dwelling in him “...**does not practice sin...**”

“...anyone who *practices* sin has not seen Him, nor has known Him. Little children, do not allow anyone to deceive you; the one who practices righteousness is righteous, even as He is righteous... [because of the gift of righteousness imputed to that person] ...The one who practices sin... [transgressing the law] ...is of the devil because the devil has been sinning from *the* beginning. For this purpose the Son of God appeared that He might destroy the works of the devil. **Everyone who has been begotten by God does not practice sin...**” (vs 6-9).

In other words, you can't live in sin. Why? *Because the Spirit of God will prick your conscience to repent!* That's why you cannot practice sin. You may continue in a sin for a great period of time, but as long as your conscience is still pricking you and you know you've got to get back to God, you haven't committed the unpardonable sin. Your conscience is telling you that you can't continue this way. What is that? *That is the Spirit of God—through the power of God, because you still have the Spirit of God in you—convicting you of that sin in hopes that you will repent.* That is leading you to repentance! You cannot *practice* sin, and here's the reason:

“...because His seed... [the Greek there is ‘sperma’—the begetting of the seed of eternal life from God the Father] ...*of begetting* is dwelling within him, and **he is not able to practice sin** because he has been begotten by God” (vs 9).

Very profound! If you have become partaker of the Holy Spirit, you are in a total different category than other people in the world, even religious people who are deceived. You have had something special given by God individually to you—*the begetting of the Holy Spirit, partaker of the Holy Spirit. That is the begetting!* You have to grow in grace and knowledge. You have to let the Holy Spirit lead you. All of those things are partaker of the Holy Spirit.

Let's show that after you are begotten of God and you grow in grace and knowledge, you are to let the Holy Spirit lead you. How do you do that?

- by prayer
- by study
- by living by the Word of God

then

- God's Spirit will lead you
- God's Spirit will prick your conscience

- God's Spirit will inspire you
- God's Spirit will give you the desire to do the will of God

In spite of all your weaknesses! Just like the man who said, ‘I believe, Lord, help my unbelief.’

Romans 8:14: “For as many as are led by *the* Spirit of God, these are *the* sons of God.”

Verse 9 is very important to show the distinction, the difference, why ***the unpardonable sin is a premeditated and pre-determined rejection of God,*** of unmitigated hatred toward God.

Verse 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.” There again, the world does not have the Spirit of God. It's only in those who have been made partakers of the Spirit of God.

Verse 10: “But if Christ *be* within you, the body *is* indeed dead because of sin; however, the Spirit *is* life because of righteousness.” Here's how we use the Spirit. This is how we are led of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit works within our mind because the seed of begetting is there.

Verse 11: “Now, if the Spirit of Him Who raised Jesus from *the* dead is dwelling within you, He Who raised Christ from *the* dead will also quicken... [make alive] ...your mortal bodies because of His Spirit that dwells within you. 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... [because you will continue to go on and commit the unpardonable sin] ...but if by *the* Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you shall live” (vs 11-13). That's just in summary to overcome human nature.

As you are doing that, v 14: “For as many as are led by *the* Spirit of God, these are *the* sons of God.” So, you have to let the Spirit of God lead you—*partaker of the Holy Spirit*. This narrows the category down to who are those who could commit the unpardonable sin. *It's a pretty high threshold!* When it is done, it is absolutely premeditated beyond belief.

Verse 15: “Now, you have not received a spirit of bondage again unto fear, but you have received *the* Spirit of sonship, whereby we call out, ‘Abba, Father.’ The Spirit itself bears witness conjointly with our own spirit, *testifying* that we are *the* children of God” (vs 15-16). That's what it means to become partakers of the Holy Spirit.

IV. “...have tasted the good Word of God...”

(Heb. 6:5)

- you've studied it
- you understood it
- it has cleansed your life

Jesus said if you 'hunger and thirst' after the Word of God, you shall be filled. When you are filled, then you have *tasted* the Word of God. You've seen what it's done for you.

Psalm 34:8: "O **taste and see** that the LORD is good..." You don't take a bite out of the Lord; that is through His Word *you taste the good Word of God!*

"...blessed is the man who takes refuge in Him. O fear the LORD, all you saints, for there is nothing lacking to those who fear Him. The young lions do lack and suffer hunger, but those who seek the LORD shall not lack any good thing" (vs 8-10)—**tasting the Word of God!** You understand it.

Have you ever been studying the Bible and all of a sudden something that you wanted to know suddenly becomes clear where it wasn't before. It's kind of like DING! a little light suddenly goes on. That's the best way I can explain what it means to *taste* of the Word of God and what it does for you. That's why study is so important, coupled with prayer and all the basic things that you have heard. It's like this: If you want to live physically, you have eat food, drink water and breathe air, and then the other things such as sleeping, etc.

If you want to live *spiritually*, you have to be **led of the Spirit, pray, study, grow and overcome**. If you don't do these things then you will die. Just like if you don't take care of your body or you mistreat it, it's going to react to you. Then if you don't take care of it from there on, it's going to react up to the end, including death. Spiritually speaking, the same thing can happen. If you avoid all of these things—you go against everything that is here in Heb. 6:4-5—then you're in bad trouble!

V. **"...and the powers of the world to come"** (Heb. 6:5)

What do you mean? *The power of God intervening in your life!* Have you ever lived through something that *you know* that God had to intervene to keep you from dying a physical death? Such as being in an accident or just missing something bad that happened? ***That's God intervening!*** That the power of God, which is going to be common in the world to come.

Hebrews 6:6: "If they have fallen away, to renew *them*... [v 4 it's impossible—1-5—who] ...have fallen away... [it's impossible]: ...to renew *them* again unto repentance; *seeing that* they are

crucifying the Son of God for themselves, and are publicly holding *Him* in contempt."

Let's see the process of this: From the *Biblical Word Commentary*—which is generally a good commentary because mostly they just expound on the different words. They don't get into doctrine; they get into the meaning of the words and so forth:

In Hebrews the characteristic terms for sin that display contempt for God are compounds of 'para'—many of which occur nowhere else in the New Testament.

Again, here we have these right in the book of Hebrews.

- 1) Heb. 6:6—'paradeigmaizein'—*to expose to public humiliation*; making a mockery of the sacrifice of Christ. If once you have gone through all of these five steps and you make a mockery of the sacrifice of Christ—that's something!
- 2) Heb. 3:16—'parapikainein'—*to rebel*—"For some, after hearing, **did rebel**... [Of course, they heard the very voice of God from Mt. Sinai. You can't have it any more direct than that.] ...but not all who came out of Egypt by Moses."
- 3) Heb. 3:8—'parapikramos'—*rebellion*—"Harden not your hearts, **as in the rebellion**, in the day of temptation in the wilderness." Isn't it interesting that right after chapter three, in chapter four it 'remains therefore, for the people of God, Sabbath-keeping.' So, it's a hardening of the heart! It's really something. Where does that hardening of the heart begin? *By not listening to the Word of God!*

v 7—"For this reason, even as the Holy Spirit says, 'Today, if you will hear His voice.' And everyday we have the opportunity to hear. —"Harden not your hearts, **as in the rebellion**... [in the] ...wilderness."

v 15—"As it is being said, 'Today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts, as in the rebellion.'"

- 4) Heb. 2:1—'pararrein'—*to drift away or fall away*—"For this reason, it is imperative that we give much greater attention to the things *which* we have heard, lest at any time **we should slip away**." That's how the unpardonable sin begins—you begin drifting away, slipping away, a little folding, a little turning of the hand so

that your spiritual poverty come upon you. Then you get into a Laodicean condition where you are blind and naked. Then you get into a condition where God is still working with you, He spews you out of the Body [of Christ], spews you out of His mouth and then He's knocking at the door—He's still working with you. If you open the door and repent, then God continues to deal with you.

If you harden your heart, if you slip away, if you let these things just totally carry you away and you go back into the world in hard-heartedness, then you can commit the unpardonable sin.

- 5) Heb. 13:9—'parapherein'—*to carry away*. This again shows another process: "Do not be **carried about** by all kinds of strange doctrines...." Isn't that profound? This tells us one of the first steps that Satan will use to start leading people away will be *all kinds of strange doctrines*. I suppose that in this day and age I don't think we've heard of all of them, but we've heard probably well over 90% of them.
- 6) Heb. 12:12—'pareinenos'—*being listless*. "Therefore, lift up the hands that are **hanging down**... [What does that generally mean? What does that generally show? *An attitude of giving up!*] ...and *revive* the weakened knees." What the Apostle Paul is doing here from Heb. 6 to the end of the book of Heb. to show them that *they need to look to Christ and avoid the unpardonable sin and how to not get caught in the trap of all of these things!*

Let's see how Paul explains it again. The book of Hebrews is written to those who have been in the Church for decades. It is written to them so that they will recover from their weaknesses, their slipping away and their sins so that they will not commit the unpardonable sin. That's why just like the book of Hebrews was for the close of the apostolic age, the book of Hebrews is for the close of the age right before Christ returns.

Hebrews 10:18: "Now, where remission of these *is*, *it is* no longer *necessary to offer* sacrifices for sin.... [animal sacrifices] ...Therefore, brethren, having confidence to enter into the *true* Holiest... [the Father] ...by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which He consecrated for us through the veil (that is, His flesh), and *having* a great High Priest over the house of God, let us approach *God* with a true heart, with full conviction of faith, our

hearts having been purified from a wicked conscience, and our bodies having been washed with pure water. Let us hold fast without wavering *to* the hope *that* we profess, for He Who promised *is* faithful; and let us be concerned about one another, and *be* stirring up *one another* unto love and good works" (vs 18-24).

Many brethren are doing that. Reach out to the other brethren that you know that may be slipping away, drifting away, just getting back into the world. Notice, just like Heb. 3-4—rebellion and rejection of the Sabbath—so we have it here:

Verse 25: "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, even as some *are* accustomed to do; but rather, encouraging *one another*, and all *the* more as you see the day drawing near." If we don't see *the day* drawing near, we are blind indeed!

Verse 26 ties right in with Heb. 6:4-6: "For if we willfully go on sinning... [practicing sin, living in sin] ...after receiving the knowledge of the Truth, **there is no longer any sacrifice for sins**, but a terrifying expectation of inevitable judgment and of fierce fire, which will devour the adversaries *of God*" (vs 26-27). That's what the unpardonable sin is!

Now, let me read something from the *Word Biblical Commentary*, which I think defines it pretty good. It says this concerning the sacrifice of Christ:

What is visualized by the expressions in Heb. 6:6 is every form of departure from faith in the crucified Son of God. This could entail a return to Jewish convictions and practices as well as a public denial of faith in Christ under pressure from a magistrate or hostile proud simply for personal advantage. The insertion of 'it is impossible to restore them to repentance' is parallel to the notion of 'laying again the foundation' concerning repentance. In the eschatological perspective of Hebrews... [that means in the fulfilling of the prophecy of Hebrews] ...there is no other repentance than that provided by God through Jesus Christ. There is no salvation apart from the purification of sins accomplished by the Divine Son in the final period of God's redemptive activity.

The 'adunatai'—which is the *impossibility*—is used and is absolute and without qualification in v 4 expressing an impossibility and the apostate repudiates the only basis upon which repentance can be extended.

In other words, to repudiate Christ is to **embrace the**

impossibility—that's what the unpardonable sin is!

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*

Scriptural References:

- 1) Hebrews 6:1
- 2) Ephesians 4:11-16
- 3) Matthew 5:48
- 4) 2 Peter 1:1-10
- 5) Hebrews 6:1-5, 4
- 6) John 1:1-5
- 7) John 3:18-21
- 8) 1 John 1:5-10
- 9) 1 John 5:16-18
- 10) Hebrews 6:4
- 11) Matthew 13:11-15
- 12) Hebrews 6:4
- 13) Romans 2:4
- 14) John 6:44
- 15) Ephesians 2:8
- 16) Romans 5:17
- 17) Hebrews 6:4
- 18) John 14:15-17
- 19) 1 John 3:1-2, 4-9
- 20) Romans 8:14, 9-16
- 21) Hebrews 6:5
- 22) Psalm 34:8-10
- 23) Hebrews 6:5-6
- 24) Hebrews 3:16, 8, 7, 15
- 25) Hebrews 2:1
- 26) Hebrews 13:9
- 27) Hebrews 12:12
- 28) Hebrews 10:18-27

Scripture referenced, not quoted: Hebrews 5

Also referenced:

Sermon Series:

- *Epistles of Peter*
- *Was Jesus God?*

Book: *Word Biblical Commentary*

FRC: bo
Transcribed: 4-22-11
Reformatted/Corrected: January/2017

The Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews XVIII

Denying God

(Chapter 6)
Fred R. Coulter

We have been talking about the things concerning the *unpardonable sin* and let's just review that so that we understand that the *unpardonable sin* is a very pre-meditated thing. ***The unpardonable sin is a deliberate, willful choice and rejection of God the Father and Jesus Christ, and the repudiation of the forgiveness of sins and the gift of salvation through Jesus' sacrifice and His blood!*** That's after the five steps of having known:

1. being enlightened; once enlightened
2. obtaining the heavenly gift
3. partaker of the Holy Spirit
4. tasted of the Word of God
5. powers of the world to come

It's not a light thing, and it's not a happenstance thing. (from handout):

The unpardonable sin is a deliberate calculated renunciation of God. It is not an accidental sin, nor a sin under temptation, nor a sin through weakness. The unpardonable sin is a knowing, determined, calculated, premeditated, willful decision and choice arrived at by rejecting any pangs of conscience, leading of the Holy Spirit, pleadings of the Word of God, or ministers and brethren. It is a willful determination to reject the gift of repentance, and hostile contempt for the commandments of God, the Spirit of God, a willful repudiation of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ and His blood for the forgiveness of sin and the salvation of God. Those who have committed the unpardonable sin have no regrets, no sorrow and no conscience that they have turned their backs on God the Father and Jesus Christ, and the Word of God. It is impossible to renew them to repentance; it is impossible for the Holy Spirit to move them to repentance, for others to move them to repentance or to move themselves to repentance. They have seared their consciences with a hot iron and there is no power—human or Divine—that is able, or has the ability to renew them to repentance.

- Their choice is final!
- Their judgment is final!
- God's judgment against them is final!

As we went through the different Greek words that have been used in the book of Hebrews, meaning:

- to expose to public humiliation
- rebel
- rebellion
- drift away, fall away
- to carry away
- being listless

There is no other repentance than that provided through Jesus Christ. There is no salvation apart from the purification for sins accomplished by the Divine Son in the final period of God's redemptive activity. The impossibility, which is used—'adunatou/adunaton'—absolutely [an impossibility], and without qualification in Heb. 6:4 expresses an impossibility because the apostate repudiates the only basis upon which repentance can be extended. **"To repudiate Christ is to embrace the impossible"** (*Word Biblical Commentary*)

That's why the Laodiceans have not committed the unpardonable sin. That's why most of those in Thyatira did not commit the unpardonable sin. That's why when God deals with a person that He will bring circumstances upon them that if they have drifted away or if they have fallen away somewhat—

- they haven't rejected God
- they haven't rebelled
- they haven't rejected the commandments of God
- they haven't rejected the sacrifice of Jesus Christ

—they, just because of following their own human nature and sin, have become what we would call *backsliders*. Backsliders can recover.

Let's see how they recover. Backsliders have not committed the *unpardonable sin*. 1 Cor. 3 tells us about what is discussed there in Heb. 6 about all the things that you go through for conversion, etc. Here Paul is also warning them in this particular situation; then we will see a similarity between this and what follows in Heb. 6.

1-Corinthians 3:10: "As a wise architect, according to the grace of God that was given to me, I

have laid *the* foundation, and another is building upon *it*. But let each one take heed how he builds upon *it*.” There are two warnings here:

1. **to the ministers**—because Paul said ‘as a wise master builder I have laid the foundation, and another is building upon it’—Apollos. The one laying the foundation has to be very careful how he’s doing it, too. That it is by:

- Truth
- the Word the God
- the Spirit of God

so that it’s right and correct

2. **to each one**—each of the brethren has to build on that foundation him/herself. It can be laid. Christ is the One Who leads you, gives you the understanding, gives you the tasting of the Word of God—the heavenly gift—and all those things that we have covered

How you build upon there then becomes the important thing.

Verse 11: “For no one is able to lay any other foundation besides that which has been laid, which is Jesus Christ.” This ties in with:

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.’”

There’s no other way to eternal life! It is Jesus Christ or nothing at all. That’s what’s going to cause the problems in the future between the Church of God and the world.

Worldly Christianity is becoming more and more pagan, and, in fact, they call it the ‘neo-paganism.’ It is becoming more and more infiltrated with witchcraft through the likes of *Harry Potter* and actual infiltration of witches, etc. If you have the Trinity Channel, just turn it on and watch it; it’s nothing but emotionalism, nothing to do with salvation, growing in grace and knowledge. It has nothing to do with growing in Christian character. It is only an experience, an emotion, and you get it amplified if you send lots of money to the preacher.

The only way is through Christ and the only way is *His way*, because He said, “I am **the Way**”—no other way; “**...the Truth...**”—no other truth; there’s no such thing as Christian truth, Jewish truth, Catholic truth, Orthodox truth, Islamic truth, Hindu truth, Buddha truth, Confucius truth. There’s only ONE TRUTH—that’s Christ! And He is “**...the Life...**”—because no one can receive eternal life any other way! I don’t know if that would help stop the suicide bombers over in Palestine or not, but they think they’re going to heaven if they blow

themselves up.

Read 1-Cor. 13—you can give your body to be burned, or you can give your body to be blown, or you can give your body to be ground up, or you can whatever, and if you don’t have the love of God and love Jesus Christ it’s of no avail! That’s why the only foundation is Jesus Christ.

Verse 12 tells us how we are to build, and we will see a parallel between this and Heb. 6:

Verse 12:12: “Now, if anyone builds upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones...” Those are things, which are valuable, improved with trial, pressure, fire and heat. That’s what God wants us to do.

The other three are very interesting: “...wood, hay *or* stubble” (v 12). You have the *Three Little Pigs* fairytale. Stubble is very interesting. If they get too much stubble in a silo it gets to hot and it can blow up—spontaneous combustion! Hay goes almost as quickly. Wood may take a little longer.

You look at some of those hot coals of a forest fire as they’re all burning. And, of course, what they did is they let all the bramble grow, the underbrush grow. They didn’t take care of it because those who ‘love trees’ must let them grow. They really hate trees because in the final analysis, after they’ve let them grow, because they weren’t maintained they burn up anyway. We’re going to see trees, vines and so forth were made to be pruned, were made to be taken care of so they produce more. But wood, hay and stubble is all burned up.

Now, if a person has not committed the unpardonable sin—he just has flimsy Christian character—there’s still hope for him.

Verse 13: “The work of each one shall be manifested... [God is going to try them] ...for the day *of trial* will declare *it*, because it shall be revealed by fire... [and that is any day that you have to stand for the Truth] ...and the fire shall prove what kind of work each one’s is.”

That was literally true in the case of William Tyndale, and in the case of those who taught their children to recite the 23rd Psalm and ‘the Lord’s prayer’ in English. They were burned at the stake.

Verse 14: “If the work that anyone has built... [on the foundation] ...endures, he shall receive a reward.” Please understand that a reward is *in addition* to the gift of salvation. A reward is something that you *work for*. A reward is something that you *can earn*. But you cannot have the reward unless you have eternal life, and ***you cannot earn eternal life***; God has to give that to you. That’s why

he puts it in this way.

Verse 15: “If the work of anyone is burned up, he shall suffer loss; but *he* himself shall be saved, yet, as through fire.” That’s what is the important thing! If you had wood, hay and stubble as your Christian building, but you haven’t repudiated Christ, you will still receive salvation. You will lose reward. Exactly how God is going to do this I don’t know, because God is the One Who’s going to judge.

What we need to do is do exactly like the Apostle Paul said here; this is how we have to do it, v 16 “Don’t you understand that **you are God’s temple**, and *that* the Spirit of God is dwelling in you?”

God desires that more than He does a temple or a tabernacle. He wants to dwell *in* you through the power of the Holy Spirit so that you can become, at the resurrection, a spiritual child of God. That’s what God desires. When we keep this in mind and we understand it and we realize that we have the Holy Spirit and we then stir up the Spirit of God. If we find ourselves building with hay and stubble clear it out yourself and start building with gold, silver and precious stones. Always remember this:

- *As long as there’s life, there is hope!*
- *As long as there is repentance, there is renewal!*
- *As long as there is repentance, there is forgiveness!*

God is able to redeem you out of those circumstances, though you have not exercised the Spirit of God in a way that you should have. Or we can use the classic case of the Laodiceans today. They had to come to the point that Christ had to ‘spit them out of His mouth.’ That was their trial so they would wake up to the fact that they need to be zealous. They are in a repentable condition—aren’t they? They’d have to be, otherwise Christ would not tell them to repent. We need to understand that. The Laodiceans have not committed the unpardonable sin! They have just been sloppy builders.

In many cases they’ve been like what you used to see years ago. In Idaho we used to see quite a few of them. They would get their land and the first thing they would do is excavate for the basement. Then they would pour the foundation for the basement and everything and they would have a little stairwell going down into the basement and then put a temporary roof on the basement, because they were going to build the house the next year. Twenty years later that temporary roof is still there, and anybody that drives by knows that they haven’t finished that house and it’s been well over 20 years.

It’s the same way, the Laodiceans have been living in the basement and they have the temporary roof and they haven’t finished the house. God spits them out so they will have to build. That’s why you have to understand you are *the temple of God* and the Spirit of God dwells in you.

Now then, here’s a warning, it can go too far, v 17: “If anyone defiles the temple of God, God shall destroy him...” You defile the temple of God by rejecting God, by repudiating God. What he’s doing, he’s giving a warning! You’ve got this building, a trial is going to come, if you’re not close to God it’s going to burn up, and then where will you be? If you continue that way then you defile the temple of God and God will destroy you.

Hebrews 6:6: “If they have fallen away, to renew *them* again unto repentance; *seeing that* they are crucifying the Son of God for themselves...” It’s a very interesting verb here; it’s a middle voice verb. They are doing this to themselves; God is not doing it to them.

“...and are publicly holding *Him in contempt*” (v 6). This happened just before the fall of Jerusalem when the rebellion took place.

Since Christ didn’t return when a lot of people figured that He would return, then the Jews beginning in 66 A.D. decided to take it upon themselves to get out from underneath the Roman domination. A lot of the zealots whom James said believed in the Lord, renounced Christ, renounced His sacrifice, went back to the animal sacrifices and the temple worship, and threw their support to those who were rebelling against Rome. So, it was quite a thing that happened!

There is another way that you can repudiate Christ and hold Him in public contempt. That has to do with the wrong Passover observance. Let me just mention here, though the Catholics are blinded and the Protestants are blinded, nevertheless, if someone leaves the Church of God—having been enlightened, having these things of being illuminated and receiving the Holy Spirit and the Word of God and so forth—deliberately rejects and goes back into the Catholic Church and participate in the Eucharist... You are dealing with priests who claim they have the power to command God to come into the bread so that the very body of Christ and the blood is in the bread. And every time they perform the Eucharist they are sacrificing Christ again and again and again. Whereas, He died *once!* And that’s why we keep the Passover once a year in the proper manner.

All of those who are Catholics need to think of this: Did that same priest, with those same hands,

who gives you the bread—and if you're able to take the wine—just molest one of the boys in the backroom before Mass? *Something to think about!* The truth is the Catholics, in their religion and belief, are so far from God that are so convinced that they believe that they are really *the* church. It's like the thing that is said: Lies told over and over again, and enough people believe it and it's reinforced over generations, when someone comes along and tells the truth, they'll be considered a raving manic and a lunatic.

Those are the ways that you can reject God and hold Him in public contempt! You can also do so by just renouncing Christ. We had one man do that temporarily. He saw the folly of what he was doing after about three years. But when he did, he took some brethren with him. The brethren who followed him *made their own choices* to do so. That's why we are to prove all things so that those things won't happen.

Let's see some ways in which we can *deny*. *Denying Christ* is not quite as bad as rejecting. It's serious! ***But not as bad as rejecting! Remember*** when Peter said, 'Lord, we're not going to let this happen to You. I would go to the death and go to prison with You and I would never deny You.' Christ said, 'Peter, you're going to deny Me three times before the cock crows.' *And he did!* But he repented! So denying—unrepented of—would, of course, then lead to rejection. But there are times when people can do that. Denying then becomes something that can bring you to the threshold of the *unpardonable sin*.

When we analyze what Peter did, he denied three times in word. Did he deny Christ in works? *No!* He repented before he went out and did the works of denial. We can see the difference there.

Titus 1:9: "Holding steadfastly to the faithful Word... [anyone who is an elder; that really includes anyone who hears the Word of God] ...according to the teachings of *Jesus Christ*, so that he may be able both to encourage with sound doctrine..."

The Word of God has to be known, it has to be *sound* doctrine, not frivolous thought, not ideas and things that come into the mind as important and replace the Word of God.

"...with sound doctrine, and to **convict** those who are gainsayers" (v 9)—*not convince*; you're not going to convince a gainsayer. How did Jesus do it?

Remember they brought the woman caught in adultery. They said, 'Moses says that this person ought to be killed.' Jesus stooped down and wrote

on the ground. I think what He probably wrote there was, *where is the man?* That would be very simple, because you can't commit adultery by yourself.

- Has anybody ever committed adultery by himself? *No!* or herself? *No!*
- How did they get her anyway?
- Which one of the Pharisees enticed her?
- How did they catch her in the very act and not catch the man?

So, I think He wrote, *where is the man?*

What Christ did to convict the gainsayers was He made them face the fact of proper judgment that they didn't bring the man. What happened? Each one, beginning with the oldest, left. And then standing in the middle of the crowd was Jesus and the woman. Jesus looked up at the woman and said, 'Does any man accuse you?' She said, 'No man, Lord.' He said, 'Go and sin no more.' I think that may have also convicted the conscience of that woman, too, as well as the conscience of those men. It can be done that way. You can convict them. Some you can't! Some you can't stop!

Verse 10: "For there are many rebellious and vain talkers and deceivers, especially those from *the circumcision party*, whose mouths must be stopped..." (vs 10-11).

Every once in a while I get a letter—it happened quite often with the sermon series *Why God Hates Religion*—and I tell you what, if you can't figure out why God hates religion then you need to go back to the sandbox and start all over again, because religion is a substitute of man's way or God's way, using the name of God and claiming the promises of God and yet, retaining all of the carnality and stupidity of human nature. If you don't believe that, witness all of the religions in the world. Then I also get letters which ask why all of this refuting and debunking, like the sermon series on *Was Jesus God?* going through and refuting the writings of these men. Why? Should we just let it go by? Have a nice day, and you don't answer back and you don't show what the Truth is? Have you defended the Word of God? *No!* Have you stopped their mouths? *No!* That what they were to do.

Verse 11: "Whose mouths must be stopped; who are subverting whole households, teaching things which *they* ought not, for the sake of selfish gain. One from among them, *even one* of their own prophets, said, 'Cretans *are* always liars, *and* evil, wild beasts, *and* lazy gluttons.' This testimony is true. For this reason you *must* rebuke them severely... [there comes a time when there has to be sharp rebuke] ...**that they may be sound in the faith**" (vs 11-13).

That's the whole purpose of it. The purpose is not to get up there and attack people and intimidate them and put them down. It's to show them that they need to change their ways.

Here's what happens; this is why God called the Apostle Paul, v 14: "Not paying attention to Jewish myths..." If you think that Protestantism and Catholicism is pagan, you don't have a clue concerning Judaism. One of the worst things that ever happened in the Church of God—when it was in its heyday—is this: 'The Jews are just like us.' They are just waiting for the Messiah to come. ***They are not like us!*** Their religion is pagan, steeped in superstition and the their Talmud is full of hatred, and vindictive and vitriolics against Jesus Christ—which they have printed and is an open repudiation of Christ. How many are blinded so they are not held accountable, I don't know. But either way, I wouldn't want to be in their shoes.

That's why we should not have, "...and commandments of men, which turn away from the Truth" (v 14).

We have been invaded with sacred names, prayer shawls, praise dancing—just to name a few—15th Passover, 6th of Sivan Pentecost. Going through the whole *Code of Jewish Law* shows you all the commandments of men; of do this, do that, and do the other thing; and don't do this, don't do that, and don't do the other thing. All of those things as is described in the introduction to the *Code of Jewish Law* are designed to keep the people so busy trying to remember what they are supposed to do that they don't have time to think for themselves on what they need to do. God expects us:

- to use His Spirit to *think*
- to use His Word to *reason*

Verse 15: "To the pure, all things *are* pure; but to those who are defiled and unbelieving, nothing *is* pure; rather, **both their minds and consciences are defiled.**" When it's that way, that your mind and conscience are defiled, you undoubtedly have committed the *unpardonable sin*.

Verse 16: "They personally profess to know God..." We're talking about Jews in this particular case. We can do the same thing with any other religion today, too, but they have not necessarily rejected God, they have just never gotten out of paganism. The Jews in Jesus' day are in an entirely different category. Christ was there in person. The apostles were there in person. *They knew!*

Verse 16: "They personally profess to know God, but in *their* works they deny Him, being abominable and disobedient, and reprobate unto

every good work."

So, when the denial reaches beyond the mental denial, as Peter did, into the actionable denial that you repudiate Christ. *Denial is one of the steps that leads to it!* What happens when you deny Christ? There is something else that happens. There comes a point when Christ gives up on that person, because they have reached a point of:

- no hope
- no repentance
- no remorse
- no sorrow
- no pangs of conscience, because they have defiled it

2-Timothy 2:12: "If we endure, we shall also reign together with *Him*; **if we deny Him, He will also deny us.**" How many times will you read some of these parables in the Gospels, and Jesus would say, 'I never knew you'?

Verse 13: "If we are unfaithful, He remains faithful—He cannot deny Himself" (vs 12-13)—because He *is*.

I want to cover this point and make sure we understand thoroughly concerning the *unpardonable sin*. So that we realize the severity of it, but we also need to understand and realize that when brethren are loving God and serving Him, regardless if they're building 'wood, hay and stubble,' they still haven't committed the unpardonable sin. Therefore, if there's to be any correction or exhortation given to them, then they should be exhorted for the sins that they are doing and not threatened with the unpardonable sin in a blanket statement to *put a guilt trip on people, to put them in fear!* Do you understand the difference between it?

If you've been backsliding, you haven't committed the *unpardonable sin*. But you better repent of your backsliding or you may get to that point!

Matthew 10:32: "Now then, whoever shall confess Me before men, that one will I also confess before My Father Who *is* in heaven. But whoever shall deny Me before men, that one will I also deny before My Father, Who *is* in heaven" (vs 32-33).

Then He wanted to make sure that you would understand that this is going to be under great duress and pressure when it comes.

Let's look at it this way: If you've never had a trial, if you never had difficulty, if you've never had any of those things come along and all you were was just blessed and blessed and blessed and kept from everything, you would have no occasion to

deny anything, and if you did, you would be almost insane. He wants you to know that it's going to be under duress.

Verse 34: "Do not think that I have come to bring peace on the earth; I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I have come to set a man at variance against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And a man's enemies *shall be those of his own household*. The one who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; and the one who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. And the one who does not take up his cross and follow Me is not worthy of Me" (vs 34-38).

So, when you come to that denial it's going to be under pressure! It's going to be under duress! He wants you to understand it.

Then He says, v 39: "The one who has found his life shall lose it, and the one who has lost his life for My sake shall find it." If you try to relieve the pressure against you by denying Christ, then He's going to deny you.

Just stop and think for a minute: William Tyndale was hauled before the court. He was interrogated for 18 months, I believe, before he was finally burned at the stake. He could have well-reasoned in his mind—which would have been good human rational thinking—I'm not going to change these guys anyway. He wasn't! *I need to finish the translating of the Old Testament, so I'm going to go ahead and placate them with the answers that they want so I will be released, so I can do the translating to finish the Old Testament.* He didn't do it! And when he prayed, the last words were: *O God, open the eyes of the king of England*—which was Henry VIII. There's a big guy to try and move. How are you going to open his eyes? '

It was also brought out that in history there was a woman who was temporarily Queen of England before Mary Queen of Scots—who was 'Bloody Mary'—and her name was Lady Jane Grey. She was reading the Bible—probably a translation by William Tyndale—and she rejected the Catholic faith and the prelates were after her to renounce Christ. They were after her day and night and she lost her hair and everything, but she didn't renounce Christ. Finally, she was beheaded and the Mary, Queen of Scots—Bloody Mary—took over and had a terrible, bloody reign, when the Catholics came back to England again.

Then when Mary, Queen of Scots died, Elizabeth—the daughter of Anne Boleyn who was the second wife Henry VIII—became Queen of England. And you might get the video and watch

that because that's a very interesting video. There are a few risqué places in it, but that's the nature of some movies today, even though they're historical. It is really quite something, and you can see that the 'lord protector' for Queen Elizabeth had to be sent by God to do the things that were done. I think you'll find it very interesting that especially when you see the final counsel by the pope and his cardinals to decide on assassinating Elizabeth, the pope said in a very low voice: 'God will bless this assassination.' How Elizabeth was protected and how those things were done was really quite something!

Today they want to have everybody in such a accepting and ecumenical and politically correct society, that you accept anything, you stand for nothing and you go along with everything. Denying the name of Christ is something that really needs to be considered.

(go to the next track)

Let's see another way how you can *deny God*, and that is by hardened sin; that you just set your mind to sin in such a way that you do not care, and in such a way that you relish it.

Jeremiah 17:1: "The sin of Judah *is* engraved with a pen of iron, with the point of a diamond; *it is* carved upon the tablet of their heart and upon the horns of your altars." In other words, right into the religious fabric of Judah. I tell you what, that really is quite a thing when you go back and consider that.

Let's see another way that you deny Christ. This would be very good for all ministers to read, especially those on the Trinity Channel. A lot of the things that are perceived on television do not show you the truth behind what is happening. The truth behind all of this is to come out with a one-world acceptable Christianity. That's what Simon Magus wanted to do. He wanted to combine Christ and the paganism that he had and still have the Holy Spirit.

Now, let's look at this man, Acts 8:9: "But *there was* a certain man named Simon, who had from earlier times been practicing sorcery... [witchcraft] ...in the city and astounding the nation of Samaria, proclaiming himself to be some great one. To him they had all given heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, 'This man is the great power of God'" (vs 9-10).

That's exactly what they're saying of the pope, because what you are reading here, this Simon was probably the one whom you could call the first pope of the Roman Catholic Church, though the Roman Catholic Church was not formed for about 300 years later. He had all the practices that they

had.

Verse 11: “Now, they were giving heed to him because *he* had for a long time bewitched them with sorceries. But when they believed Philip, who was preaching the Gospel—the things concerning the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ—they were baptized, both men and women. Then Simon himself also believed...” (vs 11-13). *Professed* that he believed, because obviously he did not believe because he hadn’t repented.

- Can you have a belief without repentance? *Yes! The demons believe there’s one God, and tremble! No repentance!*
- Can a human being have a profession without repentance? *Yes!*
- Can he have a baptism without receiving the Holy Spirit? *Yes!*

Simon himself believed “...and after being baptized, he steadfastly continued with Philip; and as he beheld *the* signs and great works of power *that* were being done, he was amazed” (v 13).

Isn’t it interesting, this reminds me of the hovering of the *false prophet*, the attempt of infiltration by Satan the devil, the usurpation of the Church of God by false apostles.

Verse 14: “Now when the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the Word of God...” We might add that Simon was baptized; they knew something wasn’t right and God did something very important because of that. He did not give the Holy Spirit! The apostles came down and straightened out the situation. I’m sure that Philip learned from his mistake. Would you not think that it would be a mistake to just go out and baptize John Paul II because he said he believed in Jesus Christ? *Yes, indeed!* That’s what we’re up against here.

Verse 14: “Now, when the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the Word of God, they sent Peter and John to them; Who, after coming down *to Samaria*, prayed for them, that they might receive *the* Holy Spirit; for as yet it had not fallen upon any of them, but they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then they laid *their* hands on them, and they received *the* Holy Spirit. Now when Simon saw that the Holy Spirit was given by the laying on of the hands of the apostles, he offered them money” (vs 14-18).

This is in here for everyone to learn the lesson that God has not given to the leadership of the Church of God that which is going to give them the power to merchandise brethren. *He’s not given that!* God does not want the brethren merchandised. Of

course, Simon would *sell* the Holy Spirit. Just like they *sell* masses, and *sell* indulgences, and *sell* forgiveness. That’s merchandising! That’s why he wanted it.

Verse 19: “Saying, ‘Give this authority to me also, so that on whomever I lay hands, he may receive *the* Holy Spirit.’” This was such a critical thing. Notice Peter’s answer, this is really a vehement answer:

Verse 20: “But Peter said to him, ‘**May your money be destroyed with you because you thought that the gift of God might be purchased with money.**’”

Today this is likened unto the saying, ‘Go to hell! You and your money’ to the theological place of ever-burning! That’s is where this kind of attitude would go! Whether Simon committed the unpardonable sin or not, I don’t know, because he never repented, so we can conclude that he didn’t. But he certainly was used of Satan to lead a lot of people astray.

Peter says, v 21: “**You have neither part nor lot in this matter...** [apostleship] **...for your heart is not right before God.** Repent, therefore, of this your wickedness, and beseech God, if perhaps the thought of your heart may be forgiven you; for I perceive *that* you are in *the* gall of bitterness and *the* bondage of unrighteousness” (vs 21-23).

Ultimately, if that is not repented of even in the second resurrection, it is the *unpardonable sin!*

Verse 24: “But Simon answered *and* said, ‘You beseech the Lord on my behalf... [no, you’ve got to pray to the Lord yourself] ...so that none of *those* things which you have spoken may come upon me.’” So, we have the example there.

Let’s see how that infiltrated into the Church and the problems that it caused in the Church. Let’s see why the warnings are given. God gives plenty of warnings before a person comes to the point of committing the unpardonable sin. He calls to repentance before a person commits the unpardonable sin. That’s why we have the message to the seven churches here in Rev. 2 & 3. He warns them of their mistakes and calls them to repentance.

The Church at Ephesus

Revelation 2:4: “Nevertheless, I have *this* against you, that you have left your first love.” There’s the admonition. There’s the exposing of the sin so they can repent.

Verse 5: “Therefore, remember from where you have fallen, and repent, and do the first works... [If they didn’t go back and do the first works, what

happens?] ...for if *you do* not, I will come to you quickly; and I will remove your lampstand out of its place unless you repent.” So, God always gives a warning! He gives a call to repentance!

The Church at Pergamos

Because they have the doctrines of the Nicolaitans and teaching of eating the things sacrificed unto idols and commit fornications.

Revelation 2:16: “Repent! For if *you do not repent*, I will come to you quickly, and will make war against them with the sword of My mouth.” That is not talking about the second return of Christ. Can God come upon you at any time? *Yes!* He can come upon you with judgment, trial, and to fight against them.

Here the Truth of God is so important not only to God and the brethren, but to Christ, that if it is not in His Church He is not going to fight against His own Church. That’s how important that this really becomes.

Church at Thyatira

We come over here to the Church that really fell into the depths of it because they had Jezebel the prophetess. Let’s see where the point comes of no return. We see part of it here. Actually, He has more things to say against the Church at Thyatira and Pergamos than any of the other churches.

Revelation 2:20: “But I have a few things against you, because you allow the woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce My servants into committing fornication and eating things sacrificed to idols. And I gave her time to repent of her fornication...” (vs 20-21)—spiritual as well; and because this Jezebel is the harlot woman of Rev. 17. Jezebel was the daughter of the priest of Baal, and she married Ahab, king of Israel. That’s the whole historical background for this.

“...and eating things sacrificed to idols. And I gave her time to repent...” (vs 20-21). Again, God always gives space to repent. So, when God gives space to repent, accept it; don’t go back on it.

“...but she did not repent. Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of their works. And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am He Who searches *the* reins and hearts; and I will give to each of you according to your works” (vs 21-23). They’re right at the edge. Right absolutely at the edge!

Here He explains why, v 24: “But to you I say, and to *the* rest who *are* in Thyatira, as many as

do not have this doctrine...” So, you can follow false doctrine to eternal death.

“...and who have not known the depths of Satan...” (v 24). If you get into Satan-worship: repudiation of the Word of God, accepting of the false teachings, accepting of the teachings of Jezebel—which are the teachings of Satan the devil and Baalim—and you get into the “...depths of Satan worship...” ***you commit the unpardonable sin!*** That’s a warning!

“...as they speak; I will not cast upon you any other burden” (v 24). These things did impact and affect the Church.

We have two things that are important, He says to Pergamos, v 13: “I know your works and where you dwell, where the throne of Satan *is*... [living in the middle of a satanic world] ...but ***you are holding fast My name, and did not deny My faith***...”

Very important! You can live in the midst of evil all around you, and if you hold fast the name of Christ and do not deny the faith, then you’ll receive salvation.

Church at Philadelphia

Revelation 3:8: “I know your works. Behold, I have set before you an open door, and no one has the power to shut it because you have a little strength, and ***have kept My Word, and have not denied My name***.”

Very important! If we follow what is said here in v 8, then we will be building gold, silver and precious stone and we will not be building with wood, hay and stubble and we will not be building things up to the point of *denying Christ*.

Let’s look at one last thing. When the unpardonable sin and the rejection of the Holy Spirit has occurred, there is no forgiveness, there is no repentance now or when you’re resurrected.

Matthew 12:22: “Then was brought to Him one who was possessed by a demon, blind and dumb; and He healed him, so that the one *who had been* blind and dumb both spoke and saw.”

The traditions of the Jews, even in Judaism, says that when the Messiah comes He will make the blind to see and the dumb to speak. We have it both in this one person. They saw this done. The religious leaders saw this done! This becomes important.

Verse 23: “And the multitudes were all amazed, and said, ‘Is this the Son of David?’” Who is what? *The Messiah!* If the Messiah comes, then the religious leaders lose all their power. When

Christ returns you can well bet that all the religious leaders are going to lose their power. I did a sermon series *Why God Hates Religion* and I asked the question: When Christ returns, which religion will He retain in the Millennium? *None!*

Verse 24: “But when the Pharisees heard *this*, they said, ‘This *Man* does not cast out demons except by Beelzebub, prince of the demons.’ But Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said to them, ‘Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand’” (vs 24-25). That is a truism, absolutely true!

Verse 26: “And if Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself. How then shall his kingdom stand?”

The truth is, Satan is only able to unite his kingdom at various sporadic times. His house is divided against itself and the power and principalities are fighting and arguing against each other as to who is going to control what. There is a truism here. It appears at times united, but it’s really divided.

Verse 27: “And if I by Beelzebub cast out demons, by whom do your sons cast *them* out? On account of this, they shall be your judges. But if I by *the* Spirit of God cast out demons, then the Kingdom of God has come upon you” (vs 27-28). The action of God, and this is by the power of the Holy Spirit from God the Father.

Verse 29: “Or how is anyone able to enter into the house of a strong *man* and plunder his goods, if he does not first bind the strong man? And then he will plunder his house.” That’s literally what Christ did to Satan, who, in this case is the strongman.

Then He gives a warning, v 30: “The one who is not with Me is against Me, and the one who does not gather with Me scatters.... [that’s a truism that will always be] ...Because of this, I say to you... [this is very important to understand]...**every sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven to men**” (vs 30-31).

That’s why it’s so very difficult to commit the unpardonable sin and why it is such a premeditated thing.

“...except the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit; that shall not be forgiven to men” (v 31). *Because:*

- you’re rejecting God
- you’re rejecting what the Holy Spirit is doing
- you’re rejecting Christ

- you’re repudiating the works of God

There is no forgiveness for that! What you are doing, you are repudiating and rejecting God the Father, the Sovereign of the universe! If you do that, on what grounds do you ever expect to have eternal life? *It cannot be!*

Verse 32: “And whoever speaks a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him...” That’s something! That’s a broad blanket of forgiveness.

“...but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this age nor in the coming age” (v 32).

It has to be so premeditated that there is no hope, because premeditation is so final, and the resolve is so vicious, and the hatred is so intense. I don’t know anyone that is in the Church of God who has come close to committing the unpardonable sin. I don’t know about those who have left the Church of God and have gone out to go with the religions of the world and accept the world, deny the Truth and things like this. I don’t know how many have come to the point of just building wood, hay and stubble or how many have come to the point of rejecting the Holy Spirit of God or not. God makes that judgment. That’s why we need to understand how powerful it is to commit the unpardonable sin.

How is your Spiritual Garden?

Hebrews 6:7: “For the ground that soaks up rain coming often upon it, and also produces useful plants for those for whom it is tilled, receives a blessing from God. But *that* which brings forth thorns and thistles *is* rejected and near to being cursed, the end of which *is* for burning” (vs 7-8).

It says here “...near to being cursed...” Not totally yet, but *near!* “...the end of which is for burning” if it continues that way.

Let’s look at some good spiritual plants. We’re part of that *spiritual* Vine and that Vine is Christ. Notice how Jesus brings about almost very similar in wording to what we just read in Heb. 6. In this we’re going to look at several things, which talks about the analogy of growing good things, and then growing weeds and thistles.

John 15:1: “I AM the true vine, and My Father is the husbandman. He takes away every branch in Me *that* does not bear fruit...” (vs 1-2). If you come to the point that your works are so bad that:

- you don’t have any *wood*
- you don’t have any *hay*
- you don’t have any *stubble*

- you don't have any *faith*

God the Father is the One Who does the pruning Himself. He's the One Who gets rid of the dead wood. Which also helps answer this question:

If a person is disfellowshipped from an organized body of believers, and he is disfellowshipped unjustly—with false charges and things which are not true—*God the Father has not removed that person. He or she is separated from evil!* There's a difference. ***Only God the Father can take a person out and qualify them for the branches to be burned.*** No edict by a man can do that!

- the pope can't do it
- a minister can't do it
- a priest can't do it
- ***only God the Father does it!***

That's what Christ said!

Verse 2: "He takes away every branch in Me *that* does not bear fruit; but He cleanses each one that bears fruit, in order that it may bear more fruit."

That's why we have trials! We're going to see what happens when you just let things grow. You can let them grow, and we'll see what happens then. When you have a trial or a difficulty, understand that it's so you can bring forth more fruit. You can bring forth more of the fruits of God's Spirit. That's the produce that we are producing—right. *Yes!* We're not producing grapes. We're not producing figs. Although you have a parallel and an analogy there.

"...that it may bear more fruit." Isn't that true when you see a well-kept vineyard where they maintain it, take care of the ground, take care of the vines. Especially as that vineyard gets older—and you can tell how old it is by how thick that the trunk of the vine is—because they prune it every year. Sometimes you will see them six or eight inches thick; you know that is a good plant, and that will produce great wine. But when you see these vineyards all laid out and they prune them and they trim them, and they know exactly how to do it so it will produce the most grapes; then that will produce the best wine. Whereas, when you look at one that isn't taken care of, you get nothing out of it. You get a lot of branches growing everywhere. But remember, branches are not fruit. God wants fruit!

Verse 3: "**You are already clean through the Word that I have spoken to you.**" Always remember that, brethren. *Whenever you repent, you are clean!* Those are the words that Christ has spoken and 'every sin and blasphemy against the Son will be forgiven.'

Remember, this was given on the Passover night. It is the Passover which year-to-year, taken in the proper manner, keeps us abiding in Christ, and we've seen how many times when people quit keeping the Passover, they quit dwelling in Christ, and that's what the word *abide* means: to *dwell* or *live* in Christ! It happens!

Here's our responsibility; notice how He puts it, v 4: "Dwell in Me... [we have to make the choice to continue dwelling in Christ] ...and I in you. As a branch cannot bear fruit of itself, but only if it remains in the vine, neither *can* you bear fruit unless you are dwelling in Me. I am the vine, *and* you *are* the branches...." (vs 4-5).

Very interesting; very simple and profound. Does the branch bear the vine? ***or*** Does the vine bear the branch? *The vine bears the branch! Therefore, everything we do has to come from Christ!* You stop and think about this: Remember how the Apostle Paul said, 'Shall the thing say to its maker, what are you making?' A lot of people do that by saying, 'God, I've got a better way of doing it.' *NO!* You can have no better way of doing it than God's way; that's the best way of doing it!

There's something about a branch that does not abide in the vine, v 5: "I am the vine, *and* you *are* the branches. The one who is dwelling in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; because apart from Me you can do nothing." What we can understand is this, just look at it this way:

Those of you who live up here in Napa *wine country*, with all these vineyards around, every year there is a new crop. So, we can look at it this way: In our lives, every year, we have to be producing the fruit. We can liken that with starting out with the Passover, because what do we do? *We take the bread and wine—which is keeping us in the New Covenant, renewing us in the New Covenant—and then produce more fruit that year and come back to the Passover again!* Of course, we can go through the whole thing of all of the Holy Days and see how those things fit in it, too.

A branch of itself, cutoff remaining away from the vine cannot produce anything. You may be able to take that vine put it in some water and maybe start growing a new plant. We're not saying that's what's going to happen here. For example: you cannot take a branch and cut it off and go put it in the water of Protestantism. You cannot go ahead and develop a new plant that way; it won't happen! These kinds are not going to be the transplantable vines that are cut that you can make a new plant out of them. You've got to stay in the vine of Christ.

Verse 6. "If anyone does not dwell in Me, he is cast out as a branch... [Who's the one who takes it

away? *The Father!*] ...and is dried up...” That’s what happens. I suppose you can cut a branch and before it loses its sap you can graft it back in. *I suppose you could and it would survive!* But it would take a while for everything to heal up and for everything to begin flowing again into that branch. But unless that is done, if it is cutoff and removed by God the Father then it’s withered

“...and men gather them...” (v 6). In this case it’s the angels that gather the wicked to throw them into the Lake of Fire.

“...and cast *them* into a fire, and they are burned” (v 6). So that you will not be despaired and think that ‘Oh boy, this is a tough saying.’ Well, it is, but it’s also easy. Because Jesus said, ‘My yoke is easy, and My burden is light.’ Here’s the guarantee that that won’t happen to you:

Verse 7: “If you dwell in Me... [notice that the condition is on *us*] ...and My words dwell in you, you shall ask whatever you desire, and it shall come to pass for you.” There’s the guarantee! Stay in Christ!

Verse 8: “In this is My Father glorified, that you bear much fruit; so shall you be My disciples. As the Father has loved Me, I also have loved you; live in My love” (vs 8-9). ***That’s how you stay in the Vine!*** Continue in the love of God. And ‘this is the love of God that you keep His commandments’

He says right here, v 10: “If you keep My commandments, you shall live in My love; just as I have kept My Father’s commandments and live in His love.”

The most important fruit; ***the fruit of love is the most important thing.*** And if you truly, truly have the love of God and keep His commandments, there is no way that you’re going to commit the unpardonable sin. It is not going to happen! You don’t need to worry about it!

Verse 11: “These things I have spoken to you, in order that My joy may dwell in you, and *that* your joy may be full. This is My commandment: that you love one another, as I have loved you” (vs 11-12). Not only from God to you, but from you to God and back to the brethren.

Verse 13: “No one has greater love than this: that one lay down his life for his friends”—what Christ did for us. This puts us in the same category as Abraham who was called ‘a friend of God.’

Verse 14: “You are My friends... [*if* someone says, ‘I’m a friend of God,’ here’s a qualification]: ...***if you do whatever I command you.***”

Are you doing everything that Jesus said? If you’re not doing everything that Jesus said, then you can’t be a friend. You may not necessarily be an enemy, but you may be an acquaintance. To be a *friend* is an entirely different thing. I’m sure there are a lot of people who are out there who are acquainted with Christ; they’ve heard the name of Christ, but they’re not a *friend* of Christ.

Verse 15: “No longer do I call you servants, because the servant does not know what his master is doing. But I have called you friends because I have made known to you all *the* things that I have heard from My Father. You yourselves did not choose Me, but I have personally chosen you, and ordained you, that you should go *forth* and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain; so that whatever you shall ask the Father in My name, He may give you” (vs 15-16).

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*

Scriptural References:

- 1) 1 Corinthians 3:10-11
- 2) John 14:6
- 3) 1-Corinthians 3:12-17
- 4) Hebrews 6:6
- 5) Titus 1:9-16
- 6) 2 Timothy 2:12-13
- 7) Matthew 10:32-39
- 8) Jeremiah 17:1
- 9) Acts 8:9-24
- 10) Revelation 2:4-5, 16, 20-24, 13
- 11) Revelation 3:8
- 12) Matthew 12:22-32
- 13) Hebrews 6:7-8
- 14) John 15:1-16

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- 1 Corinthians 13
- Revelation 17

Also referenced:

Books:

- *Word Biblical Commentary*
- *Code of Jewish Law* by Solomon Ganzfried & Hymn Goldin

Sermon Series:

- *Why God Hates Religion*
- *Was Jesus God?*

FRC: bo
Transcribed: 4-24-11
Reformatted/Corrected: January/2017

The Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews XIX How is Your Spiritual Garden?

Fred R. Coulter

Hebrews 6:6: “If they have fallen away, to renew *them* again unto repentance; *seeing that* they are crucifying the Son of God for themselves, and are publicly holding *Him* in contempt.” That’s what happens when they reject Christ. They always do, one way or the other.

Verse 7: “For the ground that soaks up rain coming often upon it, and also produces useful plants for those for whom it is tilled, receives a blessing from God. But *that* which brings forth thorns and thistles *is* rejected and near to being cursed, the end of which *is* for burning” (vs 7-8).

How is your spiritual garden? There are many, what you might call, agricultural parables and analogies in the whole Bible. Let’s understand something very important. We can learn a lesson from Gen. 2. We can learn these things physically and spiritually. The reason that they are so important and profound is because they are so simple and they are so true. We go clear back to the beginning, God created Adam and Eve—created man first.

Genesis 2:15: “And the LORD God took the man and put him into the Garden of Eden to dress it and keep it.” There is one thing for sure, that in order to have anything in a garden grow, you have to dress it and keep it. Otherwise, it will bring up thorns and thistles and things like that. The more that you dress it and keep it, the more that it’s going to produce and bring forth fruit. John 15—‘Christ is the vine and the Father is the Husbandman.’ He trims and prunes all of those who bring forth fruit so that they may bring forth more fruit. Those that don’t He cuts off.

This is a story of life based upon a garden. Your life, regardless of who you are and where you are is like a garden. How is it? In what condition is it? We will look at the things concerning the weeds, which can be likened unto human nature, and the fruit, which is likened unto the Spirit of God. Also, we’re confronted in our lifetime with the thing that Adam and Eve were confronted with.

Verse 16: “And the LORD God commanded the man, saying...” God always commands man, always does because He’s God! We’re going to see that one of the greatest weed producers or poor plant producers, or genetically engineered plants, are those things where men reject the commandments of God and go ahead and graft in their own, or genetically engineer their own. So, we can kind of in advance liken all ‘religion’ to genetically engineered gardens.

You can start out with what God created, but you end up with what you create. You will end up just exactly like Cain. You will bring an offering that you have genetically engineered and it’s going to be rejected. You’re going to say, ‘God, haven’t we done this and that and the other thing?’

He “...commanded the man, saying ‘You may freely eat of every tree in the garden...’” (v 16). God gives us free choice; He gives us plenty of right and good things to do. But because He loves us He doesn’t want us to sin. Therefore, He wants you to understand the difference between the way of life of God *and* the good and evil of the world. These are likened by the two trees:

1. The Tree of Life
2. The Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil

Every human being is confronted with the choices of good and evil—from the time of Adam and Eve clear down until now, that’s just the way that it is.

He said, v 17: “But you shall not eat of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, for in the day that you eat of it in dying you shall surely die.” Not that you would immediately die in the day that you ate of it, because Adam and Eve lived 900-and some odd years beyond. But if you have the *law of sin and death* in you it doesn’t matter if you live to be a thousand years, as Solomon wrote in Ecclesiastes, *when you die, you’re dead!* Just like Rover, you’re dead all over!

As we get older it’s the rusting out that really is the problem. Everyone is confronted with good and evil, whether they’re going to follow God or not. Even in the world, in the letter of the Law, we’re still confronted with that. You know what happened with Adam and Eve; they ate of the fruit. They didn’t genetically engineer it, of course. What did they do? *They took Satan’s command: go ahead and eat it.* In their own lust they modified what God said. *Yes, they did!* What happened? *They brought curses upon themselves rather than blessings!*

Let’s notice here the similarity of the curse of Adam, Genesis 3:17: “And to Adam He said, ‘Because you have hearkened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree—of which I commanded you, saying, “You shall not eat of it!”—the ground *is* cursed for your sake. In sorrow shall

you eat of it all the days of your life. It shall also bring forth thorns and thistles to you..." (vs 17-18).

There is also the analogy of that *spiritually*. In Heb. 6 he says that if it's not taken care of that 'which brings forth thorns and thistles is rejected and near to being cursed, the end of which is for burning.' So, he's going right back to Gen. 3 to show that you cannot build a spiritual life on weeds.

- How is your spiritual garden?
- Are you tilling it?
- Are you taking care of it?
- Are you watching over it?

There are all kinds of analogies and things we can learn from this, which we are going to do. It also talks in Heb. 6 about the rain. Without rain, without water, nothing is going to grow. Spiritually speaking, God's way and God's Holy Spirit is like water. In order to have any kind of garden, even if you grow weeds you've got to have some kind of water.

- Where is your water coming from?
- Is it good water?
- Is it the former or latter rain?
- Is it, as it is now, in some of the drought-stricken areas of America that you have to use re-processed sewer-water?

Psa. 1 tells us why we need water. And here is another spiritual analogy of our *spiritual garden*. A *spiritual garden* does not necessarily mean that all of the fruits that are there are to be eaten. You can have some for just beauty and pleasure like special trees or special flowers.

Psalms 1:1: "Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, nor stand in the way of sinners, nor sit in the seat of the scornful." All of these are the weeds and thistles that get in the way.

Verse 2: "But his delight is in the Law of the LORD... [he's going to obey His voice, obey His commands] ...and in His Law does he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the streams of water that brings forth its fruit in its season, and its leaf shall not wither, and all that he does shall prosper" (vs 1-3). This is what Paul is hoping they would have, that they would bring forth fruit (Heb. 6).

Verse 4: "The wicked are not so, but they are like chaff which the wind drives away." You're going to see plenty of that. We've had a dry summer, the hills are dry. We can say concerning taking care of not only a garden, but taking care of the whole earth, God has given man dominion of the whole earth. (Look what happens when they get kooky

ideas and don't take care of the forest. The forest likewise should be dressed and kept, because what happens? *It all burns up!* Every bit of it!

Today with the 'eco-gestapos' they don't want to cut anything down. At least George W. Bush is getting it right concerning the forests. You must log them! Trees were made to be logged! They grow, they get old, and if you don't harvest them at the right time they're going to fall on you when you're driving by them along the road.

That happened right up here close to where we meet. A person was driving down where there was a eucalyptus growing right alongside the highway and guess what? On a windy day BANG! a tree fell right down on the car and killed them. It was old and should have been harvested. Like all of these millions and millions of acres of forest that have burned up, not only because it was dry, but because all of the trash and everything that is there, the undergrowth, and it gets built up. Some of these places they have gone into, they haven't done anything for 30 years! When it gets tinder dry, it's just all burned up.

It's exactly the same thing with the ungodly! What is the ultimate fate of the ungodly? *The Lake of Fire!* These things are very simple, plain analogies that you can see in daily living.

Verse 4: "The wicked are not so, but they are like chaff which the wind drives away." Remember what we covered about building on the foundation of Christ: gold, silver and precious stone *or* chaff: wood, hay or stubble. Chaff is stubble.

Verse 5: "Therefore, the wicked shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous; for the LORD knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked shall perish" (vs 5-6).

Let's see the analogy of how it is with those who stay close to God with water and growth and taking care of the garden. Taking care of gardens is a lot of work. You have to keep at it. Let's get the comparison here. Since thistles and thorns is compared unto sin:

Jeremiah 17:1: "The sin of Judah is engraved with a pen of iron, with the point of a diamond; *it is* carved upon the tablet of their heart and upon the horns of your altars." This is another way of saying that they had actually let evil be written into their hearts.

Verse 2: "While their children remember their altars and their Asherim beside every green tree on the high hills. O My mountain in the field, I will give your wealth *and* all your treasures for spoil, and your high places because of sin, throughout all your

borders” (vs 2-3).

In other words, if you build a garden, or in this case a garden likened unto ‘religion’ that is contrary to the laws of God—and most religion is a genetically engineered version—it’s not going to stand. God is going to take it away from you.

Verse 4: “And you, even of yourself, have let go of the inheritance which I gave you... [you’re not even going to have any land to plant a garden] ...and I will cause you to serve your enemies in a land which you do not know. For you have kindled a fire in My anger, *which* shall burn forever.”

In other words, God *waxed hot* as it were. All the way through we’ll see this analogy of fire. He talks about the ungodly being burned up (Heb. 10:26).

Verse 5: “Thus says the LORD, ‘Cursed *is* the man who trusts in man, and makes flesh his arm, and whose heart departs from the LORD. For he shall be like a shrub in the desert, and shall not see when good comes. But he shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, *in* a salt land that is not inhabited.... [look at the comparison]: ...Blessed *is* the man who trusts in the LORD and whose hope is the LORD. For he shall be like a tree planted by the waters... [Psa. 1] ...*it* sends out its roots by the river, and *it* shall not fear when the heat comes, but its foliage shall be green; and he is not worried in the year of drought, nor will it cease from yielding fruit’” (vs 5-8).

When I come home from my water therapy every once and a while I come the back way into Hollister and it reminds me very much of a spot that I would drive by when I was up in Idaho in the middle 60s. In Idaho there was a rancher that specialized in Black Angus cattle. He lived in a dry area, but they had irrigation water. He had a nice gentle sloping pasture right alongside the highway that he divided down into about eight different sections. He took good care of it and managed it really well. He never ruined the pasture by overgrazing, because he would irrigate it and let the grass grow, give good feed for the cattle and then he would run the cattle in that one after growing to a certain height and let them feed for so many days. Then he would irrigate all of these eight sections and he would alternate where he put the cattle so they never ran out of green grass.

As I come back from my water therapy, there’s this one place where they have cattle and they have so many cattle, and in there’s no water and they don’t irrigate it. All that’s left is straw, skinny cattle and manure everywhere. In this small area—about an acre—they have about 12 cattle.

Just up the road from it on the other side

there’s a man who does the same thing as the man in Idaho. He’s got a bigger pasture and he’s got it laid out in four different sections and he’s always irrigating the sections the cows are not on and his cattle are fat and look good, are well-fed and the ground is healthy. It’s exactly the same way spiritually!

Verse 9—here’s the one we’re familiar with concerning the human heart: “The heart *is* deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?”

- only God can change the heart
- only God can judge the heart
- only God can change the mind

And in order for us to bring forth good fruit, we need the grace of God to do it because we have to overcome *the law of sin and death* that is in us.

Verse 10: “I the LORD search the heart, *I* try the reins, even to give to each man according to his ways, according to the fruit of his doings.... [What do you produce in you?] ...As the quail that hatches eggs it has not laid; in the same way he who gets riches, and not by right, shall leave them in the middle of his days, and in his end he shall be a fool” (vs 10-11).

You see how these things are real in life today? When you don’t have irrigation, you’ve got to depend on rain. If you don’t have rain, you’re not going to get your crop. This is talking about the covenant they were to keep:

Deuteronomy 29:9: “Therefore, keep the words of this covenant and do them so that you may prosper in all that you do. You stand today, all of you, before the LORD your God: your captains of your tribes, your elders, and your officers, all the men of Israel, your little ones, your wives, and your stranger that *is* in your camp, from the cutter of your wood to the drawer of your water; so that you should enter into covenant with the LORD your God and into His oath which the LORD your God makes with you today” (vs 9-12). Today we do that at baptism. You enter into a covenant with God.

Verse 13: “That He may establish you today for a people to Himself, and *that* He may be your God as He has said to you and as He has sworn to your fathers—to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. Nor do I make this covenant and this oath with you only, but with *him* who stands here with us today before the LORD our God, and also with him that is not here with us today.... [that is out into the future] ... (For you know how we have lived in the land of Egypt and how we came through the nations which you passed. And you have seen their abominations and their idols, wood and stone, silver and gold, which *were* among them)” (vs 13-17).

Now then, He gives a warning here and all the way through, because if you do what comes naturally, it's going to be a weed patch. If you just let it grow of itself, you will never have anything to eat. Today, we're spoiled. We go down to the supermarket and there's so much there you really don't know what to get. But if you had to go out and work to produce it—plant the seed—and if you didn't get the crop and it didn't grow, or if you didn't take care of it, you wouldn't have any food. We need to be careful. Moses gives this warning here; this is why they had this final meeting:

Verse 18: “Lest there should be among you man, or woman, or family, or tribe, whose heart turns away today from the LORD our God to go serve the gods of these nations; lest there should be among you a root that bears gall and wormwood, and it shall come to pass when he hears the words of this curse that he shall bless himself in his heart, saying, ‘I shall have peace, though I walk in the stubbornness of my heart,’ to the sweeping away of the watered and the parched” (vs 18-19).

That's what a lot of people do. They take the garden of their life and they say, ‘God, I'm going to grow what I want.’ They take the Word of God and *they genetically engineer it into their religions and bless themselves after the imagination of their own heart*. There are many analogies you can get from this. You can watch the news and look at all the cloning and everything that they are doing, and how they say that this is great. But it's the imagination of their hearts. One thing we need to understand: ***Christ is not coming for our convenience so that we can be right. He is coming to save the world!*** Not only to save His people, but to save the physical world from destruction. That's how bad it's going to get before the end comes. The whole world is doing verses 18-20 in everything that they do.

Verse 20: “Then the LORD will not be willing to forgive him, but the anger of the LORD and His jealousy shall smoke against that man, and all the curses that are written in this book shall lie upon him, and the LORD shall blot out his name from under heaven.” That's talking about the *unpardonable sin*.

Then Moses shows that God is going to render judgment; v 21: “the LORD will not be willing to forgive him, but the anger of the LORD and His jealousy shall smoke against that man, and all the curses that are written in this book shall lie upon him, and the LORD shall blot out his name from under heaven. And the LORD shall separate him unto evil out of all the tribes of Israel, according to all the curses of the covenant that are written in this Book of the Law; so that the generation to come of your children that shall rise up after you, and the

stranger that shall come from a far land, shall say (when they see the plagues of that land and the sicknesses which the LORD has laid on it) ‘The whole land shall be burned *with* brimstone and salt...’” (vs 20-23).

I want you to think of what God did to the area of Palestine from 30_{A.D.} until 135_{A.D.} They had famines and droughts. In 42_{A.D.} they had a tremendous drought begin. We find in Acts 11 that Paul and Barnabas brought up relief supplies from Antioch. We read in the book of *Josephus* it was really a terrible famine that was taking place at that particular time. You see what God did to Jerusalem—because they rebelled against God, they rejected Jesus Christ—He destroyed the city, He destroyed the temple and scattered them into all the world. Then the Jews decided that they had a new messiah. In 130_{A.D.} Rabbi Akiva declared that Bar Kokhba was the messiah. They came and attacked the Romans and drove them out. Everyone was saying, ‘Look, we're going to rebuild Jerusalem. Then the Romans came and they scraped Palestine to the ground. It was so terrible what they did to the land that it became just exactly what it says here:

Verse 23: “The whole land shall be burned *with* brimstone and salt...” They burned everything; they tore down everything! They chased the Jews to Masada and they were so absolutely set on getting the Jews who rebelled that there would never again be a Jewish rebellion against the Romans. You've probably seen the movie *Masada* where the Romans built the rampart—which went clear up to the top of where Ft. Masada was that Herod built during his reign—to get them.

- the Jews were going to hold their way
- they were going to hold their religion
- they were going to keep their days
- they rejected Christ
- they rejected the Church
- they rejected to apostles

True enough that came upon them! Now then, as we have seen as Paul says, ‘if you think that under the hand of Moses they died at the mouth of two or three witnesses, how do you suppose he that rejects the Son of man, who counts the blood of the covenant whereby he was sanctified, was an unholy thing?’

We need to examine *how is our spiritual garden*. Do we have weeds? One thing about weeds. You need to get out and get rid of them as soon as you can. What's one way to ensure that you will have thistles forever? *Do nothing about it and let them grow!* Then they go to seed. What happens when they go to seed? *The wind comes and takes the seed and plants it somewhere else! That's just like the way that evil affects you. When you let it grow*

and grow, then it goes to seed and the seeds go out and contaminate everything.

In Hollister, alongside the highway, I wondered for years why they didn't send the highway crew to burn down these thistles. Why do they let them grow every year and let them go to seed? Well, that's what we're dealing with.

Verse 25: "Then *men* shall say, 'Because they have forsaken the covenant of the LORD God of their fathers which He made with them when He brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, for they went and served other gods and worshiped them, gods whom they did not know and that He had not allotted to them. And **the anger of the LORD was kindled against this land** to bring on it all the curses that are written in this book. And the LORD rooted them out of their land in anger and wrath...'” (vs 25-28).

This sounds like a little bit of editing. This sounds a little bit like some Ezra editing when he canonize the Old Testament. He's writing it here in past tense as though it already happened.

“...and in great indignation, and cast them into another land, as *it is* today” (v 28). Ezra did write that. Where were most of the Jews when he wrote this? *In Babylon!* Just a very few came back.

Verse 29: “The secret things *belong* to the LORD our God, but the things *which are* revealed *belong* to us and to our children forever so that we may do all the words of this law.” Then in Deut. 30, God says He ‘sets before you life and death—choose life so that you may live.’ Let's see what happens when you just let it grow of it's own accord.

At home we have a couple of grapevines that we want to make into a grape arbor. What we have done, we have a little lattice roof over it—an area about 6x8—and we have the grape plants growing up on it and the grapevines grow over the top. We don't prune it, we don't trim it, so every year we get all these little green grapes all over it, but we hardly ever get any grapes that can be harvested, because we're not growing this to have grapes. If you want to grow grapes you have to have a cultivated, tilled, pruned, controlled, well taken care of vineyard. If you do, about this time of year you can look and see all the clusters of the grapes just hanging waiting for the right time to be picked so they can be made into wine. So, if you just let it grow you're going to be in trouble.

Isaiah 1:5: “Why should you be stricken any more? You will revolt more and more; the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint.... [we're getting close to that in America] ...From the sole of the foot even to the *top of the head there is no*

soundness in it; *only* wounds and bruises and putrefying sores; they have not been closed, nor bound up, nor soothed with ointment. Your country *is* a desolation, your cities *are* burned with fire....” (vs 5-7).

Of course, that's going to happen. Every time we have a riot, what do they do? *They burn the cities!*

“...Strangers devour your land right in your very presence, and *it is* wasted, as overthrown by strangers” (v 7). Isn't that happening? *Yes!*

I had to go to San Jose this week and I stopped by Costco. The closest one I could get to is on what is called Senter Ave. When I went in there I felt like I was in Hong Kong. I really did! You look around, especially in the cities, strangers are taking over. *Yes, they are!* It says that they're going to get very 'high above us.' I guess we can say we haven't seen anything, yet.

Verse 8: “And the daughter of Zion is left as a booth in a vineyard, like a hut in a garden of cucumbers, like a besieged city.”

That is saying a vineyard untaken care of and a cucumber garden untaken care of—just let it grow and grow—will produce nothing. You'll have vines everywhere, but you'll have no fruit and it's a horrible mess.

I remember when we were up in Idaho, we decided to go into partners with some brethren. They had some land available to them and it was right near an irrigation canal, so we had lots of water. What we did, we planted a garden there. He lived in Boise away from the garden, and we lived in Meridian, 12 miles away from the garden. It happened that we both left for a couple of weeks at the same time and no one took care of the garden. When we got back there, guess what happened to it? Morning glories had covered the whole garden. We had a big garden, at least half-acre garden. We got virtually nothing out of it. Every time I read this verse I think of that. You might ask yourself:

- How is your vineyard?
- How is your garden?
- Is it full of thorns and thistles?
- Is it full of weeds?
- Is it just growing unkempt?
- How is it?

There's something else you're going to need. In order to take care of it, you've got to have water.

Isaiah 5:1: “Now I will sing to my Beloved a song of my Beloved concerning His vineyard. My Beloved has a vineyard in a very fruitful hill. And He dug it up, and cleared it of stones... [showing he

took care of it] ...and planted it *with* choice vines, and built a tower in its midst, and hewed out a wine vat in it... [we're going to see a parable that Jesus speaks of which talks about this] ...and He looked *for it* to produce grapes. But it produced worthless fruits.... [God says]: ...'And now, O people of Jerusalem, and men of Judah, I ask you to judge between Me and My vineyard. What more could have been done to My vineyard that I have not done in it? Who knows? I looked *for it* to yield grapes, but it yielded wild grapes. And now I will tell you what I will do to My vineyard; I will take away its hedge, and it shall be consumed...' (vs 1-5).

- I want you to think about Israel
- I want you to think about what happened to the Church
- I want you to think about what has happened to people's lives

We can apply this all the way down the line. God can do His part. God can give us of the best. But unless we do our part—and our part is to keep the weeds out, to bring forth good fruit. If you don't, He says:

Verse 5: "And now I will tell you what I will do to My vineyard; I will take away its hedge, and it shall be consumed; *and* break down its wall, and it shall be trampled down; and I will lay it waste; it shall not be pruned nor dug; but briars and thorns shall come up. And I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it" (vs 5-6).

We can also have the analogy of the former and the latter rain. God casts His bread upon the water and it won't come back in empty. All of those things apply. Also, the rain is likened unto the Holy Spirit, because the Holy Spirit is like 'rivers of living water.' In order to have *spiritual fruit* you have to have the Holy Spirit. In order to have *physical fruit* you have to have water.

(go to the next track)

Verse 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! Woe 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!" (vs 7-8).

In other words, the same kind of urbanization that we are seeing today. Then it ends up that they're casting the Law of God behind them.

We need to understand that we can learn a lot of things from what we have in the Old Testament, but we apply that *spiritually* in the New Testament.

Deuteronomy 11:13: "And it will be, if you will hearken diligently to My commandments..." If you listen to the commands of God for your spiritual life—you shall dress it and keep it.

"...which I command you today, to love the LORD your God..." (v 13). Isn't it interesting, because when we get through with the *fruits of the Spirit* we're going to see that the most important fruit that we are to have is *the love of God!* Here He starts out with showing how they were to maintain and keep their relationship with God.

"...and to serve Him with all your heart and with all your soul... [that's exactly what God wants us to do in the New Testament] ...then I will give the rain of your land in its due season..." (vs 13-14). We have the same thing *spiritually*. God will bless us! We will grow in grace and knowledge! "...in its due season..."

- What are the seasons?
- What are the spiritual things that as it were water us?
- Like the former and the latter rain?
 - ✓ *the Holy Days*
 - ✓ *the spring harvest*
 - ✓ *the fall harvest*

Those are the things that water us and sure enough, when you stop keeping the Holy Days and then you begin to slack up on the Sabbath, what happens? *You've got a lot of weeds in your spiritual garden that you have to go get rid of!*

Let me tell you, if the ground is hard and dry, and you've got a great big thistle plant there and it's roots go down about two or three feet, you're going to have a hard time getting rid of it. That's why if you cut down the plant and you burn the thistle plant—*get rid of that sin in your life*—then you're going to have to work of getting rid of the lust that caused it, because the lust is just like that root down in the dry, hard ground.

Whereas, if the weeks are starting to come up and there is rain—likened unto God's Holy Spirit, *you can go out and pull the weeds and you can get the root and all!* If you're tending your garden and if the rain of God's Spirit is coming upon your garden, you can go out and pluck out those weeds before they grow into becoming thorns and thistles and get rid of them. You can pluck them out by the root and they're not going to grow back.

Verse 14: "Then I will give the rain of your land in its due season, the first rain and the latter rain, that you may gather in your grain and your wine and your oil."

When we take the Passover, what is it? *The wine! The bread!* Symbolizing that we are to eat

God's way. That is the fruit of what we are to eat. Again, when He mentions things being produced, He mentions corn and wine, not like Iowa corn, this means grain.

Verse 15: "And I will send grass in your fields for your livestock so that you may eat and be full."

What is important is this: God wants us to eat. He wants us to have the best. It's just like with the Word of God, you don't get the understanding of the Word of God:

- unless you work at it
- unless you dig into it
- unless you study and apply yourself to it

If you do like the Psalm says—taste and eat; taste and see that the Lord is good—then the Word of God will constantly be feeding you the good things and the rich things. But what is important that when you have those blessings and God has given it, that you don't say 'I'm rich and increased with goods and have need of nothing.'

That's why God wants us to depend on His Holy Spirit as rain, rather than irrigation. **Rain takes faith!** Irrigation: you can irrigate for a long, long time without rain. Then one day all the dams are going to run dry. Then you have a total disaster!

Verse 15: "And I will send grass in your fields for your livestock so that you may eat and be full.... [then He gives a warning]: ...'Take heed to yourselves that your heart may not be deceived....'" (vs 15-16).

What happens when everything is nice, smooth, good and convenient? The next time the electricity goes out in your area think about how hard it is for you to get along without all the things that electricity does. What happens when the electricity goes out? You're so used to getting it.

Right where our house is we've got this big power pole—not a cross-country power-pole—and the electricity lines are there and every once and a while a black bird will get up there and zonk itself, electrocute itself, fall to the ground and electricity goes out. I remember one time that it went off and I forgot that it went off. I went upstairs and I was going to watch a football game or something like that. I sat down and I kept working the remote control and the thing wouldn't go on. I forgot that the electricity was off.

That's how we get so accustom to things. Then one time last year, it happened again, the electricity was off for about six hours. Finally, the PGE guy came out and Delores said to him, 'Why don't you just put a little shield over that so the birds won't electrocute themselves and we won't have

power outages? Just think how much that will save you.' So, sure enough, they put it on and we haven't had a power outage or executed the birds since.

It's the same way *spiritually!* You put on the shield so that you're not going to have power outages. What I'm saying is this: It's so easy to take things for granted that you forget from where they came. And *you forget Who gave them!* You're so used to the rain coming on time that *you forget Who sends the rain!* You get increased with goods and so forth.

Verse 16: "Take heed to yourselves that your heart may not be deceived, and you turn aside and serve other gods, and worship them... [Can we look at recent history in the Church?] ...and the LORD'S wrath be kindled against you, and He shut up the heavens so that there will be no rain, and so that the land will not yield her fruit, and you perish quickly from off the good land which the LORD gives you. Therefore, you shall lay up these My words in your hearts and in your souls, and bind them for a sign upon your hands so that they may be as frontlets between your eyes" (vs 16-18). In other words, it's going to guide everything that you do.

Look what's happened to this nation because we didn't do v 19: "And you shall teach them to your children..." Now we have to have metal detectors and police at the schools. *Yes!* You can't speak of them to you children; you can't discipline your children because that is 'child abuse.' Just like the 'eco-nazis' have done to the poor, so they have done to our children. You can't correct them. You can't teach them. Therefore, they're like a bunch of wild weeds set up to be burned.

This should be the central thing in your life, v 19: "...speaking of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. And *you* shall write them upon the doorposts of your house, and upon your gates, so that your days and the days of your children may be multiplied..." (vs 19-21).

God wants them written upon our hearts and mind now, not just on the doorpost; not just have a plaque of the Ten Commandments on the wall, but ignore them. Have them in your mind so that you automatically do them. That's what's important! Not that we live by the letter of the law, we don't, but when the sun goes down on the Sabbath, Sabbath has started automatically! God wants the days to be multiplied.

"...in the land which the LORD swore to give to your fathers, like the days of heaven above the earth" (v 21). If you do all of these things then God is going to be with you, fight all your enemies and you won't have to worry about a thing. Now it's a completely different story.

Matthew 17:17—this after the disciples couldn't heal this young man: "Then Jesus answered *and* said, 'O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I bear with you *in your unbelief*? Bring him here to Me.' And Jesus rebuked the demon, and it departed from him; and the boy was healed from that hour. Then the disciples came to Jesus privately *and* said, 'Why were we not able to cast it out?' And Jesus said to them, '**Because of your unbelief.** For truly I say to you, if you have faith as a *tiny* mustard seed, you shall say to this mountain... [here we have a seed, a plant] ..."Remove from here," and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible to you. But this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting'" (vs 17-21). Here again, we have another analogy of a plant.

Mark 11:12—this is a very unusual one: "And in the morning, after they left Bethany, He became hungry. Then, seeing a fig tree afar off that had leaves, He went *to it to see* if He might possibly find something on it...." (vs 12-13).

It really wasn't the season of figs, because figs are not ripe until later in the summer, and this was just before the Passover.

Why would Christ do this? Come to a fig tree and then curse it, expecting something on it when there was nothing on it? *This is a parable, an analogy!* The fig tree is much like Judaism. It produced no fruit and all it had was leaves. It looked good, but it didn't produce anything. Therefore, He cursed it.

"...But after coming to it, He found nothing except leaves because it was not yet *the* season for figs. And Jesus responded *by* saying to it, 'Let no one eat fruit from you any more forever!' And His disciples heard *it*'" (vs 13-14).

Then they came back in the morning, v 20: "And in the morning, as they passed by, they saw the fig tree dried up from *the* roots. Then Peter remembered *and* said to Him, 'Look, Master! The fig tree that You cursed has dried up.' And Jesus answered and said to them, 'Have faith *from* God.... [God's faith] ...For truly I say to you, whoever shall say to this mountain, "Be taken away and be cast into the sea," and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that what he said will take place, he shall have whatever he shall say'" (vs 20-23).

Of course, we need to modify that according to the will of God. So, whatever is the will of God! It can be an impossible thing. And the greatest, most impossible thing to change is human nature.

Then He gives another caveat here, v 24: "For this reason I say to you, all *the* things that you

ask *when* you are praying, believe that you will receive *them*, and *they* shall be *given* to you. But when you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive, so that your Father Who *is* in heaven may forgive you your offenses. For if you do not forgive, neither will your Father Who *is* in heaven forgive you your offenses" (vs 24-26).

Now, let's look at another analogy, here we have the vineyard, and this is taken right out of Isa. 5:

Matthew 21:33: "Hear another parable: There was a certain man, a master of a house, who planted a vineyard, and put a fence around it, and dug a winepress in it..." Of course, that was for grape juice (said sarcastically).

Someone sent me something that obviously they had grape juice for the Passover because it was fresh squeezed in the spring. That shows you they have never planted anything. They don't know a thing about grapes. You don't get grapes in the spring; you get grapes in the fall. In order to have something from the fruit of the vine to drink in the spring, you must make it into wine.

Samuele Bacchiocchi put out a book trying to vindicate grape juice for their communion, saying they could put sulfur in and keep the grape juice fresh. The only way you could do that is have a deep cellar where it's always cool and you could put the sulfur in it and keep the grape juice for a period of time. What happens? *You have polluted drink for the Passover if you have grape juice!* Two reasons:

1. the natural leaven from the grape is in the juice, so you're drinking a leavened product
2. if you drink the grape juice, if you have to put sulfur in it then it's contaminated

We always have wine for our Passover services.

"...[he] dug a winepress in it and built a tower..." (v 33). Why have the tower? *Obviously so you can watch over the vineyards*, take care of it, whatever you needed.

"...and *then* leased it to husbandmen and left the country. Now, when the season of the fruits was drawing near, he sent his servants to the husbandmen to receive his fruits. But the husbandmen took his servants and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another" (vs 33-35).

This is what some people would like to do ministers today who teach that tithing ought to be something you should do. They want to beat them; they want to stone them; they don't want to give to God what is His!

Verse 36: "Again he sent other servants,

more than the first *time*; and they did the same thing to them. Then at last he sent his son to them, saying, 'They will have respect for my son.' But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, 'This is the heir; come, let us murder him and gain possession of his inheritance'" (vs 36-38).

Sounds like what's going on in Zimbabwe today. *Wait and see, they will have famine!* 'Oh yes, we must send them famine relief!' But it will be a self-induced famine from lust and stupidity and barbarianism. 'Let's get the land. Let's take the land.'

Farrakhan—leader of the Islamic Nation—says, 'We're a nation within a nation, and the United States should give us millions of acres so we, as the black Muslim nation, can prosper on our own.' Don't laugh! They'll take it by force. Same thing here.

Verse 39: "'Then they took him, *and cast him out of the vineyard, and murdered him....* [that's where Jesus was killed, outside the camp] ...Therefore, when the lord of the vineyard shall come, what will he do to those husbandmen?' They said to Him, 'Evil *men!* He will utterly destroy them...'" (vs 39-41).

These are the scribes and Pharisees answering back to Christ. When He gets done they're going to perceive that *they* are in trouble.

"...and he will lease his vineyard to other husbandmen, who will render to him the fruits in their seasons.' Jesus said to them, 'Have you never read in the Scriptures...'" (vs 41-42).

Isn't it interesting how last time we talked about the *foundation*, which is Christ? This time we're talking about the *garden*, talking about the vineyard. So, right here the same thing follows. He talks about the vineyard and then He talks about the *foundational stone* being Himself.

"... 'Have you never read in the Scriptures...'" (v 42). Isn't that so true? All of those who leave God, leave the Scriptures and think they still know them, and they don't have a clue!

Verse 42—that's why "Jesus said to them, 'Have you never read in the Scriptures, "*The Stone that the builders rejected, this has become the Head of the corner.* This was from *the Lord*, and it is wonderful in our eyes"? Because of this, I say to you, the Kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and it shall be given to a nation *that produces the fruits of it....* [They're going to tend to their garden!] ...And the one who falls on this Stone shall be broken...'" (vs 42-44)—showing that ***IF you repent and turn to Christ with a 'broken spirit and contrite***

heart' you'll receive forgiveness and the Holy Spirit!

But if you don't, your day with the Stone is still coming; "...but on whomever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder" (v 44).

Finally the scribes and Pharisees got the point, but not the right way, v 45: "Now, after hearing His parables, the chief priests and the Pharisees knew that He was speaking about them. And they sought to arrest Him, but they were afraid of the multitudes, because they held Him as a prophet" (vs 45-46).

Let's look at some genetically engineered plants. We can be guaranteed; genetically engineered plants are going to be rooted out. What are genetically engineered plants? Let's see what they were for the scribes and the Pharisees.

Matthew 15:1: "Then the scribes and Pharisees from Jerusalem came to Jesus, saying, 'Why do Your disciples transgress the tradition of the elders?....'" (vs 1-2).

They came all the way down there. This is an official committee to track Him down. They wanted to find out, because they heard and they saw that His disciples didn't wash their hands before they ate, and they weren't following the traditions of the elders, which is effrontery.

We're not as familiar with that today as we are with the Muslims praying five times a day, because of the recent thing with Islam. It's likened to the same thing. 'Why don't you pray five times a day? Why don't you wash your hands when you eat? And you've got to do it in this way.'

Verse 2: "'Why do Your disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? For they do not wash their hands when they eat bread.' But He answered *and* said to them, 'Why do you also transgress the commandment of God for the sake of your tradition?'" (vs 2-3). You've made a hybrid. You have genetically engineered the commandments of God.

Verse 4: "For God commanded, saying, 'Honor your father and your mother'; and, 'The one who speaks evil of father or mother, let him die the death.' But you say, 'Whoever shall say to father or mother, "Whatever benefit you might receive from me *is being given as a gift to the temple,*" he is not at all *obligated to honor his father or his mother*'" (vs 4-5).

In other words, he's going to be released. 'If you don't take care of the obligation of God, we'll release you; we'll figure a way.' They had their arguments. Which is greater:

- he that bows on the altar?
- or he that bows on the sacrifice on the altar?
- or he that swears by the temple?
- or by the gold in the temple?

All of those things are nonsense, because if your heart isn't right it doesn't matter. Likewise here; these traditions, which are the genetically engineered religious practices of the Jews—or any other religion; you can apply that to any religion today—you shall be free.

Verse 6: “And you have made void the commandment of God for the sake of your tradition.... [it's a plant that cannot bring forth fruit] ...Hypocrites! Isaiah has prophesied well concerning you, saying, ‘This people draw near to Me with their mouths, and with their lips they honor Me; but their hearts are far away from Me.... [Doesn't that describe today? *Yes, it does!*] ...But they worship Me in vain, teaching *for doctrine the commandments of men*’” (vs 6-10).

If you have all of these genetically engineered commandments—which are ‘religious’—you're not going to produce any fruit. You're not going to worship God that way. This also shows that ***you worship God by doing His commandments!*** Isn't that interesting? Not that you just come to a temple and do chants and then everything is fine; the doctrines and commandments of men! If the Jews don't take care of it, I'm sure one of the first things that God is going to get rid of is Mecca! And Medina!

Verse 10: “And after calling the multitude to *Him*, He said to them, ‘Hear, and understand.... [I want you to get the point!] ...That which goes into the mouth does not defile the man...’” (vs 10-11).

If you have a little dirt on your hands, are you going to die? I mean, what are you going to do if you're out in the orchard and pluck an apple? *You're going to rub it on your sleeve and start eating it! Same thing!* What if a spider crawled on that just the minute before you started eating it? You rubbed it on your sleeve and you got it as clean as you could, are you going to die? *Of course not!* Those little minute things are not going to defile you! It's not going to make you less acceptable to God! What makes you acceptable to God is what's in your heart. That's what He's saying here.

Verse 11: “That which goes into the mouth does not defile the man, but that which comes out of his mouth, this defiles the man.”

Of course, the worst kind of defilement does not come with cursing and swearing. The worst kind of defilement comes from genetically engineered ‘religious’ plants that you say, in all righteousness,

that this is good and right. Like all the traditions of the Catholics and Muslims and Buddhists and whatever. *That defiles!*

Verse 12: “Then His disciples came to Him and said... [You're not politically correct, Jesus!] ...‘Do You realize that the Pharisees were offended when they heard this saying?’ But He answered *and* said, ‘Every plant that My heavenly Father has not planted **shall be rooted up**’” (vs 12-13).

- How is your *spiritual garden*?
- How is your *spiritual Truth*?
- How is it *growing*?

Matthew 13:31—here it shows that the Kingdom of God is likened unto a plant that grows: “Another parable He presented to them, saying, ‘The Kingdom of Heaven is compared to a *tiny* mustard seed... [this is about the third time we've read ‘mustard seed’] ...which a man took and sowed in his field; which indeed is very small among all the seeds; but after it is grown, it is greater than all the herbs, and becomes a tree, so that the birds of heaven come and roost in its branches’” (vs 31-32).

What if you plant a thistle? What if you plant a genetically engineered plant that really looks good, but its fruit is deadly? *It will be rooted up!*

Matthew 15:13: “But He answered *and* said, ‘Every plant that My heavenly Father has not planted shall be rooted up.’” In other words:

- no one is going to get into the Kingdom of God on their own terms
- no one is going to get there by their own fruits
- no one is going to get there by their own works

Verse 14: “Leave them alone. They are blind leaders of *the* blind. And if *the* blind lead *the* blind, both shall fall into the pit.” That's where it's all headed!

Luke 13 shows that there is hope. If you haven't been producing fruit, *you can*. If you've been letting the weeds grow up, *you can get rid of them*. But you've got some work to do! There are some plants and some trees that if you have too much growing around them they can't produce. That's kind of like what it was here:

Luke 13:6: “And He spoke this parable: ‘A certain *man* had planted a fig tree in his vineyard; and he came seeking fruit on it, but he did not find *any*. Then he said to the vinedresser, “Look *here!* For three years I have come seeking fruit on this fig tree and have not found *any*. Cut it down. Why should it *continue* to waste *space* in the ground?’”

But he answered *and* said to him, “Sir, let it alone this year also, until I dig about it and put *in* manure, and *see* if in fact it will bear fruit; but if not, after that you shall cut it down”” (vs 6-8).

FRC: bo
Transcribed: 4-24-11
Reformatted/Corrected: bo—January/2017

If you’re not bringing forth some fruit, what you have to do is to do a little digging and dung it; a little ‘d and d’. You dig around it so the earth is loose and when you water it—after you put the manure on it—the nutrients go down into the ground and tree can bring it up and produce fruit. That’s what we need to do. We need to have a little ‘d and d’ —a little *spiritual* ‘d and d’ and little *digging and dunging*, and to clean it up.

Verse 9: “And *see* if in fact it will bear fruit; but if not, after that you shall cut it down.” It’s very interesting: God is long suffering with us—isn’t He? He’ll give us a chance! He’ll give us an opportunity to grow!

- You’ve got to ‘dig and dung’!
- You’ve got to water!
- You’ve got to get rid of the weeds!
- You’ve got to get rid of the thistles!

You have to be on guard so that your spiritual garden will produce the fruit that God wants!

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*

Scriptural References:

- 1) Hebrews 6:6-8
- 2) Genesis 2:15-17
- 3) Genesis 3:17-18
- 4) Psalm 1:1-6
- 5) Jeremiah 17:1-11
- 6) Deuteronomy 29:9-23, 25-29
- 7) Isaiah 1:5-8
- 8) Isaiah 5:1-8
- 9) Deuteronomy 11:13-21
- 10) Matthew 17:17-21
- 11) Mark 11:12-14, 20-26
- 12) Matthew 21:33-46
- 13) Matthew 15:1-13
- 14) Matthew 13:31-32
- 15) Matthew 15:13-14
- 16) Luke 13:6-9

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- John 15
- Hebrews 10:26
- Acts 11
- Deuteronomy 30

Also referenced: Book: *Josephus*

Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews XX The Love of God Requires Action

(Chapter 6)
Fred R. Coulter

Let's go back and just do a little review through to where we are in Heb. 6 and pick up some key things to see what it is that Paul is writing about, and how he's building his case, so when we come to Melchisedec and our opportunity—as those who have been called—to pray directly to God the Father right in heaven above without having to go through a man, and with Christ as our High Priest there, it's really quite a thing.

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*." He is:

- the ultimate *Word*
- the ultimate *Son*
- the ultimate *Message*

Whom God has sent!

Verse 2: "Whom He has appointed heir of all things, by Whom also He made the ages; 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" (vs 2-3) That's quite a statement, because God came to be a human being.

Let's just think on this: Why is Christ the intermediary between men and God? *Because He came in the flesh*, and He also—because of the nature of His birth—had to receive genes and human nature from His mother. Otherwise, His birth was not a birth, and it was not a pregnancy; it would have been an illusion. Then the one born was not really a human being; which a lot of people would like to believe that is so. In receiving genes from His mother, I think that's a very important thing, because if that being the case, then that means that Christ will be forever having those genes. So, we'll just think on that. This is one of these things that was a great and a magnificent thing that God did.

Then it talks about Him being the firstborn, loved righteousness, hated lawlessness; then in the light of all of that he begins to show *how important our calling is*, and then, what it is that Christ went through to suffer and to die.

Hebrews 2:1: "For this reason... [that's the reason of everything mentioned in chapter one] ...it is imperative that we give much greater attention to the things *which* we have heard, lest at any time we

should slip away.... [it's not the word that will slip away, but *we*] ...For if the word spoken by angels was *enforced* without fail, and every transgression and disobedience received just recompense, how shall we escape, *if* we have neglected so great a salvation..." (vs 1-3).

This is what Paul is writing about. In the course of human time, what happens? *Human beings get lazy, they get tired, they get neglectful and everything like this!* What is so great does not appear to be so great. In a progressive sense they can begin to slack up, and then we will see where that leads to. So then he refers to the situation concerning Abraham.

Then in Heb. 3, he wants to make it absolutely clear that Christ is greater than Moses. Remember, that's what the Pharisees said. Remember the man who was born blind? He was brought to the Pharisees, and they said, 'Were you born blind?' *Yes!* 'How did you see?' He told them how he saw; asked his parents, and so forth. And they said, 'As for this man—referring to Jesus—we know He is a sinner. We're disciples of Moses.' So, for the whole Jewish community, even to this day, those who reject Christ, Moses is the key individual. That's what they rely upon.

Hebrews 3:1: "Because of this, Holy brethren... [because of everything that Christ did to become the perfect sacrifice] ...partakers of *the* heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of *the faith* we profess—Jesus Christ, Who was faithful to Him Who appointed Him, even as Moses *was* in all His house. For He has been counted worthy of greater glory than Moses, even as He Who built the house has so much more honor than the house *itself*" (vs 1-3).

Again, it talks about the disobedience concerning the Sabbath, and not keeping the Sabbath; why they were left to die in the wilderness because of unbelief, and because they didn't follow God the way that they should. *Belief* is the whole heart and core of everything that we do. Then that follows either obedience or disobedience. You have belief and obedience; you have disbelief and disobedience. And that's what he's talking about here concerning the Sabbath.

Hebrews 4:9: "There remains, therefore, Sabbath-keeping for the people of God."

Paul shows how Christ is our High Priest in heaven; how that He was tempted in every way like we are, yet without sin. Then he shows the difference between the high priesthood of men and that of Christ, Who then for the first time in:

Hebrews 5:6: “Even as He also says in another *place*, ‘You *are* a Priest forever according to the order of Melchisedec’” We’re about ready to get into the explanation of Melchisedec a little bit more when we come to Heb. 7. Then it shows what Christ did, and then also again corrects them for being dull or sluggish in hearing. Heb.6:1 shows we’re to go beyond the beginning principles of the doctrines of Christ, and we should go on to perfection. A lot of the things that we are doing and studying and so forth fall into that category. Those who don’t, Paul gives the warning of the unpardonable sin. And the last one that I did was, *How Is Your Spiritual Garden?* Are you growing good plants or you growing thorns and thistles?

Hebrews 6:8: “But *that* which brings forth thorns and thistles *is* rejected and near to being cursed, the end of which *is* for burning.” Of course, the end of that is the Lake of Fire; that’s what it’s referring to after talking about the unpardonable sin. What was the curse that was brought upon Adam because of his sin? *Thorns and thistles and things would be the result of it!* Why? *Because of sin!*

Now likewise, in our growing in grace and knowledge and understanding, we can either build, as we covered, ‘gold, silver and precious stones,’ or ‘wood, hay and stubble’; in this case thorns and thistles. If we neglect what God has given us, then it really creates great and huge problems.

Verse 9: “But, although we speak these things, beloved, we are persuaded *of* better things concerning you, even *the fruits* that accompany salvation.” This is what God wants us to do, what He wants us to have; those things in our life, which bespeak those who are called to salvation. Let’s look at some of the things where it talks about it.

Mark 4—here again, we’re talking about the fruits, talking about the things that are planted, and how they grow. We’ve seen this through the whole operation of what has happened to the Church of God, too.

Mark 4:14: “The sower sows the Word. Now the ones by the way, where the Word was sown, these are the ones who hear, but Satan comes at once and takes away the Word that was sown in their hearts” (vs 14-15). He is able to do this today via many things. He’s got all kinds of helpers out there to distract people. And he can take it away! Some people hear it and immediately they think it’s

great, and then Satan comes along takes it away.

Verse 16: “And the ones which were in like manner sown upon the rocky places, these are *the ones* who when they hear the Word, immediately receive it with joy; but *because* they have no root in themselves, they do not endure; when tribulation or persecution arises because of the Word, they are quickly offended.... [we’ve also seen that happen] ...And those which were sown among thorns, these are the ones who hear the Word. But the cares of this life, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things *that* come into *their lives* choke the Word, and it becomes unfruitful. Now those which were sown upon the good ground, these are *the ones* who hear the Word and receive *it*, and bring forth fruit, one thirty-fold, and one sixty-fold, and one a hundredfold” (vs. 16-20).

Here we have almost an exact parallel to Heb. 6 at this point, concerning how we are to bring forth fruit and so forth. He wants us to bring forth the fruit *concerning the things of salvation*.

Let’s see what those things are. Isn’t it interesting that it talks about:

- that which is the fruit of the Spirit
- that which is the result of the Spirit
- that which is spiritually growing and developing in your life

It talks first of all about the lust of the flesh, and it ends up with all the works of the flesh with everything it lists there. But here are the works concerning salvation:

Galatians 5:22: “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace...” Those things hold you through, and carry you through, through all circumstances, because we’re all going to be tried in this world. We’re all going to have difficulties and problems come along. But if you have:

“...love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faith, meekness, self-control; against such things there is no law” (vs 22-23). Meaning, that these things are a law unto themselves, and this becomes a very powerful force in our lives, that these are the characteristics that we develop.

Then it shows, again, the struggle that we have, v 24: “But those who *are* Christ’s have crucified the flesh with its passions and lusts.” That means that’s how the operation takes place, where you control human nature, control the things that cause you to sin, and so forth, and you live *by the Holy Spirit*.

Verse 25: “If we live by *the* Spirit, we should also be walking by *the* Spirit.” In other

words, if we claim to have the Spirit of God, let's walk as the Spirit of God will lead us to walk. That's what's important.

Verse 26: "We should not become vain-glorious, provoking one another *and* envying one another." All of that is just the competition and the sins of the world. We want to have those things, those fruits that accompany salvation. You might want to run a separate study yourself and cover more of the things concerning salvation so that you can add that to it. That would be an extra Bible study you could do.

Hebrews 6:10: "For God *is* not unrighteous to forget your work... [No! Even if no one else sees it. Even if no one else knows.] ...and the labor of **love** by which you have showed *honor* to His name, *in that* you have served the saints and are *continuing* to serve *them*."

What we're going to see here, we're going to see the three greatest gifts, which then are the gifts of the Spirit. Here we have love, your "...labor of love..."

Verse 11: "But we earnestly desire that every one of you be demonstrating the same diligence, unto the full assurance of the **hope** until the end." You have to make it to the end. *The one who endures to the end, the same shall be saved!*

Verse 12: "So that you do not become lazy, but *that you be* imitators of those who through **faith**... [there we have love, hope, and faith] ...and steadfast endurance inherit the promises." The promises start out with:

1. you're going to have an existence as God
2. you're going to live forever
3. you will have no more sin; it will be righteousness forever
4. not only inherit the world, as it was with Abraham, but also God is creating the universe for some spectacular things that we need to understand

The thing is this: If we focus just strictly on the things on the earth, then we're going to forget the things that are in heaven. That's why he says he doesn't want you to be lazy.

Notice how all of this ties in, v 13: "For God, after promising Abraham..." All of this comes right back to Abraham. 'If we are Christ's, then we are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.'

"...swore by Himself, since He could swear by none greater" (v 13). And this is a phenomenal thing that God did to do that, to guarantee the

promise that He's given. We're not dealing with agreements like human beings have. They make them to break them. We're dealing with what God promised, *and promised unto His death in the person of Christ, that He would do for Abraham what He promised He would do.*

Here's what He said, v 14: "Saying, 'In blessing I will bless you, and in multiplying I will multiply you.' Now, after he had patiently endured he obtained the promise" (vs 14-15).

It says in another place that he didn't obtain the promise. So, part of the promise that he obtained was the promise of a physical seed Isaac, and he lived to see Jacob up to two-years-old. There was the promise that he obtained; that part of it. The rest of it is yet to come. He draws a parallel between how men solve their problems *vs* how God handled this, and because of the swearing of an oath and so forth.

Verse 16: "For indeed, men swear by the greater, and confirmation by an oath *puts* an end to all disputes between them."

There are many oaths and swearings that people do. Whether they go to court, whether it's like the Indians that would have their blood oath (they would mingle their blood, or whatever), these are the kind of covenant promises that are made. God did something greater.

Verse 17: "In this *way* God, desiring more abundantly to show the heirs of the promise... [which is Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, *and us*] ...the unchangeable nature of His own purpose, confirmed *it* by an oath."

God doesn't need to take an oath, because, God does not lie. So, this is an extraordinary thing that God has done:

- to grant eternal life to us
- to grant the forgiveness of sin to us
- to give us all of these promises and things

This is a tremendous thing that has happened brethren, and that's what He wants us to understand.

Verse 18: "So that by two immutable things, in which *it was* impossible *for* God to lie, we who have fled for refuge might have strong encouragement to lay hold on the **hope** *that has been* set before *us*." That's the hope of the eternal life, which he's talking about all the way through the book of Hebrews.

Verse 19: "Which *hope* we have as an anchor of the soul, both secure and steadfast..." He's really bringing out a lot of things here. This is some pretty powerful writing, and covers a huge gamut of what we have in the Bible.

“...and **which enters into the sanctuary within the veil**” (v 19). Now he’s starting to build up to being able to have that access to God the Father directly through Christ in heaven above. In other words, whenever we get on our knees to pray, we are praying, and we are being heard, by God the Father. That’s what he’s saying here. “...the sanctuary within the veil”—that’s in the Holy of Holies in heaven above.

Verse 20: “Where Jesus has entered for us... [on our behalf] ...*as* a forerunner, having become a High Priest forever according to the order of Melchisedec.”

From here on there is going to be an awful lot concerning *the order of Melchisedec*. Let’s go back and let’s look at some things here that we need to understand concerning *love*. The bottom line of everything that there is, ***if you don’t have the love of God, and you don’t have love, all the rest really doesn’t count***. It’s not completely thrown away, but if you have that love of God... Let’s see what Jesus says about it. Let’s see the parallel here in John 15 to that of Heb. 6. Remember, we just got done with the warning of those who are not producing; here it talks about fruit. God expects things in our lives. Not only accomplishments that we do, that’s fine. Remember, He told the apostles to ‘go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature.’ That’s work they have to do; it is to produce fruit.

- you have fruit that a church does
- you have fruit that a group does
- you have fruit in your individual lives

and this can encompass all of that. Here He’s talking about the individuals. This is on the Passover night talking to the apostles:

John 15:1, Jesus said: “I AM the true vine, and My Father is the husbandman. He takes away every branch in Me *that* does not bear fruit...” (vs 1-2). Again, tie that in with the warnings that we’ve seen in the book of Hebrews. What this is doing is showing us a consistency in the pattern of how God teaches us.

“...but He cleanses each one that bears fruit, in order that it may bear more fruit.... [as we just saw, some 30, some 60, some 100-fold] ...You are already clean through the word that I have spoken to you” (vs 2-3).

In other words, through the word which Christ has spoken and, of course, with repentance and baptism and all the other things that go with it, *you are clean*. That gives you the entrance into the Holy of Holies so that your prayers go directly before God. That’s something we are not just to say okay, that’s interesting. That’s something we are to

believe and *act* upon and *consider* our prayers to be answered in that manner.

Let’s notice how this is accomplished, v 4: “Dwell... [live] ...in Me and I in you. As a branch cannot bear fruit of itself, but only if it remains in the vine, neither *can* you *bear fruit* unless you are dwelling in Me. I am the vine, *and* you *are* the branches. The one who is dwelling in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; because apart from Me you can do nothing” (vs 4-5).

That’s what we always need to understand. The world will have a hard time understanding this, because in the face of whatever the circumstances are, we continue doing this, regardless.

Verse 6: “If anyone does not dwell in Me, he is cast out as a branch, and is dried up; and men gather them and cast *them* into a fire, and they are burned.” Notice how this follows right along with:

Hebrews 6:9: “...we are persuaded *of* better things concerning you...”

John 15:7: “If you dwell in Me, and My words dwell in you, you shall ask whatever you desire, and it shall come to pass for you.” That’s why this kind of love, and this kind of faith, and this kind of hope is so profound and important.

Verse 8: “In this is My Father glorified, that you bear much fruit; so shall you be My disciples. As the Father has loved Me, I also have loved you; live in My love. If you keep My commandments, you shall live in My love; just as I have kept My Father’s commandments and live in His love” (vs 8-10).

Loving God requires action, and action then is the *obedience*. Yes, there’s the emotion, but there’s also the action that follows it, because the love is backed up by faith, and faith is backed up by doing. That constantly gives us hope because God is there to help us, and intervene, hear and answer our prayers. That’s what it’s talking about here. This is what is so profound concerning what we’re covering here.

1-Corinthians 13—unfortunately in the *King James* they’ve translated the Greek word for *love*—which is ‘agape’—as ‘charity’ which is a Latin word for love. The Latinist on the committee that did this section of the New Testament took away from the real meaning of it. But here now, one of the most humble but greatest men of the New Testament—the Apostle Paul—here’s what he writes about love. And here’s what we constantly need to come back to, to run our lives, to regulate our lives, to produce the things in our lives that God wants us to do. We can have great accomplishments, like Paul said here.

1-Corinthians 13:1: "If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a sounding brass or a clanging cymbal.... [in other words, hollow] ...If I have *the gift of prophecy*, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing" (vs 1-2).

That's why he said in the beginning: *love is the greatest thing!* This is why whatever we do in the world, whatever our accomplishments are, that's fine; that's wonderful. Thank God for it and realize that He has provided the way, the means, and everything to do so. Whatever trial or difficulty we have that comes along, now those are going to be hard. Thank God for it so that you can learn from whatever the trial and difficulty is. Trials and difficulties are to help you grow in

- character
- resolve
- belief
- hope
- love

That's what they're there for. Here Paul is showing some different aspects of it.

Verse 3: "And if I give away all my goods..." On whatever cause, because sometimes you can give to causes which are not just for the poor and be some magnanimous philanthropist in the world.

"...and if I deliver up my body that I may be burned, but do not have love, I have gained nothing" (v 3). Then he goes right on showing, after we've looked at ourselves the way we really need to look at ourselves. ***If you love God you're always going to be in a repentant attitude***, and that's what this is showing.

Verse 4: "Love is patient *and* is kind... [in spite of all the circumstances and difficulties] ...love envies not; does not brag about itself, is not puffed up. *Love* does not behave disgracefully, does not seek its own things..." (vs 4-5).

That doesn't mean you don't take care of yourself. It just means it doesn't seek its own to the exclusion of helping other people and serving them, too.

"...is not easily provoked, thinks no evil, does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the Truth. *Love* bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails..." (vs 5-8). What it's telling us here is that the love of God, coupled with the hope and belief of God, and that all in faith, then is a formula for success regardless in

the circumstances in the world.

Someone sent me by e-mail 36 pages of something to do with some of the martyrs of the Anabaptists. He says that some of that reading was really most inspiring, how people looked at the circumstances when the Inquisition was going on. Of course, the Anabaptists were Sabbath-keepers. And they believed in baptizing at an older age; that's why they were called Anabaptists instead of infant baptism as children. Sooner or later the day is going to come when all the words that have been said about enduring to the end and holding fast in spite of all circumstances, is going to come true. It may be some difficult sledding somewhere down the road in the future. That's why we need to be doing it now, because you can't hurry up on a hurry up course and get it from someone else.

Here's what we need to understand, "...But whether *there be* prophecies..." (v 8). I am convinced that those are prophecies of men, because Jesus said not one of His words would fail. Haven't we had a lot of *prophecies of men*, interpreting the Bible the way they saw it, come out wrong? *Yes!* So, they failed!

"...whether *there be* languages, they shall cease..." (v 8). Yes, they're all going to be replaced with a true language. Just exactly like God confounded the languages in Gen. 11, so He's going to give the whole world a true language again when He returns. What language we will speak when we are resurrected, we'll find out when we're resurrected, because we'll be able to communicate. What we know now is going to cease.

"...whether *there be* knowledge, it shall vanish away" (v 8). That means the knowledge that we know and understand when we have the knowledge of God and are God; it's going to pale in such insignificance all the things that we have in this human life that it's going to be just like vanishing away. What God has for us is absolutely fantastic.

Here is the truth of the whole matter, v 9: "For we know in part, and we prophesy in part." Living in the end-time we can key together a few more things than before. But it is still *in part*. Remember the sermon I gave *The 14 Points of Prophecy* (Day 6, FOT, 2002) that have to take place before Christ returns? Only three or four had any degree of fulfillment at all. So we prophesy in part.

Now then, here's the day we're looking for, and this is what Paul is also writing about to try and inspire the brethren by saying:

Hebrews 6:9: "...we are persuaded *of* better things concerning you, even the fruits that accompany salvation."

1-Corinthians 13:10: “But when that which is perfect has come, then that which is in part shall be set aside. When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I reasoned as a child; but when I became a man, I set aside the things of a child” (vs 10-11).

What he is really saying here is if we don’t have the qualities of love that he has just covered here, then we are childish in our understanding of God’s way and are behaving in that manner. We need to put those things away. *Childish behavior is the behavior of the world*, where there are all the things that go on there. We have to function in the world, so you have to be careful and cautious with that; we have to understand how they are. But that doesn’t take away from what we need to do for God.

Verse 12: “For now we see through a glass darkly...” We can see, we can catch glimpses of these things. Today, I would say, considerably more than the Apostle Paul. I wonder what he would have thought if he could have seen some of the telescopic pictures of the universe. I wonder what kind of epistle he would’ve written. So, we can see a little more clearly, but it’s still darkly. Because when we come down to these things we have to say, as Jesus said, we don’t know ‘the day,’ we don’t know ‘the hour.’ But we can, if we’re watching, understand the season of these things as they are coming.

“...but then *we shall see face-to-face*...” That’s going to be something to see God face-to-face.

“...and I know in part, but then I shall know exactly as I have been known. And now, these three remain: faith, hope *and* love; but the greatest of these *is* love” (vs 12-13)—because it never fails. We have the same kind of pattern here back in Heb. 6 of *love, and hope, and faith*. Exactly in the way that he has written it here.

Let’s come to Revelation 22:3 and see what he’s referring to, *face-to-face*. “And there shall be no more curse; and the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it... [New Jerusalem] ...and His servants shall serve Him, and **they shall see His face**...” (vs 3-4).

We will see God face-to-face. There can be no greater thing or hope or promise that has been given of God to cling to so that we are successful unto the end, to see Him face-to-face.

“...and His name *is* in their foreheads” (v 4). That’s what Paul is talking about back here in 1 Cor. 13.

Now let’s look at a couple of other Scriptures here that tie in with Heb. 6:10, and love, serving God, and so forth.

2-Thessalonians 2:13: “Now, we are duty-bound to give thanks to God always concerning you, brethren, who are beloved by *the* Lord, because God from *the* beginning has called you unto salvation...”

Stop and think about that! Out of all the billions on the face of the earth. This is why the world does not like the Church of God—in the final analysis, won’t like the Church of God—and those who believe this, because we will say ‘we have been chosen by God’ for eternal life, and ‘you have not.’

(go to the next track)

- God is the One Who makes the selection
- God is the One Who does the calling
- God is the One Who gives the Holy Spirit
- God is the One Who will resurrect us from the dead

But He has chosen us specifically, individually! That’s why with the Holy Spirit of God in you, you belong to Him. ***You are chosen by God the Father!*** The great Sovereign of the entire universe has chosen those whom He has called. *Handpicked! Hand selected* to the exclusion of other people. Their day will come; He has a different plan for them.

“...called you unto salvation... [that ties right in with fruits that accompany salvation] ...through sanctification of *the* Spirit and **belief of the Truth**” (v 13). That’s why it’s so important.

The love of the Truth, belief of the Truth is so hard in this age of talk shows and opinions. Everybody has an opinion, and that’s where so much religious confusion comes from. They have an opinion about this, an opinion about that in the Bible. Rather than saying that the Bible says this, ‘let me find out what else does it say about this,’ and put it all together so that you know what God says.

I don’t know if they’ve ever done this on a religious program or not, it certainly wouldn’t surprise me if they would do it to run something like: What do you think? What’s your opinion of this? What’s your interpretation of this? Then run a quick poll, and then five minutes later say, ‘Well, 60% say this and 40% say this.’ You have to ***believe the Truth***, which is from God, and it’s not like a CNN poll. You have two choices:

1. believe it and live it
2. reject it

Those who are in-between create for themselves great problems. That’s called *Laodiceanism*! They had a more difficult time than we do. Why did they have it more difficult than we do? *Because today we have the Word of God!* Remember, 2-Thess. was the second epistle that Paul

had written. Granted, they may have had a form of what became the Gospel of Matthew; chances are they probably had that, because Matthew's Gospel was finished in 35_{A.D.}

They had the Old Testament. But here we have the complete New Testament, so our belief of the Truth should actually be stronger than their belief because we can base it upon facts that we can study out of the Bible and build Scripture upon Scripture and do as it says, 'precept upon precept; line upon line; here little, there a little,' and so forth, to put it together. We can have a more solid and firm belief of the Truth. The Truth is what? *Your Word is Truth! The Truth of God!*

Verse 14: "Unto which He called you by our Gospel... [again verifies that God is the One Who does the calling] ...to *the* obtaining of *the* glory of our Lord Jesus Christ." Here they were understanding already at that time that our inheritance is going to be obtaining the same glory that Jesus has.

Verse 15: "So then, brethren, stand firm..." Isn't it interesting how the style—though he's covering a subject a little differently—that the Spirit of God makes the style very similar to Hebrews?

"...and hold fast the ordinances that you were taught, whether by word or by our epistle. Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and God—even our Father, Who loved us and gave *us* eternal encouragement and good hope through grace—encourage your hearts and establish you in every good word and work" (vs 15-17).

See how the admonition that we find here in Heb. 6 follows right along with the same flow as we have in 2-Thess. That's another proof, by the way, that Paul wrote the book of Hebrews. There are quite a few scholars who don't believe he did. But when you see the style and you see the way that it's put together, you can see how closely it follows along.

Hebrews 6:11: "But we earnestly desire that every one of you be demonstrating the same diligence, unto the full assurance of the hope until *the* end."

In other words, since ***God is true, God is righteous and God is love***, then we can have the full assurance that what God has promised as *the hope* is there to the end. And that's what's so profound and important.

Let's understand something about the hope that God gives us. It's not just a false mirage of a thought within our hearts. It is part of the fruit, as we saw: *love, joy, faith, and hope*. Just like *love* comes from God, *faith* comes from God, they are the gifts

of the Holy Spirit; so *hope* comes from God, because that's what He's called.

Romans 15:13: "May the **God of hope** fill you now with all joy and peace in believing..." That kind of belief, with the hope of God, the love of God, and all of these things combined together:

- will bring joy, in spite of all circumstances;
- will bring peace of mind regardless of what is happening

"...that you may abound in hope *and* in *the* power of *the* Holy Spirit" (v 13). That's how we are to run our lives, and to which Paul is talking about back here in the book of Hebrews.

Here's why we have hope, Hebrews 6:12: "So that you do not become lazy..." That is always to inspire you. The proverb says that without vision the people perish. That's what hope is. ***Hope is the vision***; the looking out into the future; the seeing the great and fantastic possibilities. ***That hope is the vision!*** When you have that, then you're going to be, what the world calls *a self-starter*. What does that mean? That means that *you can run and govern your life with the power of the Holy Spirit to do what is right!*

- you *will pray* because you desire to pray
- you *will study* because you desire to study

—because ***this hope is that vision*** which gives you the impetus and the power everyday to go ahead, regardless of the circumstances that are around you. So that's a fantastic thing. That's why he says that, when you have that, you have that hope you're not going to become lazy. That doesn't mean you're not going to have periods where you're going to have some letdowns, because we all have that. But this means *lazy and negligent*.

"...but *that you be* imitators of those who through faith and steadfast endurance inherit the promises" (v 12).

Then he talks about Abraham, and you know the story about Abraham. You can read it in *The Christian Passover* book, that the Passover actually began with Abraham in Gen. 15. That's a profound thing! It didn't begin with Israel. *It began with Abraham!* Isn't it interesting how it always comes back to Abraham. Abraham had to believe God, because God said, 'I want you to leave your country, I want you to leave your house and go into a land that I will show you'; that he would be a blessing to all nations—his seed. That He would bless those that bless us, curse those that curse us, etc. *So, it all goes back Abraham!* What I want to do is for us to understand something very important concerning this example that he is drawing out here.

Gen. 22 is the example that he uses. Lots of times God will do things so that on the surface it will look like it's not going to come out the way that you think, but in the end it comes out better than you have thought. Does that make any sense? *Yes!*

Remember, Abraham was called when he was 75-years-old. He received the promise that Isaac would come when he was 85; that's 10 years. He then also had the promise confirmed in his 99th year that Sarah would bear and bring forth Isaac. So, here now we have 25 years involved. This is what Paul is talking about, the time span leading up to Abraham. Gen. 22 is very instructive *in faith, in hope, in belief*, and all of those things are very important here concerning what God asked Abraham to do.

Genesis 22:1: "And it came to pass after these things that God tested Abraham, and said to him, 'Abraham!' And he said, 'Here I am.' And He said, 'Take now your son, **your only son Isaac**..." (vs 1-2). Isaac was not his only son. If you recall, Ishmael was also his son—not through Sarah, but through Hagar. That problem still exists with us today with Jacob and Esau. But how does God look at it for the inheritance?

"...your only son Isaac..."—which means, it was his only *true* son, though he fathered Ishmael, because his wife Sarah bore Isaac. It was the both of them combined.

"...Take now your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go into the land of Moriah, and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell you" (v 2).

We find in the book of Hebrews, chapter 11—the faith chapter—that he did this because he counted that God was also able to raise him from the dead, if it really came to the point of sacrificing him. In other words, God gave to him when he was 100-years-old—gave him Isaac as his son—his body being dead. You know at 100-years-old, I'm sure things don't work like they do when you're 20 having a son. Then he said in his own mind, and *this is belief, this is faith*: 'If God asked me to do this, I know that He will resurrect him from the dead.' God didn't quite require that.

Verse 3: "And Abraham rose up early in the morning and saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son. And he split the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up and went to the place of which God had told him. Then on the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes and saw the place afar off. And Abraham said to his young men, 'You stay here with the donkey, and I and the boy will go yonder and worship, and come again to

you'" (vs 3-5).

We've debated back and forth many times how old was Isaac at this point? He's called a *lad*. I don't know if Abraham, being at this point well over 100-years-old, and he has a young son, how many years he could still call him a *lad*. But you know how it is with older folks, they even call 30-year-old adults 'youngsters.' So, we don't know. We've estimated back and forth at different times anywhere from 12 to perhaps 30. We don't know, probably on the younger side, below 20. I think we have the clue,

"...and took two of his **young men** with him..." (v 3)—a *lad* then has to be younger than *young men*. Let's figure 20 or below just for the sake of trying to figure it. Here's what happened. Now just imagine this scene:

Verse 6: "And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it upon Isaac his son..." This is a type of Christ carrying His own cross because he was carrying the wood for his own sacrifice.

"...And he took the *firepot* in his hand..." (v 6). That means he took a censer bowl of coals, carried it in his hand because you can't hold fire in your hand.

"...and a knife. And they both went together. And Isaac spoke to Abraham his father and said, 'My father.' And he said, 'Here I *am*, my son.' And he said, 'Behold the fire and the wood.... [*I see the fire and the wood*] ...But where is the lamb for a burnt offering?" (vs 6-7).

This is quite profound here, because I don't believe that up until this point Abraham told Isaac what was going to happen. Notice his answer, and here is a good example of faith for us in spite of the circumstances looking like they are desperate and unto the end. I've also found that when you go through circumstances that are desperate and look like the end, and you go through with faith and understanding—and perhaps maybe even the end does come in certain situations—but you still remain faithful to God, there is a blessing that comes later in God's time and in His way. Here we have a very similar thing.

Isaac asked the question of his father, and notice his answer, v 8: "And Abraham said, 'My son, God will provide Himself a lamb for a burnt offering.'..."—which is also a type of the coming sacrifice of Christ. Which is also then a type of what is called theologically, a *substitutionary death*. Which then becomes the death of another for your sins; or in this case, the death of another for the death of Isaac. He said, "...God will provide..."

“...So they went both of them together” (v 8). I don’t imagine there was very much conversation at that point.

Verse 9: “And they came to the place of which God had told him. And Abraham built an altar there and laid the wood in order. And he bound his son Isaac and laid him on the wood, upon the altar.”

This would indicate he is younger rather than older, because if he were older, maybe the weight would be a little difficult for him to get him up there on the altar. I’ve often wondered two things:

1. I wonder what Isaac was thinking when he was helping his father build the altar?
2. I wonder what he thought when he was binding him to put him on the altar for the sacrifice?

And you notice that Isaac himself did not fight back either.

Comment was made that it probably was God’s Spirit supernaturally kept them calm while they had the faith. But here in this case, we have to know that Abraham had to have faith and Isaac had to have faith. He had to have faith and trust in his father that in spite of the circumstances his father knew what he was doing; likewise for us in relationship to God the Father. Whatever our circumstances are, God the Father knows what they are, and we trust God—in that faith and belief—that He knows what is best for us according to His will. That doesn’t mean we consign ourselves to not thinking or doing or acting. But that just means *we continue to trust God for the solution!*

Verse 10: “And Abraham stretched put his hand...” He reached down to take the knife, whether it was in a sheath on his waist, or whatever.

“...and took the knife to slay his son.... [that’s coming down right to the last minute] ...And the angel of the LORD called to him from the heavens and said, ‘Abraham! Abraham!’ And he said, ‘Here I am!’” (vs 10-11).

This is done to show all of us, how far God required Abraham to go to prove his belief and his obedience. *To the absolute ultimate!* Likewise, when God calls us what are we to do? *We are to love God more than father and mother, and brother, and sister, and lands, and children, and yes, our own life also;* and we’re to carry our own cross, just as Isaac carried his own wood, and follow after Christ just like Isaac followed after Abraham. We are to trust the Father in spite of the circumstances, which may look totally opposite of what we may consider they ought to be. I think that describes a lot of situations in a lot of lives. I can tell you this, in my own life it

has not been as I ever had thought. I would have to truly say I really never thought very far beyond.

Notice what happened here, and this is what the Apostle Paul is writing about in the book of Hebrews concerning Abraham. This was such a fantastic and profound thing to do.

Verse 12: “And He said, ‘Do not lay your hand upon the lad, nor do anything to him, for now I know that you fear God, seeing you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me.’”

What does this tell us about our test and trials? *It tells us the exact same thing!* God knows that we love Him and fear Him when that which in our lives is the most dear to our hearts—that is, in this world—we *count as nothing for the sake of love and obedience to God and eternal life.*

It is easy to say those words, but it is hard to carry them out as Abraham and Isaac did here. Let’s also note that at this time we can say, if he was 12-years-old, then it’s 37 years; if he was 20-years-old, then it’s 45 years that God was trying and testing Abraham and then at that moment, because he did this He said,

“...**for now I know that you fear God,** seeing that you have not withheld your son, your only son from Me” (v 12). That’s quite a thing. That’s why we are told *endure to the end.* And that’s what it’s based upon here.

Now then, we have a miraculous thing take place, v 13: “And Abraham lifted up his eyes and looked. And, behold, behind *him* a ram was entangled in a thicket by its horns....”

I’ve said *maybe* God supernaturally created this. He could do that because nothing’s impossible for God, as a type of the supernatural existence of Christ in the flesh, that’s possible. Or, while he was laying Isaac up on the altar, God caused a ram to go up there and get caught in the thicket. Either way, it was there; either way, God provided it.

“...And Abraham went and took the ram and offered it up for a burnt offering instead of his son” (v 13). This is the exact same thing that God the Father has done for us in our sins. *He offered up Christ for our sins instead of us!* The wages of sin is death, but God says: All right:

- if you repent
- if you love Me
- if you believe Me
- if you live My way

then I will apply the sacrifice of Christ and His death to your life. Here is a type of it here:

Verse 14: “And Abraham called the name of

that place The LORD Will Provide; so that it is said *until* this day, ‘In the mount of the LORD it will be provided.’ And the angel of the LORD called to Abraham out of heaven the second time” (vs 14-15). Here is the swearing that is quoted back in Heb. 6. Let’s understand how important that this is.

1. God cannot lie
2. God needs not take an oath

—because what He says will be. God doesn’t have to take an oath for His Word to be true.

He did this because of what Abraham did in his belief. That’s why if we are Christ’s then we are Abraham’s seed and heirs according to the promise. We are to be of the faith of Abraham. So, then God did an extraordinary thing. The only time He has ever done this. Which means that it goes from the time of Abraham on down through all eternity, of course.

Verse 15: “And the angel of the LORD called to Abraham out of heaven the second time, and said, ‘By Myself have I sworn,’ says the LORD, ‘because you have done this thing, and have not withheld your son, your only son; that in blessing I will bless you...’” (vs 15-17). It becomes irrevocable, unconditional, that God is going to do this in two profound ways:

1. “...and in multiplying I will multiply your seed like the stars of the heavens...” (v 17).

Those are the resurrected spiritual sons of God who will shine as the stars, as Jesus said. That is the ultimate promise. That is the promise given to us who are called today.

2. “...and as the sand which is upon the seashore. And your seed shall possess the gate of his enemies” (v 17).

The sand then represents the physical descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and as it comes down into the world today. In those nations the world has been blessed, and from those nations has come the Word of God.

That’s why the world hates us today. They’re jealous, just like Isaac had the jealousy of Ishmael, and Jacob suffered the jealousy of Esau—*because here is the promise. It’s unequivocal*, which means that their descendants will receive the promise that God gave to Abraham, which came to Isaac, which came to Jacob when he blessed the twelve sons of Israel, when the blessings came in to the twelve tribes of Israel, that *that blessing is not dependent upon their behavior*, because it’s unconditional. The blessing *will* come!

Now, the retaining of the blessing then, becomes conditional, but God will give the blessing. That’s why, just take for example, we live in this

tremendous land in America, or wherever you may live in part of the countries of Israel, whether its New Zealand, Australia, England, parts of Europe or Canada. We were blessed with this land, grew up in this land, and we received it not because of anything that we did. The world looks upon that and looks at all of our sins and says these people don’t deserve it. And in some ways they’re correct. So, here it is, irrevocable.

Let’s apply this to the *spiritual* seed. It is irrevocable that the spiritual seed, those who are called to eternal life because of what Abraham did—and then Isaac and Jacob and on down to the birth of Christ and what Christ did—which this little episode here in Gen. 22 was just sort of a miniature thumbnail sketch of what God the Father and Jesus Christ would do during the ministry of Christ. God has bound Himself to do this. He will not lie! So, therefore, if you understand the Word of God, if you have the Spirit of God, realize that God is going to do and finish the work He has sworn to Abraham. *He has sworn by Himself*. We can believe that to the uttermost of our being.

Verse 18. “And in your seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, **because you have obeyed My voice.**” That’s the whole key thing throughout the whole Old Testament and New Testament: **Do you obey the voice of God:**

- under all circumstances?
- under all duress?

That’s not to say that Abraham didn’t have his faults and problems, *he did!* That’s not to say that he didn’t have his sins, *he did!* But when God said do something he did it. When He asked him to do the impossible, he did it. That’s why.

Let’s come back to Hebrews 6 and to see why this is so profound, and how this ought to affect our very lives in the way that we live and believe and everything that we do. I am convinced also that if we are faithful to God and we look to God, He is going to provide opportunities for us to do things we’ve never even thought of.

Hebrews 6:13: “For God, after promising Abraham, swore by Himself, since He could swear by none greater, saying, ‘Surely in blessing I will bless you, and in multiplying I will multiply you’” (vs 13-14)—and He has.

Here’s why, v 17: “In this way God, desiring more abundantly to show the heirs of the promise the unchangeable nature of His own purpose...” The heirs of promise include Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, all of the spiritual seed that are called, and all of the physical seed that would come from that.

“...confirmed *it* by an oath; so that by two immutable things...” (vs 17-18). ‘In blessing I will bless; in multiplying I will multiply’—those are the two immutable things.

“...in which *it was impossible for God to lie...*” (v 18). Most of the religionists today accuse God of lying all the time. They think that the New Testament is a pack of lies, too. But God does not lie; it’s impossible for God to lie!

Now, let’s come here to Titus 1, because we need this in here concerning God not lying. Titus 1:1: “Paul, a servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God’s elect and the knowledge of the Truth that is according to Godliness; in the hope of eternal life, which God Who **cannot lie...**” (vs 1-2).

The Greek here is ‘adunati’—meaning, the impossibility of God lying. That’s why it’s so very important that the Word of God be presented truthfully, straightforward. Because you can take the Truth of God and you can exchange it for a lie by having all kinds of false doctrines and things that you claim are in the Bible.

Verse 2: “In hope of the eternal life, which God, Who **cannot lie...**”—the impossibility of it. That’s why we are to have absolutely no doubts whatsoever that what God said, He is able to do. He is.

Not only that He cannot lie: “...promised before the ages of time, but revealed in its own set time in the proclamation of His Word, with which I was entrusted according to the commandment of God our Savior” (vs 2-3)—Who is Christ. Christ is God; the Father is God. So, it’s impossible for God to lie.

Hebrews 6:18: “So that by two immutable things, in which *it was impossible for God to lie*, we who have fled for refuge might have strong encouragement to lay hold on the hope *that has been set before us*; which *hope* we have as an anchor of the soul...” (vs 18-19). When that is that way then you are, what you would say in this world, *stable*. James 1 talks about those who don’t have faith are driven like the wind of the sea, driven here and there. They’re not anchored.

“...both secure and steadfast, and which enters into the *sanctuary* within the veil” (vs 19). That you have that relationship with God the Father and Jesus Christ in heaven above in the Holy of Holies in the temple in heaven. That’s awesome. Now if you want to know what that’s like, read the section there in *A Harmony of the Gospels* on the Wave Sheaf Offering Day when Christ was, after He was resurrected and was accepted of God the Father. What was that like? That will give you something to

really sink your teeth into.

Verse 20: “Where Jesus has entered for us as a forerunner... [He’s the One Who went ahead and paved the way to prove it can be done] ...having become a High Priest forever according to the order of Melchisedec.” *We’re going to see that the order of Melchisedec is different than any other priesthood. It is the only priesthood that was and is a King and a Priest!*

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*

Scriptural References:

- 1) Hebrews 7; 1:1-3
- 2) Hebrews 2:1-3
- 3) Hebrews 3:1-3
- 4) Hebrews 4:9
- 5) Hebrews 5:6
- 6) Hebrews 6:8-9
- 7) Mark 4:14-20
- 8) Galatians 5:22-26
- 9) Hebrews 6:10-20
- 10) John 15:1-6
- 11) Hebrews 6:9
- 12) John 15:7-10
- 13) 1 Corinthians 13:1-9
- 14) Hebrews 6:9
- 15) 1 Corinthians 13:10-13
- 16) Revelation 22:3-4
- 17) 2 Thessalonians 2:13-17
- 18) Hebrews 6:11
- 19) Romans 15:13
- 20) Hebrews 6:12
- 21) Genesis 22:1-18
- 22) Hebrews 6:13-14, 17-18
- 23) Titus 1:1-3
- 24) Hebrews 6:18-20

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Hebrews 7; 6:1
- Genesis 11; 15
- Hebrews 11
- James 1

Also referenced:

Sermons:

- *How is Your Spiritual Garden?* (Hebrews Series #19)
- *14 Points of Prophecy* (FOT, Day 6, 2002)

Books:

- *The Christian Passover* by Fred R. Coulter
- *A Harmony of the Gospels* by Fred R. Coulter

FRC:mds/cs/ddss
Transcribed: 11/16/2002
Reformatted/corrected: bo—January/2017

Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews XXI The Order of Melchisedec

(Chapters 6-7)

Fred R. Coulter

Heb. 6:20 builds on everything going clear up to Heb. 10:26. It starts out with our access to God the Father, but let's back up to:

Hebrews 6:18: "So that by two immutable things, in which *it was* impossible *for* God to lie, we who have fled for refuge... [flee from the world and all the things concerning it] ...might have strong encouragement to lay hold on the hope *that has been* set before *us*; which *hope* we have as an anchor of the soul..." (vs 18-19). In other words, how you're going to remain faithful and steadfast, is:

- to always know the hope of your calling
- to always understand the great, fantastic thing that God has for us
- to know that we are going to be the children of God
- to know that we're going to share in spiritually eternal life and live with God the Father and Jesus Christ and all the saints forever and ever in New Jerusalem

That's the hope!

"...both secure and steadfast..." (v 19). In other words, because of the promises of God by the two immutable things that He swore: that He cannot lie, and because Jesus has already given Himself as that sacrifice and is our High Priest, it is secure and steadfast, and meaning *nothing can shake it*. Our way of worshiping God:

- is not in ritual
- is not in sacrifice
- is not in form and ceremony

Our way of worshiping God is direct access to God the Father and Jesus Christ into the Holy of Holies in the temple in heaven! And the whole purpose of everything from here on, whatever he says between this and Heb. 10:26, is to show how *superior*—not just better—but *superior* the New Covenant is to the Old Covenant, and hence, superior to any other form of worship or any other religion. ***Only those that have the Spirit of God have this hope!***

It is true that if anyone will truly pray to Jesus, though they are not converted and baptized, and they believe, God will answer their prayers *according to their faith at their level*. Why would He do that? *To encourage them more toward conversion and coming to God!* That's why. So, the thing to say that Jesus only hears the prayers of those who are

converted is not a correct statement. However, it is a true statement that ***only those who have the Spirit of Christ will receive eternal life!*** God can answer prayers for anyone. *Answering a prayer does not mean eternal life!* It just means that God answered the prayer. If they go on and they're thankful and they pick up the Bible and really want to know and learn and study, then God's Spirit can be with them and lead them and, hopefully, they would be led to repentance and baptism.

But as far as those who are in the Church we have to where God has absolutely drawn the line:

Romans 8:9: "However, you are not in *the* flesh, but in *the* Spirit..." This is how God is viewing you, because, obviously, you are still in the flesh. You still have the pulls of the flesh to overcome. But this is your relationship with God. It is *spiritual*.

Here's the dividing line: "...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**" (v 9).

God is not making a mistake on what He is doing. Those who have the Holy Spirit are His. They are the ones who are called to salvation. So, if you have others out there who know of God, heard of God, heard of the name of Christ, if they pray to Jesus and He answers their prayer, that's fine. It is not giving them eternal life. You do not have to have the Spirit of God in order to have your prayers answered. Otherwise, how would anyone ever be able to approach God at all? *You couldn't!* Then you would have to have a system set up where they would have to come to some man to have their sins forgiven before they could even pray. Can you imagine what a church would do with that?

Here's our relationship with God, Hebrews 6:19: "...and which enters into the *sanctuary* within the veil." Now you're able to understand this a little bit more, so I guess it worked out just fine showing you, or having you see the tabernacle again, where you could see the two compartments of the tabernacle, where you have the Holy place and then you have the Holy of Holies. "...within the veil..." is into the Holy of Holies where the mercy seat of God is; in other words, to the very throne of God.

Notice how this is almost a repeat. This is the summary that begins the whole topic (Heb. 6:20). Here's the conclusion of everything:

Hebrews 10:19: “Therefore, brethren, having confidence to enter into the *true* Holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which He consecrated for us through the veil (that is, His flesh), and *having* a great High Priest over the house of God, let us approach *God* with a true heart, with full conviction of faith, our hearts having been purified from a wicked conscience, and our bodies having been washed with pure water. Let us hold fast without wavering *to* the hope *that* we profess, for He Who promised *is* faithful” (vs 19-23). It *begins* with hope (Heb 6:19-20), and it *ends* with hope (Heb. 10:23).

Hebrews 6:20: “Where Jesus has entered for us *as* a forerunner, having **become a High Priest forever according to the order of Melchisedec.**” We are going to start with that today, and there’s a reason why. This is all based upon what we find in Psa. 110:4 is repeated many times in the New Testament. This is the whole basis of the foundation of the New Covenant and the worship of God under the New Covenant, and our access to God the Father, and Jesus Christ and the High Priest that we have.

Psalms 110:1: “The LORD said unto my Lord...” We know David had no lord over him. So this is one of those places in the Old Testament that *reveals* the Father as well as Christ.

“...‘Sit at My right hand until I make Your enemies as Your footstool.’ The LORD shall send the rod of Your strength out of Zion *saying*, ‘Rule in the midst of Your enemies’” (vs 1-2). Isn’t that something? ***The enemies of God can only do what God allows.*** They don’t even realize how restricted and how held back they are by God.

Psa. 2—here’s their attitude; here’s the attitude of them today. This is what they are wanting to do with all of the new religions, and now with this book that I mentioned earlier, *Christianity Without God*. God is going to let this world go its way, and they think they’re getting away with it. Then one day BAM! In the heavens there’s going to appear the sign of the Son of Man, and they’re going to be astonished at what’s going to happen. It’s going to be something.

Psalms 2:1: “Why do the nations rage and the people plot in vain? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against the LORD and against His Christ, saying, ‘Let us break Their bands asunder... [God has no hold on us] ...and cast away Their cords from us.’ He who sits in the heavens laughs; the LORD scoffs at them. Then He shall speak to them in His wrath, and in His fury He terrifies them. ‘Yea, I have set My King upon Zion, My Holy mountain. I will

declare the decree of the LORD. He has said to Me, ‘You are My Son; this day I have begotten You.’ Ask of Me, and I shall give the nations for Your inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Your possession. You shall break them with a rod of iron; You shall dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel’” (vs 1-9).

When it says that He rules ‘in the midst of His enemies,’ that’s something to have great hope in. Yes, there are times that God lets the enemies conquer His people; that is true. That’s what they’re going to figure that they are doing in the last days when the martyrdoms occur. What is going to be the ultimate reality of the fulfillment of Psa. 2? When they think that they have finally won? The enemies are going to think that they have finally won *when they kill the two witnesses*, because look what they do after that:

Revelation 11:9: “Then those of the peoples and tribes and languages and nations shall see their bodies three and a half days, for they will not allow their bodies to be put into tombs...”

After they’ve tormented them with plagues and everything like this, and they can call fire down from heaven, and hold back the rain, and everything. God is going to let them kill them [two witnesses]. Whereas before, if they tried to kill them, what would happen? Fire would come out of the mouth of the two witnesses and devour them. They are going to think, ‘Boy, we finally got it! These guys are dead!’

They “...shall see their bodies three and a half days, for they will not allow their bodies to be put into tombs. And those who dwell on the earth will rejoice over them, and will make merry, and will send gifts to one another, because these two prophets had tormented those who dwell on the earth” (vs 9-10).

So, for three and a half days they’re going to think they’re victorious. Really not very long at all! Then right after that, they are raised, the seventh trumpet is blown, and the resurrection takes place.

Never worry about the enemy. Yes, we’re to be ‘wise as serpents and harmless as doves,’ that’s true. But never worry about the enemy, because God *rules* in their midst, and if He lets them rise very high; guess what, *they have further to fall!* Always remember Pharaoh. God said, ‘I raised him up for this very purpose: to show My power and My glory, that will be known in all the earth’ Yes, it was, and still is.

Wherever the Bible is, and you read it, it’s still known in all the earth that God took him down. But He let him be raised up in great glory. He let

him oppress the children of Israel. Then God intervened. And Pharaoh learned one thing—even though he didn't have any of the technological marvels that we supposedly have with our weapons today—that *you can't fight against the plagues of God!* You can't be a very good warrior when you're covered with boils and blains. You can't concentrate on what you're doing if flies, frogs and lice and all of these things are bothering you. God has a good way of taking care of them. God does rule in the midst of His enemies.

Psalm 110:3: "Your people will offer themselves in the day of Your power..." That's something! When is the day of His power? *Whenever He intervenes on behalf of His people*, whether it is *before* the second coming or *at* the second coming. Of course, the second coming is going to be the greatest manifestation of it.

"...in the beauties of Holiness from the womb of the morning: Yours is the dew of Your youth.... [this is just sort of a symbolic expression of eternal life] ...The LORD has sworn and **will not repent**, 'You... ['the LORD said to my Lord'] ...are a priest forever **after the order of Melchisedec**'" (vs 3-4).

One thing that's very important here that we need to understand is *when this was given*. This was given while the Aaronic priesthood and the Levites were in full blossom in Jerusalem. This is already telling us while that priesthood was functioning that it was going to be out of date sometime in the future and *be replaced by the order of Melchisedec*. So, this is what we will see.

Verse 5: "The LORD at Your right hand shall strike through kings in the day of His wrath.... [this shows His second coming] ...He shall judge among the nations... [He's constantly doing that] ...He shall fill them with dead bodies; He shall shatter chief men over the broad earth. He shall drink of the brook by the way... [likening unto the Holy Spirit] ...therefore, He shall lift up the head" (vs 5-7)—lift up Himself for battle; His second return.

Hebrews 7:1: "For this Melchisedec, King of Salem, Priest of the Most High God, Who met Abraham *as he was* returning from *his* slaughter of the kings, and blessed him, and to Whom Abraham gave a tenth part of all; on the one hand, being interpreted King of Righteousness; and on the other hand, King of Salem, which is King of Peace; without father, without mother, without genealogy; having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but having been made like the Son of God, remains a Priest forever. But consider how great this One *was* to Whom even the patriarch Abraham gave a tenth

of the spoils" (vs 1-4).

Now let's go back and look at the priesthood of Melchisedec. Let's first of all understand what it says here in Heb. 7:1 *that He is King and Priest*. Under the system that Israel had, the priest could not be king. You had the kingship, which would come down through the line of David; you had the priesthood, which would come down through the line of Aaron. A king could not become a priest, and a priest could not become a king. But here we have both offices together in Melchisedec. The reason that this is so is *to show the superiority of the priesthood of Melchisedec, Who is Christ*—that's what it's showing.

Let's go back and see the account in Gen. 14; this is all we have concerning Melchisedec in the Old Testament. This becomes a very important precedent when we understand that Melchisedec (Gen. 14) was actually the One Who became Jesus Christ. Every other man has *a mother, a father, a beginning of days and an end of life!*

Some commentaries like to say that Melchisedec was Shem. Why could it not be Shem? It's very, very simple, the Bible records Shem's birth.: *Shem, Ham, and Japheth, the sons of Noah!* So, he had a father and mother; he had a beginning of days, and he had an end of life. Therefore, just as God appeared to those in the Old Testament time in different manners, there's a time later when He came to Abraham and He appeared as a man. Here's a time where He appears as a High Priest. Now this becomes very important, because this occurred *before* the priesthood of Aaron and the Levitical system. That means that it has precedence over the covenant with Israel.

When they came back from the slaughter of the kings, Genesis 14:17: "And the king of Sodom went out to meet him after his return from the slaughter... [the king of Sodom didn't go out and fight. He stayed home] ...of Chedorlaomer and of the kings with him, at the valley of Shaveh, which *is* the king's valley. And Melchisedec the King of Salem..." (vs 17-18).

This tells us this is a preview of the only ceremony that we have where we use physical things. That ceremony is *the Passover!* This King of Salem, Priest of the Most High, did not accept animal sacrifices, did not accept any other form of worship. Here we have right here—by what He did—was a prophecy of what would be when it comes time for the Passover. This may not have been at the Passover time. It doesn't tell us whether it was or whether it wasn't.

Verse 18: "And Melchisedec the King of Salem brought forth bread and wine. And He *was*

the Priest of the Most High God.”

When it talks about the Most High in the Old Testament, that is talking about God the Father. So, there are these some few references in the Old Testament concerning God the Father. In Dan. 7 He is called the *Ancient of Days*. Here He is the *Priest of the Most High God*, and that means God the Father. Though the king of Sodom may have been there, there’s no indication that he participated in this service with Abraham and Melchisedec.

Notice what happened, v 19: “And He blessed him, and said, ‘Blessed *be* Abram of the Most High God, possessor of heaven and earth. And blessed *be* the Most High God, Who has delivered your enemies into your hand.’ And he gave Him tithes of all” (vs 19-20).

This becomes a very important thing. This also shows that tithes were required *before* the Levitical priesthood. We won’t get into tithing today, but we’ll sort of set the stage here with it. Was Abraham a righteous man? *Yes!* He’s called *righteous Abraham!* Which meant *that he kept the commandments of God!* But more importantly, what made him more righteous than others was this: ***he obeyed the voice of God without question, and with a willing heart and obedience!***

Here we have the blessing passed on from Abraham to Isaac, and God tells Isaac, Genesis 26:3: “Stay in this land, and I will be with you and bless you, for to you and to your seed, I will give all these lands; and I will establish the oath which I swore to Abraham your father.”

Isaac remembered that oath. He was one of the participants at the time when God asked Abraham to offer Isaac for a burnt offering. He understood fully what was being said here. He remembered the swearing that God said, ‘In blessing I will bless, and multiplying I will multiply.’

So, He reiterates it here in v 4: “And I will multiply your seed [Isaac] as the stars of the heavens and will give to your seed all these lands. And in your seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, **because Abraham obeyed My voice** and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws” (vs 4-5).

These had to be the very same that He gave to the children of Israel at a later date. Why can we be so sure of that? *Well simply because Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever, and ‘I, the LORD, change not!’* If His commandments are righteousness, which they are; and if obedience is required of them, which He does; then *they had to be the exact same laws*. Otherwise, how would Abraham know how to tithe unless God had

commanded him to tithe? Though we only have this one account of spoil, that doesn’t mean that that was the only time that Abraham tithed. It gives this one account to establish a precedent that the priesthood of Melchisedec was:

- in operation before the priesthood of Aaron
- has superiority over the priesthood of Aaron
- that the priesthood of Aaron and the Levitical system was to come to an end at a future date

That’s why these things are there.

Hebrews 7:2: “And to Whom Abraham gave a tenth part of all; on the one hand, being interpreted King of Righteousness; and on the other hand, King of Salem, which is King of Peace.” This is a literal declaration of His title (Gen. 14), and it is a prophetic reference of His titles when Christ sets up the Kingdom of God. We will see that all the way through when we’re going through this.

Verse 3: “Without father, without mother...” No human being can be without father or mother. *This has to be the One Who became Christ!*

“...without genealogy...” (v 3). There is no genealogy in the Old Testament you can’t go back where it says, ‘This is the genealogy of Melchisedec, the Priest of the Most High God.’ Whereas, you could go back into the Old Testament in you could find the genealogy of the Aaronic priesthood and the Levites, beginning with *Moses and Aaron!* *Yes indeed!*

“...having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but having been made like the Son of God...” (v 3). When Melchisedec appeared as the Priest of the Most High God, He presented Himself in a form that He would look like when He became Christ. Now as the Son of God, He remains a Priest forever. This becomes so very important, because it means that *there is no interruption of the service of His Priesthood!* He does not need a successor because He is there *forever* it says.

“...remains a Priest forever” (v 3). And that’s continually, without interruption. How much better a priesthood is this, than a priesthood of men who through history have shown that they have become corrupted? And that corruption was previewed by *the wilderness*, when the people came to Aaron and said, ‘As for this man Moses, we don’t know where he is. Aaron, make us gods.’

So, the corruptible nature of the Aaronic priesthood was revealed immediately in Aaron himself. Aaron didn’t say, ‘Now look, we know we

heard the voice of God. We know that He said *you shall not make any idols or graven images of anything, and you shall not bow down and worship them!* So therefore, no, I'm not going to do this. And since my brother Moses is up there talking to God, if you so much as raise a finger to make an idol, I'm going to have the soldiers over here thrust you through with a spear.' Which is what he should have done, but he didn't. That whole episode of making the golden calves was not only a sin at that time, but it was also *a prophecy of the coming corruption of the Aaronic priesthood!* You can go back and read how corrupt they became. Here we have a King of Righteousness:

- Who has no corruption
- Who lives forever
- Who is the right hand of God
- Who has given us permission to come into the Holy of Holies in the temple above to God the Father, and Jesus Christ sitting at the right hand of God

That's why it's so superior!

- We have God the Father Who lives forever
- God the Son Who lives forever
- Who can never be corrupted
- Who are always righteous
 - ✓ gives us of His Holy Spirit
 - ✓ gives us hope
 - ✓ gives us understanding
 - ✓ gives us of His Word
 - ✓ gives of His Truth
- ✓ we can have direct contact with Them in heaven above

That's contrasted with the Aaronic and Levitical system, where they had to come to the priest. They didn't have direct access to God the Father in heaven above. Only certain of the prophets and the patriarchs had direct access to God. What a tremendous privilege that is, brethren!

That's why Paul spent so much time on this, so when he comes to the end of this in Heb. 10, he says, 'If you trample under foot the Son of God, and count the blood of the covenant wherewith you are sanctified as an unholy thing, it's over with,' because this is a tremendous, absolute privilege here. ***He remains a Priest forever!***

Why would he say, 'the King of Righteousness,' rather than 'the Priest of Righteousness'? Very important! He's called the King of Righteousness, the King of Salem, which is the King of Peace, because not only as High Priest, He has the two offices: He is King and He is Priest—which then is a *special office* not granted to other human beings. This is to show that actually ***He***

is God! Because no one can be King of Righteousness unless he is God.

Revelation 19:11 shows His activity in righteousness here even in making war: "And I saw heaven open; and behold, a white horse; and He Who sat on it *is* called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He does judge and make war."

Only the King of Righteousness can judge and make war this way. Then it talks about Him and His glorified form, and He's called The Word of God.

Verse 16: "And on *His* garment and on His thigh He has a name written: King of kings and Lord of lords." Being King of Righteousness and King of Peace, *and* Priest at the same time, is a *far greater office* than the priesthood of Aaron, because he was only a priest and he was physical. Whereas we now have a Priest *forever* Who is also King, Who is also Ruler.

You can tie Isa. 9 in there with it. The very purpose why Christ came, and it shows all of these things all tied together. Here it doesn't show His *priestly office*. Here it shows His *kingly office*.

Isaiah 9:6: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon His shoulders..." The *kingly office* is being exalted here. In Psa. 110 we have the *priestly office*. Then in Heb. 7 we have them *combined together* for the very first time, because ***Christ was the only One Who was righteous enough to be King and Priest!*** Foretold by being King of Salem and Priest of the Most High back in Gen. 14.

Here it talks about the *kingly element* of it, "...the government shall be upon His shoulder; and His name shall be called Wonderful..." [all of these are names of God, qualities of God] ...Counselor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.... [He's called the King of Peace (Heb. 7)] ...Of the increase of *His* government and peace *there shall be* no end, upon the throne of David..." (vs 6-7)—showing that though He is Prince of Peace, He will be King of Peace because He's going to sit on the throne of David.

"...and over His kingdom, to order it and to establish it with judgment and with righteousness from henceforth, even forever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this" (v 7). There we have the *kingly* part of the Melchisedec, being King and High Priest.

(go to the next track)

Now, let's cover a couple of things concerning Melchisedec Who established it? ***The Lord established it Himself, the Most High!***

Melchisedec was Priest of the Most High. That means that God the Father established this, and it was before the establishment of the covenant in Gen. 15; that was on the Passover Day. How long it continued to exist we don't know. If it went beyond the days of Abraham to Isaac; we have nothing other than what it tells us in the Old Testament and the New Testament.

That's why Paul spends the time here, saying, Hebrews 7:3: "Without father, without mother, without genealogy; having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but having been made like the Son of God..." That could be translated *assimilated into*, meaning ***the very office of Melchisedec was assimilated into the function of the Son of God***, Who was Christ.

- He is a Priest forever, because He lives forever
- He is King forever, because He lives forever

Verse 4: "But consider how great this One was..." This is important to understand, because what is it that the Jews today look to as the most important man? *Moses!* They also understand about Abraham, but they look to Moses more. Abraham preceded Moses. This is why he's going back to this historical setting to show that the precedent of Melchisedec *as Priest and as King* was established *before* the covenant with Abraham.

Paul says, v 4: "But consider how great this One was, to Whom even the patriarch Abraham gave a tenth from the spoils." The reason he brings this out is because under the covenant with Israel no one was to receive the tenth other than the Levites and the priests. So, he is showing here the giving of the tenth, and also it shows that God required a tenth *long before Israel and, undoubtedly, long before Abraham!*

We don't know, but we could make a guess, so we'll have to say part of this is a guess and part of it is fact. God does expect us to use our minds in a proper way and to think things through with Scripture to come to understand what His Word is. Most of the time God does not necessarily repeat everything over again in exactly the same way. And this is what bugs people to death to no end concerning the New Testament, because they say, 'Well, there's no command to keep the Sabbath.' But yes there is when you come to understand it, likewise here when we read about Cain and Abel.

If you keep the commandments of God and obey His voice and keep His charge, His statutes, His commandments and His laws, you are righteous.

'All Your commandments are righteousness.' If you do not do that, and you break the commandments, we know that sin is 'the transgression of law'; therefore, *sin is the breaking of the commandments!* We understand that. Let's come here and read this account with Cain and Abel, and this will help us understand.

Let's give just little background before we start reading. Adam and Eve were cast out of the Garden of Eden and two cherubim were put at the entrance of the East gate. This is very similar to what, as we went through and showed concerning the tabernacle, how the tabernacle was constructed. In the Holy of Holies, the inner part of the tabernacle, or the temple, was where the Ark was, or, the throne of God, or where the presence of God was. Now, after Adam and Eve were exiled from the Garden of Eden, who lived in the Garden of Eden? *God still did!* He didn't destroy it. He put the cherubim there to protect the *Tree of Life* so that they could not get in there.

In symbolism under the covenant with Israel, the high priest was allowed to go into the Holy of Holies of the temple once a year. He would come into the outer chamber every day. In the outer chamber we have:

- the seven lamp stands
- the things for washing
- the table of showbread with the six loaves on each side of the table

All of that is reflective back here to the Garden of Eden. When Adam and Eve and Abel would want to have contact with God, where would they go? Probably at the set time, probably on the Sabbath Day they would meet the Lord at the entrance of the Garden of Eden. Just outside the entrance of the Garden of Eden there had to be some sort of altar. Just like outside the entrance to the temple you had the altar of burnt offerings. Inside the first part you also had the altar of incense. Instead of a temple, we have the Garden of Eden and the two cherubim; out from there we have an altar, and there had to be an altar because of what we're going to read here in Gen. 4.

The Lord also functioned not only as King, but as Priest. *He would have to with Abel and Cain, and Adam and Eve!* This maybe reflects back on the office of Melchisedec going clear back here, because obviously the Lord had no beginning of days, or end of life, nor any genealogy. What happened after Cain and Abel were born:

Genesis 4:3 "It came to pass that Cain brought to the LORD an offering of the fruit of the ground."

Are you to bring certain offerings of the ground to God? *Yes, you are!* You're to bring the firstfruits. You're to bring the tithe of it. The same laws apply. We can take the laws that God gave to Israel, and they have to be the same ones back here. Even though you brought an offering from the ground, was that sufficient? If you brought an offering of the ground that was not the firstfruits, or that was not the tithe of the ground, that still was not an offering in the sense that it was an animal sacrifice. There are a lot of things we can derive out of this when we understand the rest of the Bible.

Verse 4: "And Abel also brought of the firstlings of his flock *and* of the fat of it...." What are the firstlings? *They are the firstborn!* Where do we find the law of the firstborn? *Exodus and Deuteronomy!* 'All that opens the matrix being males are Mine, says the LORD.'

Were these offered at the same time? *It doesn't say that they were offered at the same time,* and you don't put the firstfruits on the altar, and you don't put the tithe of the ground on the altar. The only thing you put on the altar is an animal sacrifice. But also, because of the nature of man, what was it that God required of Israel when they approached Him? *To bring an offering for sin! Only by the shedding of blood is there remission of sin! That's correct today through the blood of Christ!* That was correct with Israel with the animal sacrifices they had. Therefore, we can say it had to be also correct with Abel and Cain, otherwise, God then would have different standards for different people when there is only one law, and one standard, and one Lord. So, this is how we are to reason with the Scriptures.

Verse 4: "And Abel also brought of the firstlings of his flock *and* of the fat of it...." It could be offered for a firstborn; it could also be offered for a sin offering, either way.

"...And the LORD had regard unto Abel and his offering" (v 4). People look at that and they think, 'Well, now, Cain tried.' This was before New Age philosophy. 'If he was sincere and he tried, therefore, God was being discriminatory because He accepted Abel's sacrifice and not Cain's. After all, from the goodness of his heart, Cain must have done this.' *No!* We don't find that at all.

Verse 5: "But He did not have regard unto Cain and his offering...." Why? *If it would have been done according to the laws that God gave them it would have been accepted!* If you do something according to the Law of God, does He not accept it? *Yes, He does!* That's what He said is acceptable. You even read there of the sacrifices in Lev. 1, it says *when any man brings a voluntary offering of his*

own will. He has to initiate it. Then when he initiates it He gives all of the commands on how that is to be offered at the altar. So likewise, we've got to have the same thing in play here. When did God not accept an offering by the priest and the Levites? (Mal. 1). You bring the blind and halted and the maimed, and that which God rejects, and you expect Him to accept it. So, God didn't have any respect to that.

Whatever it was that Cain brought and did, he did not do it according to the commandment of God. So therefore, God did not have respect unto it. Now then, from this we can learn a great principle, which covers everything: ***Unless you do it God's way, He is not bound to respect what you do!*** We can just think on that! That's true! After all, is not God, *God?* Since He *is* God—not *if*—He is the One Who commands men. *Men do not command God!* So, what we have here is Cain doing his own way, coming to God and asking God to accept something that was done contrary to the Law; otherwise, it would have been accepted.

Let's come back to the book of Jude and tie this in with relationship to New Testament faith. We've read this many times before, but let's put this in a little different light.

Jude 3: "Beloved, when personally exerting all *my* diligence to write to you concerning the common salvation, I was compelled to write to you, exhorting *you* to fervently fight for the faith, which once for all *time* has been delivered to the saints." Jesus said, 'If you love Me, keep My commandments.' We can go through all of that, too.

Verse 4: "For certain men have stealthily crept in, those who long ago have been written about, condemning *them* to this judgment.... [that means their condemnation of old was written about] ...*They are* ungodly men, who are perverting the grace of our God, *turning it* into licentiousness, and are personally denying the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ" (vs 3-4).

After he talks about what happened to the children of Israel, and Sodom and Gomorrah, and the angels that sinned, and so forth, v 10: "As for these... [men who are turning the grace of God into licentiousness] ...whatever things they do not understand... [they don't understand them] ...they blaspheme; but whatever things they understand by instinct, as irrational brute beasts, they are corrupting themselves in these things. Woe to them! For they have walked in the way of Cain..." (vs 10-11).

This defines the way of Cain. The way of Cain is contrary to the commandments of God,

contrary to the faith of Christ. While Abel is called righteous, Cain is called wicked in this way, and it is the way of Cain, because he established something after the account there in Gen. 4.

Verse 11: "...and for gain, they have wholly given themselves up to Balaam's delusion, and have perished in the rebellion of Korah."

What was the thing of Balaam? *Balaam wanted to be paid for his services!* 'Yes, I will come and curse if you pay me.' And he says, 'Whatever you ask.' God let him have it. He gave him a warning with the angel and the jackass.

"...and have perished in the rebellion of Korah" (v 11). Korah did what?

- they were the ones who wanted to usurp the priesthood
- they were the ones who wanted to offer incense
- they were the ones who wanted to get rid of Aaron

So, you have that same thing connected with Cain, Balaam, and Korah. What was it that Cain did back here? Isn't this typical?

Genesis 4:5: "...And Cain was extremely angry and his countenance fell." He wanted *his* way.

Try the same thing on any Sunday-keeper, and say, 'You ought to keep the Sabbath.' They'll get mad and their countenance wroth, fallen. They will be, 'How dare you!' There's one man who sent an e-mail, I forget what it was, but I called Ron Cary, and I had Ron Cary give him a little note and send him the *Rome's Challenge To The Protestants*. And boy, I got back a hot e-mail. 'I never knew you were SDA [Seventh Day Adventist]!' *Well, we're not SDA.* 'You SDAs always hide under other names!' *We're not SDAs, and we're not hiding under other names.* We have it very clearly stated, Christian Biblical Church of God. That's not another name. Then he says, 'Jesus gave us the first day of the week by being resurrected on the first day of the week.' All mad! All angry! Didn't want the Truth.

That's exactly what Cain was. So, God gave him a chance, v 6: "And the LORD said to Cain, 'Why are you so angry? And why has your countenance fallen? If you do well, shall you not be accepted?....'" (vs 6-7).

Whatever he did was not right, because it says that the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering, which means that God accepted it. He's saying to Cain, 'You didn't do this in a right manner. Had you done it in a right manner you would have been accepted.'

Verse 7: "...But if you do not do well... [if

you do not what is right] ...sin... [which is the transgression of Law] ...lies at the door...." That's a very interesting statement there. This I'm sure has reference to the entrance into the Garden of Eden where God would come out and He would manifest Himself. Maybe that's when the priesthood of Melchisedec began. The altar was at the entrance, or the door, to the Garden of Eden. Here he's bringing sin. "...**sin lies at the door**...."—right at the entrance where God lives. That's what He's saying.

"...Its desire *is* for you..." (v 7). In other words, if you give in to it—you give in to your lust—it's going to get you. What is the wages of sin? *Death!*

"...but you must rule over it!" (v 7). That's what it should read. In other words, you are to overcome sin. What did God do when Cain sinned? *He called him to repentance!* Isn't that what God commanded Israel? *Yes, indeed!*

Since he brought an offering of the ground, and he brought it to the altar, could it be that he brought it and put it on the altar in place of a burnt offering? In other words, on the altar of God instead of a sacrifice of a lamb or a goat, as we know would be allowable. He brought the fruit of the ground and put it on the altar and expected God to accept that as a burnt offering. Can you burn wheat? *Yes, you can put a bundle of wheat up on an altar with the fire and it will burn!* It's possible. Again, we don't know. We can't say for sure, but something like that must have been the case, because it was called sin.

So therefore, we know it was not firstfruit offering; we know it was not a tithe offering. Another possibility just brought up, which is a good comment. Since Cain would have to bring an animal for a sin offering, he probably would have had to trade with his brother Abel to get a lamb to do that, and he didn't want to do it. So, he was going to force his way upon God. Either way you look at it, whatever Cain did was *to force his way upon God*. That's totally the opposite of repentance.

Let's see the same thing here. Whenever there is sin, God defines it, and God calls to repentance. God instructs what needs to be done after repentance, and that's the same thing that He did with Cain. You go back and analyze that.

Isaiah 1:10: "Hear the Word of the LORD, rulers of Sodom; give ear to the law of our God, people of Gomorrah. 'To what purpose *is* the multitude of your sacrifices to Me?' says the LORD...." (vs 10-11).

Even the animal sacrifices, if they were not offered correctly, or if they were not according to what God had said, or if you come with an evil heart there in the book of Micah, that you're going to have

greater favor with God. You can even take God's way and so pervert it and still say that you're doing it to God, even in the temple of God, but you're living in sin. That's what they were doing.

"...I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I do not delight in *the blood of bulls*, or of lambs, or of he-goats" (v 11). Yet, He commanded it. But they were doing it with sin.

Verse 12: "When you come to appear before Me, who has required this at your hand, to trample My courts?" It sounds an awful lot like Gen. 4. You might put there Sunday-keeping. 'Who has required you to do this? You come and say you're doing it in the name of God. And you're coming and saying that you have entrance to Me and My court.' *No!*

Verse 13: "Bring no more vain sacrifices; incense is an abomination to Me—new moon and Sabbath, the calling of assemblies..." We know that for Israel, these were *their own* sabbaths and own new moons and everything like this. *It wasn't God's!* We know when we read the rest of the book of Isaiah that they were worshiping Baal. They were following all the gods of the nations around them, offering their children in the fire to Moloch.

"...I cannot endure iniquity along with the solemn assembly!" (v 13). I tell you what, there is nothing more frustrating than to go to some meeting and it turns out to be some stupid meeting with absolutely no meaning or relevance to anything. And much more so if you come to hear the Word of God and anything but the Word of God is expressed. This is what God is telling us here.

Verse 14: "Your new moons and your appointed feasts My soul hates; they are a trouble to Me; I am weary to bear *them*." He says in another place: 'Israel, you have made Me to serve with your sins' That's what God did. He's exposing their sins, and He's telling them why. Now He's going to tell them what to do here in just a minute.

Verse 15: "And when you spread forth your hands, I will hide My eyes from you; yea, when you make many prayers, I will not hear; your hands are full of blood." Then He brings them to repentance:

Verse 16: "Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean; put away the evil of your doings from before My eyes; cease to do evil... [that's repentance] ...learn to do good... [that's what you do after repentance] ...seek judgment, reprove the oppressor. Judge the orphan; plead for the widow. Come now, and let us reason together,' says the LORD. 'Though your sins are as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall be like wool. If you are willing

and obedient, you shall eat the good of the land; but if you refuse and rebel, you shall be devoured *with the sword*'; for the mouth of the LORD has spoken *it*" (vs 14-20).

What happened to Cain? *He refused!* He went and killed Abel. Maybe he had to go to Abel to barter some of his goods of the ground to bring an animal for a sin offering or a sacrifice for a Sabbath or Holy Day. And he didn't want to do it. There are many different things that we can read out of the account there with Abel and Cain. He was jealous. He was firstborn, therefore, he figured that whatever he did should be acceptable. So, you always have this kind of thing going on even in families today. You always know the one who is second born is always playing catch-up.

You have everything there. Even though he brought something from the ground, if it were proper according to God's Law, he would have been accepted. None of the things from the ground can be taken for a sin offering or a burnt offering. The burnt offering is given when you're thankful to God, and its wholly consumed on the altar, and God takes that as a real sacrifice on your part; and He commanded it, and if it's done right, God accepts it. So there are many, many different things that you can glean and from the account with Abel and Cain.

This also ties in to tithing, and ties into the thing that people want to give offerings rather than to tithe. There are two things people get upset about:

1. their lives
2. their money

Satan is right there to take advantage of both of those! God is right there to bless you with both of those! So, before we get all huffy and puffy and before I even get to it, I know there are going to be people who will say, 'You're doing this because you need money.' *No!* I'm not bringing this because the Church needs money, or I personally need money. I'm bringing it so that you will understand that if you go contrary to the commands of God in anything—including *tithes and offerings*—then you're holding back a blessing that God would want to give you. That's why.

If you have to live by every Word of God, which you do, then that's included. I'll just say right here, those who are retired and who are on Social Security and so forth, you do not have an active servile working increase, so therefore, to give offerings on what you receive, that's perfectly fine. I'm not trying to preach that those who are on pensions or those who have very little income, they should tithe. But nevertheless, *always remember the widow's mite*. The point was not how much she gave, the point was that *she loved God!*

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*

Scriptural References:

- 1) Hebrews 6:18-19
- 2) Romans 8:9
- 3) Hebrews 6:19
- 4) Hebrews 10:19-23
- 5) Hebrews 6:20
- 6) Psalm 110:1-2
- 7) Psalm 2:1-9
- 8) Revelation 11:9-10
- 9) Psalm 110:3-7
- 10) Hebrews 7:1-4
- 11) Genesis 14:17-20
- 12) Genesis 26:3-5
- 13) Hebrews 7:2-3
- 14) Revelation 19:11, 16
- 15) Isaiah 9:6-7
- 16) Hebrews 7:3-4
- 17) Genesis 4:3-5
- 18) Jude 3-4, 10-11
- 19) Genesis 4:5-7
- 20) Isaiah 1:10-20

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Hebrews 10:26
- Daniel 7
- Genesis 15
- Leviticus 1
- Malachi 1

Also referenced:

- Book: *Christianity Without God* by Lloyd Geering
- Article: *Rome's Challenge to the Protestants*

FRC:mds/cs/dss

Transcribed: 12/10/2002

Reformatted/Corrected: bo—January/2017

Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews XXII Tithing & the Superior Covenant

(Chapter 7)
Fred R. Coulter

I mentioned that we were going to do some things on tithing; we have a whole series on: *Tithing*. That should answer all your questions covering:

- Is it Old Testament only?
- Is it New Testament?
- Was there tithing required before Abraham?

It all gets down to everything that there is; whatever your obedience to God is, *it has to come from the heart*.

If someone makes you do it, puts you in fear to do it, coerces you to do it, or whatever means of pressure is upon a person to do something, and they don't want to do it, well then you can't change their mind. God shows that what He does in dealing with people, *He always brings repentance first*.

Hebrews 7:4: "But consider how great this One was to Whom even the patriarch Abraham gave a tenth of the spoils." The reason that this is given here is because he gave it to Melchisedec.

There are two reasons why this is very important:

1. because Abraham was the father of *physical* Israel
2. because Abraham is also the father of *spiritual* Israel, being the Church

In giving a tithe to Melchisedec, it was *based on eternal life*, because He remains a Priest forever. So, the authority for tithing is based upon God; He's the One Who gave the authority.

The reason he is contrasting this, he brings up the sons of Levi and the Aaronic priesthood; then he is showing that the authority for tithing under the covenant with Israel was a lesser authority and a temporary authority, because the authority really resides in God, in the person of Melchisedec.

Verse 5: "For on the one hand, those from among the sons of Levi who receive the priesthood are commanded by the law to collect tithes from the people—that is, *from* their brethren—even though they are *all* descended from Abraham; but on the other hand, He Who was not descended from them received tithes from Abraham, and blessed him who had the promises. Now, it is beyond all doubt *that* the inferior *one* is blessed by the superior *one*.... [this is what Paul is showing here] ...And in the first

case, men who die receive tithes; but in the other case, *He received tithes of Whom it is* witnessed that He lives *forever*. And in one sense, Levi, who receives tithes, also gave tithes through Abraham; for he was still in his forefather's loins when Melchisedec met him" (vs 5-10).

This is showing the point that the priesthood of Melchisedec is far superior to the priesthood of Aaron and the Levites. That the receiving or the giving of tithes in Abraham's case; and that wasn't the only time he tithed, as recorded there in Gen. 14. That's the only one that's recorded.

Verse 5: "For on the one hand, those from among the sons of Levi who receive the priesthood..." That's separating out not just Levi alone, but also Aaron, because the Levites were assistants to the priests.

"...are commanded by the law to collect tithes from the people—that is, *from* their brethren—even though they are *all* descended from Abraham" (v 5).

Let's look at something that is very important to understand. When Abraham tithed to Melchisedec, and we saw that Melchisedec was the manifestation of God to Abraham, as the Priest of God. Just like He appeared to him when He came with the angels as a man.

Numbers 18:20: "And the LORD said to Aaron, 'You shall have no inheritance in their land...' That means that the tribe of Levi did not receive a territory like we would call a state. Rather, the Levites and the priests were scattered throughout all Israel, and they had cities for Levites. The Levites and the priests could own their own homes on their own property within the cities that they had designated for the cities of the Levites. They were not without land that they owned themselves. Howbeit, they did not own agricultural production land as the rest of the tribes of Israel.

"...neither shall you have any part among them.... [that is in the land] ...**I am your part and your inheritance** among the children of Israel" (v 20). Isn't that interesting? Whenever you belong to God, that's how it's phrased, especially with the ministry. With the priesthood it's phrased that way here.

In John 13 we have the last Passover with

Jesus Christ. He was talking to His apostles, who were going to be the leaders of preaching the Gospel. Notice what Jesus said to him when He came to Simon Peter:

John 13:6: “Then He came to Simon Peter; and he said to Him, ‘Lord, are You going to wash my feet?’ Jesus answered and said to him, ‘What I am doing you do not understand now, but you shall know after these things.’.... [you’ll know when I’m done] ...Peter said to Him, ‘You shall not wash my feet, not ever.’ Jesus answered him, ‘If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me’” (vs 6-8).

It’s interesting that that’s the same phraseology that’s used concerning Aaron. He had his part with God. Likewise with the apostles: “...you have no part with Me.”

Let’s see when they selected the replacement for Judas Iscariot; they selected Mathias. The reason that ministers are not selected in this manner today is because the Bible does not instruct us to do so. Since the selecting of the apostles—because Jesus Christ personally chose them—they would be presumptuous if they had chosen one. For example if they said, ‘Ok, let’s have a vote on it, guys. Let’s all gather around here and we’ll vote who’s going to replace Judas.’ *They didn’t have the authority to do so!*

Let’s just carry this one step further. When Barnabas and Saul were ordained as apostles, how was it made known to them that they were to be apostles? *The Holy Spirit revealed it*, and apparently there was the spoken word through the power of the Holy Spirit to ‘separate Barnabas and Saul for the work that I have called them to do.’ So again, we have the selection of apostles done, not by men but by God. So we have the same thing here. This is why they cast the lots.

Acts 1:24: “And they prayed, saying, ‘You, Lord, *the* Knower of the hearts of all, show which one of these two **You** have personally chosen to receive the part of this ministry and apostleship...” (vs 24-25).

Not only did Aaron and the Levites have part in the ministry, and their part was with God, so likewise when it comes to the apostleship those who are going to be the ones in establishing the Church you have exactly the same thing, *a part*.

“...of this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas *in* transgressing fell, to go to his own place.’ Then they cast their lots; and the lot fell on Matthias, and he was numbered with the eleven apostles” (vs 25-26).

Let’s see some interesting things that Peter

said to Simon Magus when Simon said, ‘Oh, I’ll give you money and you give me this power.’

Acts 8:19: “Saying, ‘Give this authority to me also, so that on whomever I lay hands, he may receive *the* Holy Spirit.’ But Peter said to him, ‘May your money be destroyed with you because you thought that the gift of God might be purchased with money. You have neither part nor lot in this matter, for your heart is not right before God’” (vs 19-21).

Then he told him to go ahead and repent. So it’s very interesting, that the exact same wording in Num. 18 when God is talking to Aaron, and why He was going to do with Aaron what He was going to do.

Let’s see something that is very important and very profound. We have seen that the One Who became Melchisedec was also the One Who was the LORD God of the Old Testament—Old Covenant—or the LORD God, dealing with the patriarchs. When He dealt with the patriarchs, *He appeared to them personally and also in vision*. When He dealt with Moses, He told Aaron and Miriam that He would talk to Moses face-to-face, but any other prophet from that time forward He would speak in dreams and revelations. So, here we have a situation, now, where God is establishing the Aaronic priesthood with the Levites to help. The same One Who was Melchisedec. That’s the whole point that Paul is making here.

Numbers 18:21: “And behold, I have given the sons of Levi **all the tithe** in Israel for an inheritance, for their service which they serve, the service of the tabernacle of the congregation.”

Let’s look at a couple of things here concerning that. God *gave it* to them; it was His to give. So, it tells you that this is something that God owns. Whatever God owns He can give to whomever He wants. So He gave it to them.

Let’s also understand another thing. He says, “**...all the tithe...**”—which He does not restrict to agricultural or animal products. All the tenth is not restricted to agricultural products or animal products, because the earth and the fullness is God’s, and He made it. Everything that we do anyway is derived out of the ground. If you produce oil, it’s out of the ground. If you produce a metal, it’s out of the ground. If you work with woodwork, it’s out of the ground. It all comes from the earth. God well knew that it was going to be more than just on the agricultural products. That’s why He said, “**...all the tithe...**”—whatever the tithe was.

So, here we have established that Melchisedec in the person of the LORD God, because that’s Who it was, then took the tithe, which

was rightfully His by the fact that He was God, and gave it to the Levites and to Aaron. We will see that that is the whole point of what Paul is writing about here: that *Melchisedec is far superior* to the Aaronic priesthood. They are commanded by the Law to collect tithes from the people. Now then, since God owns it, then whatever the tithe is, *is the thing that belongs to God*. That's why Jesus said, 'Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and render to God the things that are God's.'

Hebrews 7:5: "...that is, *from* their brethren—even though they are *all* descended from Abraham" So, even in spite of the fact that they are on a human level, equal, He did not give the tithe to anyone but to Aaron and the Levites. Now then, he's making a contrast here between the authority of the Law, because they are commanded by the Law. What Abraham gave to Melchisedec was on the authority of eternal life. Which is a higher authority, law? or eternal life? *Eternal life is!*

Verse 6: "But on the other hand, He Who was not descended from them received tithes from Abraham..." He's making a point here very importantly. He is showing very clearly that the tithes given to the Levitical system was temporary. That's why we have the prophecy:

Psalms 110:4: "...‘You are a Priest forever after the order of Melchisedec.’"—showing that that system of the Levitical and Aaronic priesthood was coming to an end. We covered on how the Levitical and Aaronic priesthood is corruptible, because they are human, and how that the very first time that Moses didn't come back from the mountain, and the people said, 'Make us calves,' Aaron was corrupted the first time.

Here we have, based upon a Priest Who lives forever, Who does not die, Who has greater authority, and Who in fact was the One Who gave the tithes and the commandment to the sons of Levi in the first place. So therefore, you cannot make the argument in any case that the only ones who were to receive the tithes were the priests or the Levites. Abraham never gave it to a priest of Aaron or Levi, because in fact they were still in his loins. Showing the superiority of the effort of Abraham and the superiority of the priesthood of Melchisedec, both.

Hebrews 7:6—furthermore: "...and blessed him who had the promises." What were the promises? *Two major promises!*

1. promises of *physical seed*; as the sand of the sea
2. promises of *spiritual seed*; the Church

And if you are Christ's then are you Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise. So, you have

both.

If you are an Israelite and you're looking back at your roots, then you would have to say that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are your forefathers, and those are your roots. But when you come to Abraham, Abraham had a relationship with God *long before* the promises were given, at least ten years. And he had a continuous, faithful relationship with God all through his life, and obeyed His voice and kept His charge, His commandments, laws and statutes. This shows that Abraham, as a person, had a higher relationship with God than they did. His relationship with God was on a *spiritual* basis. That's why when he believed God it was counted to him for righteousness. ***He had faith! He obeyed!***

Yes, he did offer some sacrifices. But the sacrifices he offered were burnt offerings. Nowhere do we find that Abraham offered a sin offering. So, that means with his direct relationship with God, whatever sins he committed he could repent just like we do, because he had that access to God. That's why he is the *father of the faithful*.

The children given to Abraham as physical descendants, are in a lesser position with God than Abraham was. They had a temple, or tabernacle, to worship at. They could not have a relationship with God like Abraham had, or like those who God calls now being of Jesus Christ. So, this is what he's saying. This is the whole point that he is making here. He "...blessed him who had the promises." That shows that He was *superior* to Aaron and the Levites.

Verse 7: "Now it is beyond all doubt *that* the inferior *one* [Abraham] is blessed by the superior *One* [God].... [this is both true physically and spiritually] ...And in the first case, men who die receive tithes; but in the other case, *He received tithes of Whom it is* witnessed that He lives *forever*" (vs 7-8).

This also tells us something concerning receiving tithes in the New Testament. The tithes were to be received to help people with eternal life. That's what it's for, to minister unto them the Word of God unto eternal life. Whereas the tithes that the Levites received were not unto eternal life. So, ***the tithing that Melchisedec has, which we also have in the New Testament, is based upon everlasting life!*** The tithing that was given to Israel was temporary, because God for the time and duration of the Aaronic and Levitical priesthood gave it to them. Now we're going to see how God handled that when we get to the section concerning Paul's authority in tithing.

Now, to make the point, v 9: "And in one sense, Levi, who receives tithes... [the priests who

were there at the temple] ...also gave tithes through Abraham; for he was still in his forefather's loins when Melchisedec met him" (vs 9-10). What we have with this: this very act, was a prophecy of the subordination of the Levitical priesthood to the Melchisedec priesthood. That's what it's showing us. Here is the reason for the change.

Verse 11: "Therefore, **if perfection** was indeed *possible* through the Levitical priesthood—" What do you mean by perfection? *That is, pointing to eternal life!* Paul also covers this in Galatians, showing that eternal life is a gift of God. The power and authority of eternal life is greater than the authority that was given to the Levites.

Galatians 3:21: "Is the Law then contrary to the promises of God?..." This is the whole Old Covenant. That's what it's talking about here when it says *the Law*.

"...MAY IT NEVER BE! For if a law had been given that had the power to give life... [eternal life] ...*then* righteousness would indeed have been by law" (v 21)—or *true perfection*.

Law tells you what is right and what is wrong. Yes, if you love God you're going to keep His commandments. That's absolutely true. But you've missed the whole point of law if you don't understand that that is to lead you to Christ. And when you come to Christ you don't give up the law-keeping and commandment-keeping; rather it is all now spiritually magnified and in keeping the commandments of God.

That's why when it talks about annulling the Law there in Heb. 7, it's not talking about doing away with all law. It was talking about the law as related to the priesthood. Those had to be changed. So, there is no law that brings perfection. *Law gives us the knowledge of sin! Law tells us what is right and wrong!* The Holy Spirit from God the Father through Jesus Christ brings us eternal life, and we receive that by promise. That's the promise that was given Abraham, which is extended to us.

Now let's look at a couple Scriptures here showing a little bit more about perfection, which Christ even said in the Sermon on the Mount.

- no law can make you perfect
- no law can give you life

That's why salvation comes through:

- repentance
- baptism
- belief
- walking in the way of God

It does not come because you open a book of the law and it says if you do these laws you will receive

eternal life. If that were the case, you could earn it. ***But you can't earn eternal life!*** That's why it's not by law. That's why Paul said:

"...if a law had been given that had the power to give life, *then* righteousness would indeed have been by law" (v 21). That righteousness means *the righteousness of perfection*, which comes through eternal life.

Matthew 5:48, where He summed up this first section of the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus said: "Therefore, you shall be perfect, even as your Father Who *is* in heaven is perfect." The only way that can be done is through the gift of eternal life.

Perfection comes by God's Spirit! Perfection does not come by law-keeping. It's so difficult for people to understand that you must keep the commandments of God, yet, that does not give you eternal life. Howbeit, it's got to be a condition of eternal life. We will see that it is a condition. God can put conditions on it. You can't buy it. It's not a condition that you buy. It's a condition of something that you do.

Revelation 22:12: "And behold, I am coming quickly; and My reward is with Me, to render to each one according as his work shall be." We are to have good works. God created them that we should walk in them.

Verse 13: "I am Alpha and Omega, *the* Beginning and *the* End, the First and the Last." What He's saying here is that there's 'no way you're going to get eternal life by going around Me.'

Verse 14: "Blessed *are* those who keep His commandments... [practice and keep] ...that they may have the right to *eat of* the Tree of Life, and may enter by the gates into the city." Commandment-keeping *is* required, but commandment-keeping *cannot* give life, because commandment-keeping *is not* receiving the Holy Spirit.

Is it possible to keep the commandments of God though you're not converted? Can you keep them in the letter? *Of course, you can! To keep them in the Spirit is another challenge*, because you're dealing with the mind and you're dealing with overcoming lust, and you're dealing with overcoming human nature. The whole spiritual keeping of the commandments of God is another whole different story.

Physically speaking, Matthew 19:16: "Now at that time, one came to Him *and* said, 'Good Master, what good *thing* shall I do, that I may have eternal life?' And He said to him, 'Why do you call Me good? No one *is* good except one—God. But ***if***

you desire to enter into life, keep the commandments” (vs 16-17).

The young man said to Him, because he figured ‘I’ve been doing that. I’ve been good, Lord, I’ve been good.’

Verse 18: “Then he said to Him, ‘Which?’ And Jesus said, ‘You shall not commit murder... [haven’t done that] ...you shall not commit adultery... [haven’t done that] ...you shall not steal... [haven’t done that; boy, I must be getting close] ...you shall not bear false witness; honor your father and your mother; and, you shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ The young man said to Him, ‘I have kept all these things from my youth. What do I yet lack?’” (vs. 18-20).

What does he lack? *He lacks the Holy Spirit!* So this is showing that it’s more than just the physical keeping of the Law. But it also shows this: It shows that, yes, you can keep the commandments in the letter, and that in keeping them in the letter there is no spiritual perfection. Why? ***God expects that of every human being!*** That’s why.

Verse 21: “Jesus said to him, ‘If you desire to be perfect... [this is for eternal life] ...go *and* sell your property, and give to *the* poor...’” Get rid of your idols on the earth. That’s what He’s saying. Whatever your idol on the earth is. In his case, it was money.

“...and you shall have treasure in heaven; and come *and* follow Me.’ But after hearing this word, the young man went away grieving, because he had many possessions” (vs 21-22).

So, we can conclude by this, commandment-keeping is required. Jesus never said it was wrong at any time. As a matter of fact, He said He did not come to abolish the law but to fulfill. But we also find here that commandment-keeping, though God requires it, is a basic fundamental. It does not perfect you spiritually.

Now let’s look and see why He said that. What Paul is doing is he’s helping put everything in perspective. It again talks about selling all that you have. There is a way to sell all that you have and still be able to use it. That may sound a little contradictory, but it’s not.

Matthew 13:45: “Again, the Kingdom of Heaven is compared to a merchant seeking beautiful pearls; who, after finding one very precious pearl, went and sold everything that he had, and bought it” (vs 45-46). This is showing a complete dedication of your life.

Luke 14—the *repentance and counting the cost* chapter. Here is how you need to sell the things.

Selling them alone and then wishing you had never sold them, or selling them, and then complaining that God said to sell them. Selling it and not repenting and coming close to God and not doing the spiritual things isn’t going to help you either, because Paul said, ‘Though I give all my goods...’ The *King James* says, ‘to the poor,’ but it’s *you can give it to different causes* ‘and have not love, it profits me nothing’

When we come to Heb. 7 this is the kind of perfection that he is showing. That under the Levitical priesthood you could not have perfection of the heart and mind and spirit:

1. because the Holy Spirit was not given
2. because the system under the Aaronic and Levitical priesthood never allowed for salvation of eternal life

Luke 14:25: “And great multitudes were going with Him; and He turned *and* said to them, ‘If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brothers and sisters, and, in addition, his own life also, he cannot be My disciple’” (vs 25-26).

That’s what was the problem with the young rich man; not that he couldn’t have sold his goods, he could have sold his goods. But he wasn’t willing to give himself. So, if you give yourself, and count yourself this way to God, this is called counting the cost and so forth. Just realize that, as Paul said, ‘In whatever circumstances you are, whether you are abound, or whether you are abased, you always trust in God’ That’s the spiritual attitude that God wants us to have. If you don’t have that, Jesus said, ‘He cannot be My disciple.’

Verse 27: “And whoever does not carry his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple.” Now a cross is whatever trial, a difficulty, whatever thing that you have to give up. Some people have to give up more than money. The two things people get all concerned about is:

1. their lives
2. their money

And we see that interplaying throughout all of this that we’re talking about.

So, it is possible, if you count everything but loss for Christ, that you don’t have to sell everything you own, because you have already in your own mind divorced yourself from all the physical things around you, and count them but dung. That doesn’t mean that you don’t take care of the physical things around you. That just means to serve God there isn’t one physical thing that is going to hold you back. You’re always going to be yielding to God. In some

cases it's going to be hard. Other cases it will be easier.

(go to the next track)

Let's look at this perfection again, and here is the whole spiritual process. That's why Paul said in writing Hebrews, that perfection did not come by law. ***Perfection, or eternal life, comes by gift, and comes by the Holy Spirit!***

Ephesians 4:11: "And He gave some as apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers for the perfecting of the saints..." (vs 11-12).

The ministry of Christ—Who was High Priest after the order of Melchisedec—their work is a *spiritual work! You have part with Christ!* All of those who are baptized have a part with Christ and eternal life. The whole purpose and goal and meaning for having those who serve is for the perfecting of the saints, *that they may receive eternal life!*

"...for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the Body of Christ; until we all come into the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ" (vs 12-13).

That then gives the definition of how to be perfect; Matthew 5:48: "Therefore, you shall be perfect, even as your Father Who *is* in heaven is perfect." It is a spiritual thing that must take place.

So, Christ gave the command and Paul shows how. Now, that's quite a thing to grow into. And eternal life is a fantastic and wonderful thing, so much that, as Paul said, we 'look through a glass darkly.' He tells them to grow up. I think this is what needs to be for a lot of people in the Church of God today.

Ephesians 4:14: "So that we no longer be children, tossed and carried about with every wind of doctrine..." And do we get *every wind of doctrine*, every kind of question, everything! They come in cycles. If we hadn't had a certain question for a certain time, know for sure it's going to come up. The whole thing that is important here is *if* those who are teaching the brethren *teach* them the Word of God, and *help* them grow up in Christ, then the brethren are not going to be any more children. And instead of be being tossed to and fro and saying, 'Oh, isn't that interesting! Tell me about it.' You'll be able to say:

- that's right
- that's wrong
- here's why it's right

- here's why it's wrong

—because you will have the mind of Christ to do so. That's the whole purpose in it. All too often it comes down to a matter of force, personality, rules and regulations. Then what should have been to Christ becomes a religion to men. And we've all lived through that.

It's very interesting here, v 14: "...every wind of doctrine by the sleight of men in *cunning* craftiness, with a view to the systematizing of the error." In other words, they were going to systematize it into a 'religion.' Has that been done? *Yes!* So much so, that as I've mentioned, I have a book called *Christianity Without God*. It is true that Christianity today is without God, because why? It has been totally undermined and replaced by the *systematizing of the error*. Now they have a religion.

Verse 15: "But holding the Truth in love, may in all things grow up into Him Who is the Head, *even Christ.*"

How much does God want us to grow spiritually? *As much as we yield to God and choose to do so!* That's how! He's not giving any limitation. There's no difficult law for you to do that you must complete, and if you don't complete that law you're not going to have eternal life; or you won't be perfected. If you believe Christ and walk in His way, and have the Spirit of God, and continually repent of your sins and grow in grace and knowledge and overcome, you are going to grow up into Him in all things. Then you can be part of those who had the five talents and increased five, or the two talents and increased two. Then he talks about the whole Church growing up into that, and so forth.

Hebrews 7:11: "Therefore, if perfection was indeed *possible* through the Levitical priesthood..."

Verse 19: "Because **the law** brought nothing to perfection..."—*the Law* is a principle of law. But what we are talking about here, we're talking about the Law concerning the priesthood in serving the people. Otherwise, there is an annulment of the Law, there's a changing of the Law.

Yet, Jesus said in Matthew 5:17: "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets..." And hence you would have a great contradiction. Since the Law came from God, can any man annul it? Can any man change it? Oh, they can say they can. But in reality, do they, in fact, do it? *No!* What God has given, He can take. What God has commanded, He can change.

Hebrews 7:11: "Therefore, if perfection was indeed *possible* through the Levitical priesthood—for the Law *that* the people had received was *based*

on it—what further need *was there for* another priest to arise according to the order of Melchisedec, and not to be named after the order of Aaron?”

If you had something that was perfect, why would you want to replace it? You wouldn’t want to.

Verse 12: “For since the priesthood has changed... [stating it as a fact] (if you have a different priesthood): ...it is obligatory *that* a change of the *priestly* law also take place.”

Now the change of the Law means the laws relating to the priesthood, directly. Secondly, it can include all the laws are brought to their spiritual fullness. So, they were changed in that sense. But they were not changed in the sense of the change in the priesthood law. A change had to take place. How was that change accomplished? Well, He’s preparing the way. The change has already taken place. Instead of worshiping in Jerusalem, Jesus said, ‘You shall worship God *in Spirit and in Truth*. Not in Jerusalem, nor in Samaria. For God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must *worship in spirit and in truth*.

You change the form of worship. Under the covenant with the Aaronic priesthood, they came and brought a sacrifice. They recited certain words, bowed the head, and the priest blessed them and they went on their way. Now it’s entirely different. You have the Spirit of God, and you develop a relationship with God the Father and Jesus Christ.

So therefore, you have to have a change in the priesthood, you have to have a change in the temple.

- instead of the temple on earth, it’s the temple in heaven above
- instead of the Holy of Holies on earth, it’s the Holy of Holies in heaven above
- instead of animal sacrifices, there are two sacrifices that are required:
 1. the sacrifice of Christ
 2. your baptism

—because you literally die in that watery grave. Entirely different than repeating the sacrifices over and over again, as he covers there in Heb. 10. Entirely different! It also requires a change to whom the tithe belongs to. God is the One Who gave it.

We’re going to look at 1-Cor. 9, because it fits right in here. All of the laws *relating to the worship of God under the covenant with Israel* were changed or annulled. Not having to do with the Ten Commandments, not having to do with tithing. But having to do with the form of worship, from worship at a temple to a spiritual relationship with God with

the Holy Spirit in your mind where you worship Him *in Spirit and in Truth*.

Now one thing I’m going to cover is why Paul did not use that authority. He had the authority to use it, but he didn’t use it. We’ll understand that when we get to it, which I’ll cover separately.

1-Corinthians 9:11, Paul wrote: “If we have sown to you spiritual things, *is it* a great thing if we shall reap your physical things? If others participate in this authority... [‘exousia’] ...over you, much more surely *should* not we? Nevertheless, we have not used this authority...” (vs 11-12).

Why? *Because they were carnal!* That’s why! Didn’t he say, you’re carnal, and not spiritual? *Yes!*

“...but we have endured all things, so that we might not hinder the Gospel of Christ. Don’t you know that those who are laboring *in* the sacred things of the temple live *of the things* of the temple, *and* those who are ministering at the altar are partakers with the altar? In the same way also, the Lord **did command...**” (vs 12-14)—‘diatasso’—which means, *to command, to ordain, to direct*.

If the Lord commanded, or directed, or ordained, “...that those who preach the Gospel are to live of the Gospel” (v 14)—how should they live of it? *As the priest who waited in the temple and served at the altar!* What did they receive? *Tithes and offerings!* So, here is a clear-cut Scripture that shows that in the New Testament, yes, it is an authority that should be used.

That’s why it had to be changed. Because, when we read back there in Num. 18, God gave it to the Levites. Now that He is doing away with the Levitical priesthood, God has the tithes and the offerings, so then He designates to whom He gives it, and He just did, right there in 1-Cor. 9. It’s designated! The Lord commanded, ordained, or appointed that that’s how it should be done. I found it very interesting that all those who don’t believe in tithing very rarely go to 1-Cor. 9 and the verses that I read. Yes, they read the verses, which have not to do with tithing, but have to do with the varying degrees of a person’s ability to give. And Paul even said, ‘You don’t even treat me as good as an ox.’

So, it’s like everything else. If you don’t love God, and if you don’t want to serve Him from your heart, and if you don’t want to do what is right, you just have to examine your heart before God, that’s all. No one can make you do it. All the letters, all the envelopes, all the beatings, all of the fear and everything else. But it’s still true, if you take the things that belong to God, you’re stealing from God. It’s just that simple. There are some people who are

upset if I read that verse in Mal. 3, because they've been so traumatized in their own mind over tithing, and corruption of men, that they have forgotten that it is the commandment of God. It's that simple.

The Protestants like to read Heb. 7:12 as the change in the Law, so therefore, that does away with the Law.

Hebrews 7:12: "For since the priesthood has changed... [that's what it's talking about] ...It is obligatory *that* a change of *the priestly* law also take place... [*regulating the Levitical priesthood*; that's what it's talking about] ...because the One of Whom these things are said belongs to another tribe..." (vs 12-13). That means it's Christ. Is this not also telling us that Melchisedec was Christ? Is that not true? *Yes indeed!*

"...from which no one was appointed to serve at the altar. For *it is* quite evident that our Lord has descended from Judah..." (vs 13-14). This ties it right in: the Lord from Judah; Melchisedec Son of God, a Priest forever.

"...of which tribe Moses spoke nothing concerning *the* priesthood" (v 14). Therefore, God had to make a change. If He was going to take it from the Levites and give it to someone else, God had to make the change, and the command there is in 1-Cor. 9.

Verse 15. "And it is even more evident because a different Priest arises according to the order of Melchisedec; Who was not invested according to *the priestly* law of a fleshly commandment, but by *the* power of indestructible life" (vs 15-16).

That's why what I said is absolutely true. The authority for Melchisedec to collect the tithes is based upon eternal life. The authority for Levi to collect the tithes is based upon a temporary command, which God gave to Levi until Christ came.

That's why he says, v 17: "For He testifies, 'You *are* a Priest forever according to the order of Melchisedec.'" Melchisedec was appointed by a swearing of an oath:

Psalms 110:4: "The LORD has sworn and will not repent, 'You are a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec.'"

That was never said of Levi. They were never appointed by an oath. They succeeded by physical inheritance. If you were of the house of Aaron, you were a priest, or able to be a priest when you reached the proper age. If you were of the tribe of Levi, but not of the house of Aaron, then you

were a Levite and you were to serve the priesthood, and you were to serve the people as teacher, and so forth. That's why God gave the tithe to Levi. Now then, we have something greater that is to be done. That is to teach the way of eternal life.

Verse 16: "...by *the* power of indestructible life. For He testifies, '**You are a Priest forever according to the order of Melchisedec.**' For there is indeed an annulment of the earlier commandment *delivered to Aaron...*" (vs 16-18). That's what it's talking about, the difference between Aaron and Melchisedec.

"...because of its weakness and unprofitableness, because the *priestly* law... [of the priesthood] ...brought nothing to perfection; rather, *perfection* is brought about by a **superior** hope..." (vs 18-19). That's what the Greek means—not a better hope—*superior*. Not something that is just better. *It is superior!*

Let's liken it this way: today, the physical descendents of Judah are waiting to have another temple spot so they can build another temple. And where do they go? And every year it is, 'Next year in Jerusalem. Pray for the peace of Jerusalem.' Well, that prayer has never been answered because they have rejected the King of Peace Who is Christ.

What is one of the things that they want to do? They want to get to the physical place. If they can get to the Western Wall and scribble out a little prayer...as a matter of fact, you could even fax a prayer to Jerusalem, and they will put it on a little, thin piece of paper, and they will take it up and scrunch it into a crack in the Western Wall. Which is superior? That you can get on your knees and have direct access to God the Father and Jesus Christ wherever you are? You don't have to do like the Muslims, pray toward Mecca five times a day.

Here's what it is: "...**through which we draw near to God**" (v 19). What do you have to do to draw near to God?

This is by faith. We are told Jesus gave the promise. He said, '**Ask**, and you shall receive; **seek**, and you shall find; **knock**, and it shall be opened.'

That's the kind of access that you have to God by prayer and by belief. If you believe God, don't worry about the circumstances around you. Take care of it the best that you can. You have to trust God to intervene for you. You do your part. *You believe God*, and continue to believe Him, even though a prayer may not be answered in the timeframe you think it should be. When that happens, you know that's not the timeframe of God. And don't look at the circumstances around you as being so dire that they are not recoverable, because

with God, all things are possible. That's why it's a *superior hope*.

James 1:1 concerning faith: "James, a servant of God and of *the* Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes, which *are* in the dispersion: Greetings! Consider *it* all joy, my brethren, when you are beset by various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance" (vs 1-3). That means *the proving of your faith works patience*; the same word for *endurance*.

Verse 4: "But let [patience] endurance have *its* perfect work..." What happens if you get impatient? You're cutting off patience [endurance]. It's that simple. You've got to let patience have its perfect work. Maybe God has something else in mind, rather than what you have in mind, or what I have in mind. Put it all in God's hands, He'll work it out. If you believe, *He will answer!* He will answer in His time and in His way, because we have a *superior hope*, because we draw close to God.

So it says, v 4: "But let endurance have its perfect work, so that you may be perfect and complete, not lacking in anything." This is the whole process of perfection that the law is not able to do.

Verse 5: "However, if anyone lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, Who gives to everyone freely and does not reproach *the one who asks*; and it shall be given to him. But let him ask in faith, not doubting at all because the one who doubts is like a wave of *the* sea that is driven by the wind and tossed *to and fro*" (vs 5-6). We also know that, not only driven by the wind, but also enhanced by tsunamis, and enhanced by earthquakes, and the water responds.

Verse 7: "Do not let that man expect that he will receive anything from the Lord. *He is* a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways" (vs 7-8). When that happens then you are not trusting in God.

James 4:7 talks about it again: "Therefore, submit yourselves to God. Resist the devil... [we have our work we need to do] ...and he will flee from you.... [we're to resist him in the faith] ...**Draw near to God**..." (vs 7-8)—because that's what it's talking about in Heb. 7:19, a *superior hope* through which we draw near to God.

"...and He will draw near to you. Cleanse *your* hands, you sinners, and purify *your* hearts, you double-minded! Be grieved and mourn and weep; let your laughter be turned into grieving, and *your* joy into mourning. Humble yourselves before the Lord, and He will exalt you" (vs 8-10). God will do it!

This is a greater relationship with God. And what is so fantastic about this is that, it is not

dependent upon who you are. It is not dependent upon whether you are one of the twelve tribes of Israel; it is not dependent upon whether you are circumcised in the flesh; *it is dependent upon whether you are circumcised in the heart, and have had the baptism of Christ!* That's how we draw near to God.

Hebrews 7:19: "...*perfection* is brought about by a superior hope, through which we draw near to God. And according to this *superior measure*... [that's how we are to measure it] ...*it was* not without *the* swearing of an oath *that He was made a Priest*. (For those *who descend from Aaron* are made priests without *the* swearing of an oath; but *He was made a Priest* with *the* swearing of an oath by Him Who says concerning Him, '**The Lord swore and will not revoke His Word**', "You are a Priest forever according to the order of Melchisedec"')" (vs 19-21).

Now, if you truly, truly understand this, you won't be bothered with problems of Judaizing. If you truly understand this, you won't be bothered with a lot of problems that people have, because then you are going to be living by that *superior hope*, and always have that before you. So that's something!

Verse 22: "By such a greater measure then, Jesus was made the Guarantor of a superior covenant." Through the priesthood of Melchisedec, through being the perfect sacrifice of God, *that is a superior covenant!*

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*

Scriptural References

- 1) Hebrews 7:4-10, 5
- 2) Numbers 18:20
- 3) John 13:6-8
- 4) Acts 1:24-26
- 5) Acts 8:19-21
- 6) Numbers 18:21
- 7) Hebrews 7:5-6
- 8) Psalm 110:4
- 9) Hebrews 7:6-11
- 10) Galatians 3:21
- 11) Matthew 5:48
- 12) Revelation 22:12-14
- 13) Matthew 19:16-22
- 14) Matthew 13:45-46
- 15) Luke 14:25-27
- 16) Ephesians 4:11-13
- 17) Matthew 5:48
- 18) Ephesians 4:14-15
- 19) Hebrews 7:11, 19
- 20) Matthew 5:17

- 21) Hebrews 7:11-12
- 22) 1 Corinthians 9:11-14
- 23) Hebrews 7:12-17
- 24) Psalm 110:4
- 25) Hebrews 7:16-19
- 26) James 1:1-8
- 27) James 4:7-10
- 28) Hebrews 7:19-22

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- Genesis 14
- Hebrews 10
- Malachi 3

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Sermon Series: *Tithing*

Book: *Christianity Without God* by Lloyd Geering

FRC:mds/cis/rel

Transcribed: 01/31/2003

Reformatted/Corrected: bo—January/2017

Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews XXII-A The Greatness of Christ's Priesthood

(Chapter 7)
Fred R. Coulter

Hebrews 7 lays the foundation for chapters 8-10. It becomes very important in understanding our relationship with God more than anything else. It is telling us that the priesthood of Christ is the *priesthood of being King and Priest*, which makes it *superior* to what it was under the Old Covenant. Not just better, but *superior*!

Then you add to that *eternal life*! Now you have something that is so great and marvelous that we need to really understand that this is telling us how we have a continuous relationship with God the Father and Jesus Christ *through the priesthood of Jesus Christ*!

The patriarch Abraham gave a tenth to Melchisedec (Heb 7:4). What Paul is also showing is that Abraham is greater than all Israel, because he was the father of what became all Israel—was he not? So, as I mentioned in the last one that we did on tithing, that if people do not believe in tithing, then they are denigrating the Priesthood of Christ below the Aaronic priesthood.

Hebrews 7:9: “And in one sense Levi, who receives tithes... [the priesthood had not yet been completely done away] ...also gave tithes through Abraham; for he was still in his forefather's loins when Melchisedec met him. Therefore, if perfection was indeed *possible* through the Levitical priesthood... [perfection has a great meaning] ...—for the Law *that* the people had received was *based* on it—what further need *was there for* another priest to arise according to the order of Melchisedec, and not to be named after the order of Aaron? For since the priesthood has changed, it is obligatory *that* a change of *the priestly law* also take place” (vs 9-12).

The Protestants love this, because they say that this does away with all law. We will see that the term *law* applies to the regulations regarding the Levitical priesthood, and all the laws of sacrifice, etc. The law also applies to the covenant, but the covenant change does not change the commandments of God. That's why Abraham is brought in here. Because the verse that we go back to so many times is that the covenant was confirmed to Isaac, the one that God gave to Abraham, because Abraham:

- obeyed His voice
- kept His charge
- His statutes

- His commandments
- His laws

‘We are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise,’ if we are Christ's. Nowhere in here does this imply in any sense that the commandments of God have been done away. Those who do so are living in a perpetual state of lawlessness. Of course, God is *a God* of:

- law
- love
- mercy
- forgiveness

—and all of these things are important. So, it's also obligatory that a change in the law take place, too. What was changed in relationship to the priesthood? First of all, *how the priesthood began*! The Priesthood of Christ was prophesied in Psa. 110:4. From the very beginning the priesthood of Aaron was doomed.

Psalm 110:4: “The LORD has sworn...” There are two places where the Lord has sworn. We'll look at those two places. When God swears, and swears by Himself, that is a profound thing.

“...and will not repent...” (v 4). He's not going to change. So really, this is saying it doesn't matter what people think. He's not going to change. God does not run salvation with CNN polls, or public opinion.

“...‘You are a priest **forever**... [eternal] ...after the order of Melchisedec” (v 4)

Now we are dealing with a whole change of circumstances. *Yes, we are, **an eternal Priesthood**!* Why is that important? *Because men fail*! Let's look at what it says concerning the Law. Let's look and see how a priest is selected. God did not establish the Aaronic, Levitical priesthood with an oath. He appointed it by physical descent, entirely different.

Hebrews 5:1: “For every high priest, being taken from among men to act in behalf of men, is appointed to serve in *the* things pertaining to God in order that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins... [there are all the laws you find back in Lev., Num. and Deut., that the priests had to do] ...*and* he is able to deal gently with those who sin in ignorance and those who have been led astray, since he himself is also encumbered with many weaknesses. And because of these *weaknesses*, he is

obligated also to offer *sacrifices* for his own sins, exactly as *he does* for the people" (vs 1-3).

Let's go back and see the prophecy of the doom of the Old Covenant, and the doom, or the ending, of the Levitical priesthood. We're just going to kind of do a review by chapter. Sometimes it's good to go back and do a review by chapter and just get the overview as to where we're coming.

Exo. 20—we have the Ten Commandments given, and then we have the reaction of the people. Thus showing that the people would not have a direct relationship with God. Under the Old Covenant, you did not have a direct relationship with God except those special, selected ones with whom God made the choice to have the relationship with Him; like Moses, David, certain of the kings of Israel and certain of the prophets.

Exodus 20:18: "And all the people saw the thunders, and the lightnings, and the sound of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking. And when the people saw, they trembled and stood afar off. And they said to Moses, 'You speak with us, and we will hear...'" (vs 18-19).

There's a basic flaw, right there. Whenever you depend upon a man it cannot lead to eternal life. Why? *Because man dies!* And man has a sinful nature. People like to have a man that they can look to, so if something goes wrong they can blame. They may be right or wrong in their accusations. But nevertheless, that is just the way it is. Whenever people get caught doing things, or doing things that are not right, what do they always do? They justify it by pointing out the difficulties of someone else that's very similar. *That is the fatal flaw in human nature!* It is completely weak, it is unable to save itself, it is incapable of true right righteous thinking. We're all limited with that. That's just the way it is.

So, here's the flaw in the relationship between the people and God under the Old Covenant: *They wanted a man between them and God!* Moses did that. He went up and he got all the things concerning the things for the Old Covenant. He came back and he told all the people all the words:

Exodus 24:3: "And Moses came and told the people all the words of the LORD, and all the judgments. And all the people answered with one voice and said, 'All the words which the LORD has said, we will do.'" Then He established the covenant with them, and so forth.

While Moses is on the mountain for 40 days receiving more instructions, the corruption of the Aaronic priesthood made itself very evident right at first, and was influenced by the people. That's why

when you go through the history of the children of Israel, what do you find? *You find periods where they come to God, then corruption!* God corrects them; they come back to God; same way with the priesthood.

What happened in Exo. 32? *The situation with the golden calf, showing that the priesthood of Aaron was subject to corruption!* Not only in dying—because he died—but also in practice. That is why every religious movement goes through a cycle where they start out fine, and then what happens? *They become corrupt!* Then they have to be purged, and there are splits, and all these things that take place. That's all a part of the weakness of human nature.

In order to have eternal life, you have to have a completely different set-up. That's why the order of Melchisedec is *by an oath*, and then it's going to be forever, and no man can turn it down. That's why when Christ came in the flesh He had to carry within His flesh *the law of sin and death* and yet never sin so He could become the perfect sacrifice, and so that He would qualify as the perfect High Priest forever, *Who never sinned*, contrary to the priesthood of Aaron, where they had to offer sacrifices for their own sins, as well as sins of the people. That's why it was obligatory.

Hebrews 7:12: "For since the priesthood has changed, it is obligatory *that* a change of *the priestly* law also take place... [What are the differences here?] ...because the One of Whom these things are said belongs to another tribe, from which no one was appointed to serve at the altar" (vs 12-13). Even God abided by His own laws until the establishment of the New Covenant.

Verse 14: "For *it is* quite evident that our Lord has descended from Judah, of which tribe Moses spoke nothing concerning *the* priesthood. And it is even more evident because a different Priest arises according to the order of Melchisedec; Who was not invested according to *the priestly* law of a fleshly commandment..." (vs 14-16). That is if you are the son of Aaron you are *automatically* a priest. You qualify for the priesthood by the virtue of your birth. That's the law of fleshly commandment.

Now contrast that with this: "...but by *the* power of indestructible life. For He testifies, 'You are a Priest forever according to the order of Melchisedec'" (vs 16-17)—a *perpetual* priesthood. Now what God is establishing here is a higher priesthood, because the Levitical priesthood was fundamentally flawed from the beginning, because it was an appointment of a man who had 'the law of sin and death' in him, and was subject to corruption

like all other human beings.

Now we have a High Priest Who has not sinned; Who—though He died to be the perfect sacrifice—is incorruptible. So, there is no comparison. This is to give us the understanding and realization that the calling we have is absolutely marvelous and fantastic. It is not just a religion; it is not just an organization; it begins with a personal relationship between you and God the Father and Jesus Christ.

Everything has to be put on an entirely different basis. Here's what has to change, and God did all the changing. What God instituted, God also destroyed. Radical difference now in all things that pertain to the priesthood:

1. the temple *destroyed*
2. the high priesthood *destroyed*
3. the sacrifices *destroyed*
4. cleansing *destroyed*
5. access to God—*totally different*
6. worship of God

All of those had to change and be replaced with something *superior*.

Now we have the temple in heaven above—don't we? Is that not greater than a temple on earth? *Yes, indeed!* Now we have a High Priest at the right hand of God the Father, or the Majesty on High, Who intercedes for us, Who was human, Who died, Who suffered, Who was tempted in every way like we are, yet without sin. We have the High Priesthood. We have the sacrifices. We have a greater sacrifice. What animal sacrifice could be compared to the death of Christ? *No comparison!*

- circumcision—circumcision of the heart
- cleansing—cleansing of sin

How are we cleansed of our sins? *Physical ritual never cleansed sin! Access to God! We draw near to God!* That's a tremendous thing, brethren. All of these are very profound and important. Let's look at a couple of them.

The most important function that we have with the Priesthood is One Who knows and understands. Now then, instead of going to a temple, instead of going to a human priest—which the Catholics have never understood—we come to a High Priest in heaven above. *Because:*

- He lives forever
- He is the order of Melchisedec
- He became human and died and was the perfect sacrifice for us.

Therefore, when we come to Him, and we come to God the Father through Him, everything is on an entirely different level.

It is true, people can fool people some of the time, part of the time, and fool all of the people part of the time. *But you can never fool God!* That's what's important. That's profound in our relationship with God. When we come before God privately in prayer, this is the most important time in your relationship between you and God. You have direct access to God the Father in heaven above through Jesus Christ.

Hebrews 4:12: "For the Word of God *is* living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of both soul and spirit, *and* of both *the* joints and *the* marrow, and *is* able to discern *the* thoughts and intents of *the* heart. And there is not a created thing that is not manifest in His sight; but all things *are* naked and laid bare before the eyes of Him to Whom we must give account" (vs 12-13).

When we come to God in prayer—that is our form of worship to God, mainly; and that is also the basis of our relationship with God—we hold nothing back from God. That's important to understand.

- that's all a part of *repentance*
- that's all a part of *spiritual growth*
- that's all a part of *understanding God's Word*

That's how we have our relationship with God. It must be totally open, totally right before God, because we are sinners. We can have full confidence.

Cleansing

The next thing we will look at, then, will be the cleansing, v 14: "Having, therefore, a great High Priest, *Who* has passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, we should hold fast the confession of *our faith*. For we do not have a High Priest Who cannot empathize with our weaknesses, but *One Who* was tempted in all things according to *the* likeness of *our own temptations*; yet, *He* was without sin. Therefore, we should come with boldness to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need" (vs 14-16).

That's why we live under grace. You have the greatest thing that is given to you. You come before God, completely open, completely honest. God knows everything about you; He made you. He even knows the number of hairs on your head.

What do we have here? *We have the basis for a proper relationship between the individual and God*, of which then the hypocrisy of human nature can be overcome, and the sins of human nature can

be overcome. In His grace, God does something greater. He gives you something that was never available under the covenant that He had with Israel: ***He gives you the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of promise!*** Let's look at that, because the Holy Spirit and circumcision tie together.

This is one of the greatest acts of grace that God can do, aside from having sent Jesus Christ to be the sacrifice for the sins of the world. God gives you the Holy Spirit, coming from Himself, as a seed of begetting that you have. That is a great and a marvelous grace that God gives.

Ephesians 1:13: "In Whom [Christ] 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.**"

That's a tremendous thing, brethren, to understand having the gift of the Holy Spirit because God ***called you and chose you and selected you.*** And also, *you had to repent*, too, which is the beginning of the true cleansing. You received the Holy Spirit.

Verse 14: "Which is *the* earnest of our inheritance until *the* redemption of the purchased possession, to *the* praise of His glory." This puts us under the grace of God on a continuous basis.

We don't have to, as it said in one place, go to heaven to find God. We don't have to go to the depths of the earth to find God. God has given His presence in our hearts and minds with His Holy Spirit. We become a temple of the Holy Spirit or a temple of God. Is that not a greater relationship than going to Jerusalem? Even like the Jews say every year, 'Next year in Jerusalem!' The only year I want to go to Jerusalem is after I've been resurrected and I'm on the Sea of Glass and come down with all the saints. That's the only time I want to visit Jerusalem. This is why we are told this:

Ephesians 2:8: "For **by grace you have been saved...**" It was an individual act upon God:

- to call you
- to select you
- to lead you to repentance
- to give you the Holy Spirit

All of that's an act of grace. None of that can be accomplished with a physical temple, or a physical priesthood.

"...through faith, and this *especially* is not of your own selves; *it is* the gift of God..." (v 8)—which is both *of faith* and *of grace*. Can any human being save himself? *Of course not!* Only God can

save him. Therefore, it has to be by God's grace.

Verse 9: "Not of works... [not of something we can do] ...so that no one may boast. For we are His workmanship..." The whole complexion of everything is changed. We are His workmanship. Christ is being formed in us. 'Let this mind, which was also in Christ, be in you.' The whole process of conversion—through the relationship that we have with God the Father in heaven above through Jesus Christ, Who is a High Priest forever, after the order of Melchisedec—is *so superior* to any other means—*period!*

Verse 10: "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto *the* good works... [those are the works of the Holy Spirit] ...that God ordained beforehand in order that we might walk in them." We have been called, not to a 'religion,' but to a *special way of life* by God; that's why it's so important. That takes care of the High Priesthood and the sacrifice of Christ.

Circumcision

Circumcision now is required of all. Under the Old Covenant it was only required of the male, and then when marriage took place the females participated in the circumcision through the sexual act. Now under the New Covenant, everyone has to be *circumcised in heart and in mind*. Paul wrote concerning it. I think we could apply a lot of this to ourselves, too, today.

Unfortunately, as it turns out, too many people fall into a 'religious' category as the Jews did here. 'Oh, well, we're the people of God.' So, this is why Paul wrote what he wrote. Let's just go through it so we get a full complexion and picture of it; so that we understand how much greater this relationship that we have with God the Father and Jesus Christ and the Priesthood of Christ is today. It is fantastic.

Romans 2:17: "Behold, you are called a Jew, and you yourself rest in the law, and boast in God, and know *His* will, and approve of the things that are more excellent, being instructed out of the law; and are persuaded *that* you yourself are a guide of *the* blind, a light for those in darkness, an instructor of *the* foolish, a teacher of babes, having the form of the knowledge and of the Truth *contained* in the Law. You, then, who are teaching another, do you not teach yourself also?...." (vs 17-21).

In other words, you better take care of yourself first. And that's why under the New Covenant you have that relationship with God so that you can.

"...You who preach, 'Do not steal,' are you stealing? You who say, 'Do not commit adultery,' are you committing adultery? You who abhor idols, are you committing sacrilege? You who boast in law, are you dishonoring God through your transgression of the Law? For through you the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles, exactly as it is written" (vs 21-24).

I would have to say the Church of God made itself a laughingstock of the world, too, because of that, because of the very same thing.

Verse 25: "For on the one hand, circumcision profits if you are observing *the* Law; on the other hand, if you are a transgressor of *the* Law, your circumcision has become uncircumcision. Therefore, if the uncircumcised is keeping the requirements of the Law, shall not his uncircumcision be reckoned for circumcision?" (vs 25-26).

What he is showing here is that the physical act had no relationship to the spiritual need of keeping the commandments. To be circumcised did not mean that one was less of a sinner, or had less hypocrisy. It was only part of the Old Covenant as God had established. Now moving into the New Covenant, an entirely different kind of circumcision is required.

Verse 27: "And shall not the uncircumcised, who by nature is fulfilling the Law, judge you, who, with *the* letter and circumcision, *are* a transgressor of *the* Law? For he is not a Jew who *is one* outwardly, neither *is* that circumcision, which *is* external in *the* flesh; rather, he *is* a Jew who *is one* inwardly... [Christ is *in* you, and He came from the tribe of Judah] ...and **circumcision is of the heart, in the spirit** and not in *the* letter; whose praise *is* not from men but from God." (vs 27-29).

Let's see that under the New Covenant and with the Priesthood of Christ, we have a greater circumcision. So, to say that circumcision was done away really gives the wrong implication. It should be *physical circumcision is no longer required*. Circumcision has been spiritually more profound than physical circumcision, because ***spiritual circumcision is to change the heart and the mind, of which only God can do! Before God deals with you, you have to have the spiritual circumcision!***

Colossians 2:10: "And you are complete in Him..."—in Christ. As we see in the book of Hebrews with the priesthood that is eternal, your completeness, or perfection, comes through Him and through that process.

"...Who is the Head of all principality and power in Whom you have also been circumcised

with *the* circumcision not made by hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ" (vs 10-11).

That circumcision begins with *repentance!* He changes your heart and your mind, and your whole way of living and thinking. Of course, you have to grow into it. You also have to apply yourself to it. ***This is the circumcision of Christ!*** How is that accomplished?

Verse 12: "Having been buried with Him in baptism... [into His death; conjoined] ...by which you have also been raised with *Him* through the inner working of God, Who raised Him from the dead." That is the *spiritual circumcision* that takes place. On the heels of this, with the grace of God, with the Holy Spirit of God, with the spiritual circumcision in Christ, now we have a new way of cleansing, *spiritual cleansing*.

(go to the next track)

The Pharisees were concerned about being clean. The reason they became so fastidious in the washings of pots and pans and tables and hands and clothes and everything else, was that they made the mistake of this: As the temple was to be cleansed—*clean, purified—in everything that was done by the priests in everything; therefore, in your home, everything you do should be as the temple*. And that's how they got carried away with it. God never required that the home be as the temple.

When John the Baptist came, this presented the Pharisees with a problem. John the Baptist was the son of a high priest. Where did John the Baptist operate? *In the River Jordan!* Not at the temple. That was a profound thing that God did, because God was showing that through repentance and purification by baptism sins were forgiven. They didn't have to go to the temple. Now you understand why the Pharisees and the Levites came to John and said, 'Who are you? (We're losing people from coming to the temple to be purified)'—the unspoken thing. After Christ we have a new way of being cleansed. We have an entirely different relationship, too.

John 15:1: "I am the true vine, and My Father is the husbandman. He takes away every branch in Me *that* does not bear fruit; but He cleanses each one that bears fruit, ***in order that it may bear more fruit***" (vs 1-2). That means *cleanses it*. Cleansing by 'the washing of the water by the Word.' He cleanses or purges it.

If we look upon all of our trials and difficulties that we go through as a means by which God is using, so that if we repent and come to Him, we can bear more fruit.

Verse 3: "You are already clean through the word that I have spoken to you."

- Have you ever had the experience that after you have studied the Word of God you feel really great?
- Inspired and uplifted?
- Why? *Because it has cleansed you!*

On the other hand:

- Don't you feel miserable and rotten when you don't study?
- Don't you feel miserable and rotten when you don't pray?
- *Yes! Because you're not being cleansed!*
 - ✓ we are to be cleansed with the Word of God, *and that is to be daily*
 - ✓ we are to be cleansed with the Spirit of God, *and that is to be daily*

That's why the model prayer says, 'Give us our bread day-by-day, and forgive us our sins...' and the obvious implication is day-by-day. So, we are cleansed of our sins by the Word of God and through repentance day-by-day. And instead of going to a priest and saying, 'I did this. I want to bring this animal sacrifice,' you go to God and you confess your sins, between you and God directly.

That's something! *That is a profound and magnificent privilege!* It's something that we need to realize that we need to do every day. That's why John, in the first chapter, gives us a thumbnail overview of this relationship that we have with Jesus Christ, Who is a High Priest forever after the order of Melchisedec, and how great it is!

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..."

The difference between *seen* and *looked upon* [observed]: is that 'looked upon' means *we have just intently gazed and examined*.

"...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)" (vs 1-2). He is showing the great experience they had as apostles. This is referring to after the resurrection when they saw Him.

Verse 3: "Which we have seen and have heard we are reporting to you in order that you also may have fellowship with us; for the fellowship—indeed, our fellowship—is **with the Father and with His own Son Jesus Christ.**"

That is what Paul is writing about in the book of Hebrews. That's why we must understand the greatness of the Priesthood of Christ, the greatness that He has been made a Priest after the order of Melchisedec *forever*, and that we have this relationship with God.

Verse 4: "These things we are also writing to you, so that your joy may be completely full. And this is the message that we have heard from Him and are declaring to you: that God is Light, and there is no darkness at all in Him. If we proclaim that we have fellowship with Him, but we are walking in the darkness, we are lying to ourselves, and we are not practicing the Truth" (vs 4-6). The Greek there is 'poieo,' which means *to practice the Truth!*

Verse 7: "However, if we walk in the Light, as He is in the Light, *then* we have fellowship with one another..."—between God the Father and Jesus Christ, *and* with each other. That's very important, because that's part of the basis of the whole reason why we keep the Passover, that we love one another.

"...and the blood of Jesus Christ, His own Son, cleanses us from all sin" (v 7).

- we are cleansed *through the sacrifice of Christ*
- we are cleansed *through the Word of God*
- we are cleansed *through the Holy Spirit of God*

That's why the whole process of cleansing of sin is entirely different. And it's a better and a greater way.

Verse 8: "If we say that we do not have sin... [we don't have a sinful nature; we're all just good people] ...we are deceiving ourselves, and the Truth is not in us. **If we confess our own sins...** [to Him] ...**He is faithful and righteous, to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness**" (vs 8-9).

The whole operation of the temple and the priesthood had to be a change in the way that it was done, which meant *there was a change in the law of the priesthood and the temple*. We are now under the operation of *faith, belief and the power of the Holy Spirit*. Maybe some of you have not understood this. I've often wondered about this, so I'll bring this out in relationship to that there was a necessity that there be a change in the Law. What was it changed to?

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." That's what we are doing:

- walking after the Spirit

- keeping the commandments of God
- striving to overcome
- maintain the relationship with God

to prepare for eternal life.

Verse 2—here's part of the grace of God: "Because **the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus...**" *Hello!* That then is *the new priesthood law and operation of our relationship with God the Father and Jesus Christ, which then leads to eternal life!* Through that cleansing of sin that we just covered, through the cleansing and the 'washing of the water by the Word.'

Verse 2: "Because **the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has delivered me...** [justified me] **...from the law of sin and death.**" That becomes a very important thing.

Living under the grace of God puts you in the special category that God does not look upon you the same way that He does other people. That's not to lift us up, that's to encourage us, and help us to be thankful to God. But He looks upon us as what we are going to be in the Kingdom of God. He is looking to the end, or the completion of His work. Because God speaks of those things that are not, as though they are. Isn't that something? That is a tremendous and a fantastic relationship that can only be accomplished because we have a High Priest Who lives forever, and because now we have a priesthood that is not subject to the physical laws.

Hebrews 7:15: "And it is even more evident because a different Priest arises according to the order of Melchisedec; Who was not invested according to *the priestly* law of a fleshly commandment, but by *the* power of indestructible life" (vs 15-16).

When you come before God the Father and Jesus Christ, bear that in mind. He lives forever.

Verse 17: "For He testifies, 'You *are* a Priest forever according to the order of Melchisedec.'.... [on into the ages of eternity forever] ...For there is indeed an annulment of the earlier commandment *delivered to Aaron* because of its weakness and unprofitableness..." (vs 17-18).

Why was it weak and unprofitable? *The corruption of human nature, and not being given access to the Holy Spirit!*

Verse 19: "Because the Law... [of the priesthood] ...brought nothing to perfection..." The Law, the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus, brings us to perfection. *It's greater!*

Verse 11: "Therefore, if perfection was indeed *possible* through the Levitical priesthood..." *It wasn't possible!*

Verse 19: "Because the *priestly* law brought nothing to perfection; rather, *perfection* is brought about by a **superior hope, through which we draw near to God.**" We have the superior hope of eternal life. They had the hope of living in the 'promised land.' Which is greater? *Eternal life!* "...through which we draw near to God."

That is the whole basis. That's why when He gave the Ten Commandments we find there in Deut. 5:29, when the people said, 'Oh, we'll do everything that You say.' God said, 'Oh, I would that there were such a heart in you, that you would fear Me and keep My commandments always!' But they couldn't. So, we have a *superior hope*. We draw near to God. That is the whole theme of the rest of the book of Hebrews. In drawing near to God there are some profound things that we need to do. James 4 ties in with what we've already covered in relationship to cleansing.

James 4:6: "But He gives greater grace. This is the reason it says, 'God sets Himself against *the* proud, but He gives grace to *the* humble.'.... [showing our relationship with God] ... Therefore, submit yourselves to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you...." (vs 6-8). How about that? That is the relationship that we have with God

"...Cleanse *your* hands, you sinners, and purify *your* hearts, you double-minded!" (v 8). That is by repentance. So, that follows along with what we've already covered.

Verse 9: "Be grieved and mourn and weep; let your laughter be turned into grieving, and *your* joy into mourning. Humble yourselves before the Lord, and He will exalt you" (vs 9-10). There again is another way of expressing the same relationship that Paul was writing about here in Heb. 7.

Hebrews 7:19: "...through which we draw near to God. And according to this *superior* measure, *it was* not without *the* swearing of an oath *that He was made a Priest*. (For those *who descend from Aaron* are made priests without *the* swearing of an oath; but He *was made a Priest* with *the* swearing of an oath... [they just get it by inheritance] ...by Him Who says concerning Him... [he repeats it at least four or five times in the book of Hebrews] ...'*The Lord swore and will not revoke His Word, "You are a Priest forever according to the order of Melchisedec."*') By such a greater measure then, Jesus was made the Guarantor of a **superior covenant**" (vs 19-22). Not just better, *superior!* Can

you compare life with death? *No!* That's why it's *superior*.

Verse 23: "Now in the one case, there were many priests because they were not able to continue to *serve* by reason of death... [wouldn't have to worry about that] ...but in the other case, because He is living forever, His priesthood never changes.... [you can always count on God] ...Therefore, He has the power..." (vs 23-25)—'dunamis'—in this case because it is eternal, it has the implication of *absolute power*. Does God have absolute power? *No question about it!*

Verse 25: "Therefore, He has the power throughout all time to save those who come to God through Him *because* He is ever living to intercede for them." What if there is someone out there just kind of feeling lost and miserable and sort of cries out to God, 'Help me'? What does God do about that?

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

The seven horns in the head of the Lamb signifies the seven churches of Rev. 2 & 3, and Christ is the Head of the Church; that is why there are seven horns. ***Christ is always the Head of the Church.*** "...the seven Spirits of God that are sent into all the earth." What do the seven Spirits of God do? Why are they sent forth into all the earth? *God is busy and active!* God is ready to intercede on behalf of those who call out to Him. The seven Spirits there are the seven eyes of God, which go through all the earth.

2-Chronicles 16:9: "For the eyes of the LORD... [the seven Spirits of God that we saw (Rev. 5)] ...run to and fro in all the whole earth... [in other words, they're busy surveying the whole earth] ...to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is perfect [sincere] toward Him...."

That's why Jesus said, 'Seek, and you will find, and knock and it will be opened; draw near to God, He'll draw near to you' because those seven Spirits of God are active and busy watching over the whole earth. Now, that covers those people who are not converted or called, yet, who may be in the process of being called. But with us, we have the Spirit of God direct, and we go directly to God.

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.... [that's always the way it's been; that is a living principle] ...And if you seek Him, He will be found by you...." (vs 1-2). *Always a living principle!*

If you find yourself in predicaments where it's very difficult, ***seek God!*** And if necessary, start out: 'Oh God, I'm here in the bottom of the barrel, and I don't know where to go. I've gone clear to the bottom. And, of course, You want me there.' Now that's hard to admit. Why does God want us there? Everyone's going to come to the bottom of the barrel in his life, one way or the other:

- that we'll trust in God
- that we'll turn to God
- that we'll seek Him
- that we won't seek ourselves
- that we'll look to His solution
- that we'll wait patiently for it

Yes, we'll do our part. Yes, we'll do the things that we need to do, no question about that!

But here's a guarantee, v 2 "...if you seek Him, He will be found by you. But if you forsake Him, He will forsake you." And that's also the story of the book of Hebrews. Did we not cover the thing on the *unpardonable sin*? {see #s 17 & 29 this series} *Yes, indeed!* Therefore, He is able to save throughout all time.

Hebrews 7:25: "...to save those who come to God through Him *because* He is ever living to intercede for them." How quickly will God forgive sin? *As soon as you repent!* Many times when you sin you have such a great guilt complex about it, because you really are not repenting in the way that you need to. You're letting the guilt complex take hold of you more than you ought to. You ought to feel guilty and repent, that is true. Then on the other hand you end up sort of accusing God, that He can't forgive you unless you do something else. You really don't mean to, but that's just sort of the way that human nature is.

Have any of you sinned as badly as King Manasseh? (2-Chron. 33); he did it for 55 years. He shed much innocent blood. He let the homosexuals take over the whole temple area. He even built an altar in the temple of God dedicated to other gods. And God sent him off in captivity. While he was in the dungeon in Babylon he repented. God had mercy and brought him back.

Likewise with Ahab; God told Elijah, 'You go to Ahab, and you tell him that he is going to die. You tell him that he is a wicked, and evil, and terrible, and a wretched human being; and My judgment is, he's going to die, and the dogs are

going to lick his blood and Jezebel's blood off the wall.' So, sure enough, Elijah goes and he tells him that—and, I'm sure, shakes his finger right in Ahab's eye—and says, 'You are the man!' So, he left. What did Ahab do? *He repented!* It says he walked tenderly, put on sackcloth. As Elijah was on his way back home, God told him, 'Go back to Ahab, My servant Ahab. And tell him I will forbear.'

None of us have sinned to any extent like those two men. Those are examples for us, so that when we repent we can know we have forgiveness. When we come to Jesus Christ, and He has the power—the absolute power—to save, He will.

Verse 26: "For it is fitting that we should have such a High Priest..."—with a *superior covenant* should we not have a superior High Priest? *Of course!*

"...Who is Holy, blameless, undefiled, set apart from sinners and made higher than the heavens; Who has no need, as *do* the *other* high priests, to offer up sacrifices day by day, first for his own sins *and* then for the *sins* of the people; for this He did once for all time when He offered up Himself. For the *priestly* the law makes high priests of men who have weaknesses; but *by* the word of the swearing of the oath, which supersedes the *priestly* law... [of the priesthood of Aaron] ...the Son, Who has been perfected forever, *has been made High Priest*" (vs 26-28). That's what it means.

Perfection

Let's look at this thing concerning perfection, because the law could not make anything perfect. What God did, He perfected Christ. Being God in the flesh, was He ever imperfect? *Of course not!* But He was not *perfected* until He had gone through the crucifixion, and then being resurrected.

First of all, you have a High Priest Who has been perfected. Hebrews 5:7: "Who, in the days of His flesh, offered up both prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears to Him Who was able to save Him from death, and was heard because *He* feared *God*. Although He was a Son, *yet*, He learned obedience from the things that He suffered; and having been perfected... [by the things that He suffered] ...He became *the* Author of eternal salvation to all those who obey Him, after He had been designated by God *as* High Priest according to the order of Melchisedec" (vs 7-10).

First of all, you have the perfection of the Priest. Next, you have the perfection of the people. The whole point is, that under the Old Covenant you could not be perfected. Under the New Covenant you can receive that perfection. How does that come

about? We've already covered some of it: *repentance and baptism, receiving the Holy Spirit!* Now then, there is the process of growing in grace and knowledge, which then is *perfection*.

Let's come to Ephesians 4, and see that that is the whole purpose of what God has in mind. The whole purpose as to why there are ministers and teachers. There are ministers and teachers, not for the exercise of authority, but for the exercising of teaching the brethren to exercise that authority in their lives through God's Spirit:

- to grow
- to be perfected
- to let God work in their lives

Ephesians 4:11: "And He gave some as apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers **for the perfecting of the saints...**" (vs 11-12). Only possible under the New Covenant; only possible with a perfected High Priest Jesus Christ.

"...for *the* work of *the* ministry, for *the* edifying of the body of Christ; until we all come into the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, **unto a perfect man...**" (vs 12-13). **Perfection!** That is, *spiritual* perfection. Don't worry about the physical perfection; God is not perfecting the flesh. ***He is perfecting the spirit!***

I was watching Larry King, and he was talking to Art Linkletter. I caught the section which was just somewhere before the close, where he said, 'How old are you?' And he said, 'I'm 90 and six months.' Larry King sort of dropped his jaw and took a deep breath, and said to the effect 'How do you do it?' And he said, 'First of all, I live a very modest life. Secondly, I exercise everyday.' And he looked younger than a lot of 65-year-old people that I have met. So, as the Apostle Paul wrote, physical exercise profits, but you've got to keep at it.

Now then, he said something else. Larry King asked him, 'How are you able to do this?' And he says, 'We all live between our ears.' I thought it was a good statement. In other words, *in 'ye cranium' is your life*. That's where perfection takes place. ***Perfection in character, with the mind of Christ, with the fruits of the Holy Spirit!*** It has to come from within by the power of the Spirit of God, and everything that is done within the Church of God should be toward that goal of perfecting the saints. Till each one comes to, as it says:

Verse 13: "...**unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.**" Of course, that won't take place until the resurrection. Now, that is a tall order.

Let's see how Paul did it. Since we live between our ears, what do we do? How do we handle it? You can spend all your life like the Jews and the Arabs hating each other, killing each other, vengeance against each other, blowing up each other, condemning each other. Where does it lead? *Death and destruction, and plenty of misery in-between!*

Or you can live in the past, whatever your past has been. If it hasn't been too good, if you dwell on the past, you're going to be dwelling on the past. So, you have some things that you need to do. This is what the Apostle Paul did. No one had any greater case for a perpetual guilty conscience than Paul. No one has done any worse than the Apostle Paul when he was Saul, hauling Christians off to be killed and to force them into renouncing their faith. So, this is what he said. This is how Paul lived with himself and God *between his ears*.

Philippians 3:4: "Though I might also have *reason to trust in the flesh*. If any other thinks he has *cause to trust in the flesh*, I have much more."

I mean, here's his pedigree. A lot of people like to get into genealogy. They get all excited when they find out they belong to the kings and queens of England and so forth, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah! Well, a lot of them were nothing but a bunch of corrupt murderers, adulterers, whoremongers and deceitful political people, and the only reason that America and Britain has what they have is *because of what the promise was given to Abraham*, and *not* because of any inherent goodness in them. Pedigree doesn't mean a thing.

Verse 5: "Circumcised on *the* eighth day; of *the* race of Israel, from *the* tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; with respect to law, a Pharisee... [couldn't be any more strict] ...with respect to zeal, persecuting the Church..." (vs 5-6). You talk about a wrong cause. You read that in Acts 9, he soon found out—BINGO!—there he is, lying on the ground.

Verse 6: "With respect to zeal, persecuting the Church; with respect to righteousness that *is* in law, blameless. Yet, the things that were gain to me, these things I have counted *as* loss for the sake of Christ. But then truly, I count all things to be loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord... [that's what we need to do] ...for Whom I have suffered the loss of all things... [and yes, our own lives also, through baptism] ...and count *them* as dung..." (vs 6-8)—Greek—"skubalon."

"...that I may gain Christ and may be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which *is derived* from law, but that *righteousness*, which *is*

by *the* faith of Christ, the righteousness of God *that is* based on faith... [to be put in that right standing with God] ...that I may know Him... [not look at the physical circumstances around] ...and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death; if by any means I may attain unto the resurrection of the dead" (vs 8-11).

In the face of every difficulty, problem, struggle, trial, and things that he had to go through, this is the attitude he maintained. This is what we need to do. He didn't accuse God. That's the whole lesson of Job. You accuse God, you're in terrible shape: 'Well, why did God do this?' Well, go to God and find out what *you* need to do. Maybe the answer will come. That's what Job had to do. Paul said that he always looked toward the resurrection.

Verse 12: "Not as though I have already received..." [everyday is another day. Everyday you have to keep striving] ...or have already been perfected..." You *are being* perfected. That's the whole purpose of the High Priesthood of Melchisedec Jesus Christ, to perfect you.

"...but I am striving, so that I may also lay hold on that for which I also was laid hold of by Christ Jesus.... [never gets discouraged; never gets down] ...Brethren, I do not count myself as having attained; but *this* one thing *I do*—**forgetting the things that are behind...**" (vs 12-13). That is the key. **You must forget the things that are behind!** They are done! They are over!

Let me give you a good example. How many here have a checking account? When you get your statement you get back your canceled checks. If you want to know how worthless they are, take one of those canceled checks for your house payment or rent payment and send it back to the mortgage holder, or the one who's renting to you, and see if they will accept it. Of course, they won't! It's worthless! Why? *Because it's over, it's done*; the function of that check has been fulfilled. It is worthless.

Likewise, everything that you have done, which has not been for building the character of God, you repent of, you forget, you put behind you, it is worthless. To remember it, to dwell on it, is the same as trying to pay your rent with a canceled check, it won't be accepted. That's why he says, forgetting those things that are behind.

What if you say, 'I can't forget those things'? Well then, you better get on your knees and ask God to help you forget. You better begin filling your mind with some of the things of the Word of God so you can forget. And you better be asking

God for His Spirit and understanding so you can put those things behind you. They have to be put behind! Here's another way of looking at it: all of the problems of today end at sunset, or when you go to bed. *They end!* If there's nothing you can do about it when you wake up in the morning, put it behind you. Why pollute the new day with the problems of the old day? Solve the problems of the old day, and go on. Whatever problems come, as Christ said, 'Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof.'

Let's finish it here, v 13: "...but *this* one thing *I do*—^[#1]forgetting the things that are behind, and ^[#2]reaching forth to the things that are ahead, ^[#3]I press toward *the* goal for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. So then, let as many as *be* perfect **be of this mind...**" (vs 13-15). *That's how we are perfected!*

Christ was perfected by suffering in the flesh so that He could be the High Priest to make intercession for us. Now He is perfecting the people of God, and this is the process of perfection.

Verse 15: "So then, let as many as *be* perfect be of this mind. And if *in* anything you are otherwise minded, God will reveal even this to you." Why? ***So you can repent and change!***

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*

Scriptural References

- 1) Hebrews 7:9-12
- 2) Psalm 110:4
- 3) Hebrews 5:1-3
- 4) Exodus 20:18-19
- 5) Exodus 24:3
- 6) Hebrews 7:12-17
- 7) Hebrews 4:12-16
- 8) Ephesians 1:13-14
- 9) Ephesians 2:8-10
- 10) Romans 2:17-29
- 11) Colossians 2:10-12
- 12) John 15:1-3
- 13) 1 John 1:1-9
- 14) Romans 8:1-2
- 15) Hebrews 7:15-19, 11, 19
- 16) James 4:6-10
- 17) Hebrews 7:19-25
- 18) Revelation 5:6
- 19) 2 Chronicles 16:9
- 20) 2 Chronicles 15:1-2
- 21) Hebrews 7:25-28
- 22) Hebrews 5:7-10
- 23) Ephesians 4:11-13
- 24) Philippians 3:4-15

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- Hebrews 7:4
- Exodus 32
- Deuteronomy 5:29
- Revelation 2; 3
- 2 Chronicles 33
- Acts 9

Also referenced:

Hebrews Series #s 17 & 29 the Unpardonable Sin

FRC:mds/cis/dds
Transcribed: 03/19/2003
Reformatted/Corrected: bo—January/2017

Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews XXIII A Superior Covenant!

(Chapters 7-8)
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What we are going to cover today is going to, I hope, give you a greater understanding and appreciation for what God has done and is doing. Especially from the point of view that God wants us to have a relationship with Him through the New Covenant that is individual and special and very particular. He doesn't want us *playing* religion or church or whatever. But He wants us to worship Him *in Spirit* and *in Truth*.

Let's see a prophecy in John 4 that Jesus gave about how we are to worship God, which then sets the foundation for what we have here in the book of Hebrews. The book of Hebrews goes into great detail showing how the New Covenant—which is *superior* to the Old Covenant—works.

Jesus is talking to the Samaritan woman at the well, John 4:19. “The woman said to Him, ‘Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet. Our fathers worshiped in this mountain...’” (vs 19-20).

If you need the background on the Samaritan worship and the temple at Mount Gerizim, I've got a section of that in *The Christian Passover* book, and you can see that that was a counterfeit substitution worship in competition with Jerusalem during the days of Ezra.

“...but you say that the place where it is obligatory to worship is in Jerusalem” (v 20). When it was with the Old Covenant that was the central place where they were to worship. Everything came out of Jerusalem. The high priest was the one to whom everyone looked to for the finality of law and decisions, the settling of high-level controversies, and so forth.

When they were spread in the Diaspora, they had to come to Jerusalem on pilgrimages to keep the Feasts. They could keep the Feast out in the local areas, but they couldn't keep the Passover because the Passover had to be kept in the land. So therefore, that's how it came about that the Jews in the Diaspora did not keep a 14th Passover, because they couldn't keep a 14th Passover being outside of the land. So, they renamed the Feast of Unleavened Bread *Passover*, and then they extended it from the 15th to the 22nd having a false notion of eight days. We cover all of that in the Passover book.

However, Jesus gave the answer, v 21: “Jesus said to her, ‘Woman, believe Me, the hour is coming when you shall neither in this mountain nor

in Jerusalem worship the Father. You do not know what you worship...’” (vs 21-22).

That's quite a statement! There are a lot of people who worship and they don't know what they're worshipping. Why do they go to church on Sunday? *Well, they have a good time*, whatever it may be. Why do you bow down to this crucifix and statue of Mary? *Because it makes me feel good!* **You worship you know not what!** All of those things can never put you in contact with the true God.

I spoke to a man who is a Seventh-Day Adventist yesterday, and he is reading the Bible through. He's one of the partners down here where I do my water therapy, so we talk back and forth every once in a while. He's a 'Laodicean' S.D.A. If you can figure out how bad that is then you'll know. So, he's reading the Bible, and he's asking me questions about it, and so forth.

Jesus says, v 22: “You do not know what you worship...” The book of Hebrews then clarifies Who we are worshipping, and how we are worshipping, and how we have access to the Father in a very particular way. It is explaining how the New Covenant works after the destruction of the temple, because the temple was the place to go. So, He says, ‘you don't know what you're worshipping.’ And remember, you can just put in your margin there Simon Magus, who the great one, who was giving himself out as a great prophet of God, the great power of God (Acts 8).

“...We know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews” (v 22). That is also a *spiritual* statement in two ways.

1. to the Jew first, then to the Gentile
2. those who have the circumcision of Christ are the true Jews

Are they not? It applies in both cases. In other words:

- salvation is not going to come out of Samaria
- salvation is not going to come out of Rome
- salvation is not going to come out of New Delhi
- salvation is not going to come out of Southeast Asia
- salvation—the knowledge of salvation—comes out from the Jews

Jesus was a Jew! So therefore, He is the main One Whom it's talking about. You can put all of those factors together.

Verse 23: "But the hour is coming, **and now is...**" It is pretty well clear, coupled with other things in the book of John, that that was an added thing that John wrote when he finished his Gospel, which was finished after the temple was destroyed. It wasn't *now is*; yet, when Jesus was speaking; *now is* was *after* the temple was destroyed.

The disciples were not worshipping God the Father. Jesus was in *the process of revealing* Him. They didn't understand the Scriptures even concerning Jesus until after He was resurrected from the dead and He explained it to them, as we find in Luke 24. all of these things show that the phrase "...and now is..." is an edit by John when he finished the Gospel.

Verse 23: "But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in Spirit and in Truth..."—not in ritual, not in law. People have a very hard time understanding about grace, and I'll explain a little bit about it today. Grace is the most fantastic thing we could possibly receive in this life, and everything that comes with the grace.

"...shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth; for the Father is indeed seeking those who worship Him in this manner. God *is* Spirit, and those who worship Him **must...** [obligatory] ...worship in Spirit and in Truth" (vs 23-24). The whole book of Hebrews tells us how this is done, and the circumstances and the covenant under which it was done.

Let's also look at something else leading up to the beginning of the New Covenant. Remember, the Law and the Prophets were the authority until John; there was no higher authority. You could go to no higher authority than the Law and the Prophets. If it didn't state it in the Law and the Prophets, it had no bearing; it had no meaning.

Then when John came something very important occurred. Who was John the Baptist? What was he? *His father was a priest!* That means that John was a priest. So, what we are seeing here—in the transition from the Old Covenant to the New Covenant—is that God used the authority that He established beginning with Aaron and the Levitical priesthood coming on down to the time of John the Baptist. And John the Baptist, being a priest, then means that God followed the authority that He gave.

However, where was it that they normally went to worship and be cleansed of sin through giving offerings and washings and things like that?

They went to the temple! John being a priest, did he ever officiate at the temple? *No!* Where did he go? *It says he went into the wilderness until the day of his appearance!* Where did he begin his ministry? *The River Jordan*, away from the temple, away from the cleansing of the temple. This becomes a very important thing, because the Pharisees' idea of cleansing and the reason that they had all the laws that they did, was because they wanted to make the home—all of the eating, all the things, all of the bathing and all of the rituals that they did at the home, all the laws that they added—as nearly like the temple as possible.

So, when John starts out there and begins preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom of Heaven, we have the transition period between required temple worship and how then God is going to establish and move on over to the New Covenant. He was a messenger sent before *to prepare the way for the Lord*. This is why people don't understand the statement: '*The law and the prophets were until John.*' They say we don't keep the Law and Prophets anymore.' That doesn't say you did away with the Law and the Prophets. It's just saying that the highest authority was the Law and the Prophets. The highest authority becomes the Kingdom of God beginning with John the Baptist, who was the messenger sent to prepare the way before the face of the Lord.

He wasn't in his priestly garb. What did he wear? *Camel's hair!* How do you think one of the priests coming up the way from Jericho would have looked upon John the Baptist? And in addition, to show the humility of his office, he was a Nazarite from birth, meaning, he did not cut his hair; he did not shave his beard. So, being dressed in camel's hair, he was probably a pretty wild looking man. This gives us some very important points in coming over to understanding more about the book of Hebrews, because God didn't just suddenly do this. He prepared the way, He used the authority that He had used before, to prepare the way for John the Baptist.

Matthew 3:1: "Now, in those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, and saying, 'Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.' For this is he who was spoken of by Isaiah the prophet, saying, '*The voice of one crying in the wilderness, "Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight His paths."*' Now John himself wore a garment of camel's hair, and a leather belt around his waist; and his food was locusts and wild honey" (vs 1-4).

You talk about a sumptuous diet. Now remember, there was never a man born, as Jesus said, greater than John the Baptist. Yet, Jesus said, 'I

say to you, he that is least in the Kingdom of God is greater than John the Baptist' So, this is an amazing thing that took place.

Verse 5: "Then went out to him *those from* Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the country around the Jordan..." Why?

They knew that—whenever it was, probably 30 years before—that *this was a miraculous birth* by a, probably, 75-year-old woman and her husband. He finally showed himself, and they're wondering who he was and what was going to become of him. Can you imagine how quickly this spread, even without telephones? 'He's here! Let's go down there.' What do you think all the scribes and Pharisees thought when the temple population was suddenly reduced? The people weren't coming to the temple to be cleansed, they were going to the River Jordan to be cleansed. This was a direct affront to their power. We have to understand some of the politics involved here.

Verse 6: "And were being baptized by him in the Jordan, confessing their sins. But after seeing many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, '*You* brood of vipers, who has forewarned you to flee from the coming wrath? Therefore, produce fruits worthy of repentance'" (vs 6-8)—and don't say, 'We have Abraham.'

Let's look at the account in the Gospel of John. We will see that this was this account here was actually an official delegation from the temple; they wanted to know:

- Why are you doing this?
- Who sent you to do this?
- By what authority do you do this?

Then Jesus said, 'You tell Me by what authority John did it, and then I'll tell you by what authority I do it.' The Pharisees and Sadducees and priests would be coming down there with their full dress, meeting a priest who had all this wild hair and beard, and was dressed in camel's hair and standing alongside the river, and saying, 'You generation of vipers!' I mean, this is something! They were probably really steaming.

John 1:19: "And this is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him... [an *official* delegation: 'we have been sent'] ...Who are you? Then he *freely* admitted, and did not deny, but declared, 'I am not the Christ'" (vs 19-20). He knew they were looking for the Christ sometime around there. They understood the prophecies.

Verse 21: "And they asked him, 'Then who *are you?* Are you Elijah?'..." Of course, Jesus later

said He was. I think it's very interesting for all of the Elijah candidates out there, if John the Baptist didn't know he was Elijah, how do you know that you are? How many people have set themselves up as Elijah? Or Elijah's message? *No!* Don't any man appoint himself, especially to the office of Elijah. You're asking for heap, big trouble. Did heap, big trouble come when that was proclaimed in our church experience? Yea, verily!

"...Are you Elijah?" And he said, 'I am not.' *Then they asked*, 'Are you the Prophet?'... [note sermon *That Prophet*. That's the one prophesied by Moses (Deut. 18)] ...And he said, 'I am not.' *Then they asked*, 'Are you the Prophet?' And he answered, 'No.' Therefore, they said to him, 'Who are you? What do you say about yourself so that we may give an answer to those who sent us?'... ['we've got to write up a report when we get back']. ...He said, 'I *am* a voice crying in the wilderness, "Make straight the way of *the* Lord," as Isaiah the prophet said.' Now those who had been sent belonged to *the sect* of the Pharisees, and they asked him, saying to him, 'Why then are you baptizing...?' (vs 21-25).

This is for cleansing, because the Pharisees had what? *They had the washings* of cups, washings of pots, washings of hands and arms and feet, and everything else. They wanted to know, "...Why then are you baptizing?..." The question is really this: Since you are technically a descendent of the priesthood, why are you here doing this in the River Jordan, and you're not up at the temple doing what you're supposed to be doing up at the temple? That's the basic, underlying question.

This is such a new thing. I mean, this is unheard of! Jesus said He confirmed it when the woman said that 'you ought to worship in Jerusalem'; He didn't deny it. But He said the time is coming that you won't. Here's the first instance of it as a preview with John the Baptist.

Verse 25: "And they asked him, saying to him, 'Why then are you baptizing, if you are not the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?' John answered them, saying, 'I baptize with water, but there is one *Who* stands among you Whom you do not know. He it is Who comes after me, *but* Who has precedence over me; of Whom I am not worthy to loose the thong of His sandal'" (vs 25-27).

Then he said there in Matt. 3 that He will baptize with the Holy Spirit. What happened when they were baptized with the Holy Spirit? We need to follow this through; we need to understand. This also helps destroy the proposition of the Mormons that Jesus was sent to the Mayans in Mexico, because they claim that the other people, the 'other

flock' that Jesus had were the ones that were the descendents of the Mayans, and therefore, that's part of the Mormon religion.

Let's understand something: **God always follows His own authority, what He's established!** Therefore, the giving of the Holy Spirit and the beginning of the Church started at the temple so there would be no question that this was of God. Had it been done in Samaria, how far do you think it would have gone? Had it been done in Rome no one would have believed, or any other place in the world. This becomes very important, because now this sets the stage of beginning the preaching of the Gospel at the temple.

Where did the apostles teach? They taught everyday at the temple. Till they were run out of town! This shows a consistency in what God did in preparing the way for the Church, and also in preparing the way for the future destruction of the temple, which was already prophesied to happen. Let's see that that's what Stephen was preaching (Acts 6). People do not like to be told that their beautiful temple, their beautiful ceremonies, their rituals, their sacrifices, their gold and silver, and everything that they have is worthless. Or as the book of Hebrews says *unprofitable*, but which really means *useless*. Especially when it was God Who said, 'Ok, you can build it, and you come and worship here.' Great affront!

Acts 6:9: "Then certain arose among those of the synagogue who were called Libertines, and of the Cyrenians and Alexandrians, and of those from Cilicia and Asia; *and* they were disputing with Stephen.... [these were all Jews] ...But they were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spoke. Then they suborned men, who said, 'We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses and *against* God.' And they stirred up the people and the elders and the scribes; and they came and seized him, and brought *him* into the Sanhedrin. Then they set up false witnesses, who said, 'This man does not cease to speak blasphemous words against this Holy place and the law; for we heard him saying that this Jesus, the Nazarean, will destroy this place, and will change the customs that Moses delivered to us'" (vs 9-14).

Right from the beginning this is what they were preaching. Can you imagine that, right in the area of Jerusalem, and perhaps even standing in the temple saying, 'God is going to destroy this'? And He did, and when that was fulfilled it was awesome!

He was probably preaching out of Isa. 66. Here is a prophecy of what we are getting into in the book of Hebrews. We've gone over this many times in the past. But it becomes very important for us to

understand the importance of the relationship with God that we have under the New Covenant, and the importance of the New Covenant itself.

Isaiah 66:1—this probably is where Stephen was preaching from: "Thus says the LORD, 'The heaven *is* My throne, and the earth *is* My footstool. Where, then, *is* the house that you build for Me?'"

- What are you going to build for Me?

Especially now that we can look out and see the vastness of the universe in a much clearer form than at any time in the history of man!

- What are you going to build for God?
- What are you going to contain God in?

"...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).

In other words, a humble, worshipful attitude toward God; that's more important than anything else. This is probably Christ speaking.

In the New Testament the collective *body of the saints* compose the temple of God. That's where God dwells. **He dwells in His people!** He is delighted to dwell in His people. The only way He can dwell in His people is *through grace*, because we are still physical. That's why we have an earnest of the Holy Spirit, because a physical body cannot contain the wholeness of the Holy Spirit; you have to be resurrected. So, this gets in to be really some things to understand and to fully appreciate, and *especially* when you pray. I hope that this is going to open up for you a whole new approach to praying, and to understand the access that you have to God, and to comprehend what He is doing in your life, because *it is profound!*

Verse 3—he talks about if you come to the temple and offer something with a wrong attitude: "He who kills an ox *is as if* he killed a man; he who sacrifices a lamb *is as if* he broke a dog's neck..."

Who commanded these things to be offered? **God did! Yes, He did!** So, even if you do what God commanded, if your heart isn't right, then it's of no worth to Him.

"...he who offers a grain offering *is as if* he offered swine's blood; he who burns incense *is as if* he blessed an idol. Yea, they have chosen their own ways, and their soul delights in their abominations. I also will choose their delusions, and I will bring their fears upon them because when I called, no one answered; when I spoke, they did not hear. But they did evil before My eyes and chose *that* in which I did not delight" (vs 3-4).

I can just tell you that summarizes exactly what happened with the destruction of the temple in 70 A.D. It was awesome! How many here have *Josephus*? Take the time and read about the destruction of Jerusalem and the awesome things that took place. It was something! One of the things that God entrapped them in their own ways, in their own thoughts; by 70 A.D. Judaism had completely rejected Jesus Christ as the Messiah. They thought they understood the prophecies that the Messiah would come and save them from the Romans. Therefore, in 70 A.D. the word went out that, 'As many of you as possible, come and keep the Passover in Jerusalem.'

The Romans had another plan. The Romans said, When the 'the pilgrims' come from out in the empire, we'll just stand back and let them go right up to Jerusalem. We're not even going to fight. We're just going to let them go in there. Josephus records that there were 3-million in Jerusalem. Then Titus' army surrounded Jerusalem, and they dug trenches so they couldn't get out. It never happened that the Messiah came to rescue them. It was the most horrible destruction of people recorded in the history of the world.

Here's what God wants and desires now, v 5: "Hear the Word of the LORD, you who tremble at His Word, 'Your brethren who hated you, who cast you out for My name's sake...'" That happened during the days of the apostles. *Cast them out of the synagogues!* How many times did Paul go in the synagogue and preach, only to end up in a riot? And I think it's really quite humorous in Corinth when that happened, they moved into a hall that was right next to the synagogue. So here, you had the Christians on one side of the wall, and you had the Jews on the other side of the wall. Cast them out!

"...said, 'Let the LORD be glorified.' But He will appear to your joy and they will be ashamed" (v 5)

We'll just summarize this. What he is doing, he is showing the *superiority* of the priesthood of Jesus Christ. Not just better; *the superiority!* And also what he is showing is this, and this becomes so very, very, very profound and important: ***Everyone who has the Spirit of God has direct access to God the Father—individually and directly—without going through another physical human being!*** That doesn't mean that they don't have to be taught. That doesn't mean that there aren't ministers, and so forth. This means that today, everything that is found in Judaism, and Catholicism in particular, cuts people off from God, because they have to go through a man. God does not want that. God does not want His personal, Fatherly relationship with

you—*begettal in your mind*—to be filtered through another man. Why?

1. because we have a perfected High Priest—Jesus Christ
2. all men and women have a sinful nature—they are not fit to filter anything to God

That's important to understand. I want you to grasp the fact that ***you have a direct relationship to God the Father and Jesus Christ with no man in between!*** That's why prayer and study become so important. This cuts off relying on a human being. Therefore, anyone who is a true teacher of God is going to say, 'Here are you, and there is God, now get with it.' We come together as brethren and love each other as Christ loved us because God does something special when we get together—especially on the Sabbath Day—through the power of His Holy Spirit with us. We have that individual relationship.

Hebrews 7:11: "Therefore, if perfection was indeed *possible* through the Levitical priesthood—for *the Law* that the people had received was *based* on it—what further need *was there* for another priest to arise according to the order of Melchisedec, and not to be named after the order of Aaron?"

Remember this was prophesied in Psa. 110:4. This was not something that came as a bolt out of the blue. God already prophesied that He was going to do it. He already prophesied that He was going to make a New Covenant with Israel and Judah. This comes as no surprise. God is acting upon it, and when He acts upon it the old says, 'No, we don't want that.' So, He has to explain it in great detail.

Verse 12: "**For since the priesthood has changed, it is obligatory that a change of the priestly law also take place.**" This is the law of *how you come to God*. This includes the *law of the rituals* that were under the Old Covenant. That is all changed. This includes the *spiritual laws by which we operate*. *Operating under the New Covenant:*

- it is the *spiritual law*
- it is the *spiritual application*
- it is by *faith*
- it is by *belief*
- it is by the *receipt of the Holy Spirit of God*

That's what it's based upon. And it's based upon that you now live your life according to walking after the Spirit and not after the flesh.

Romans 8:1: "Consequently, *there is* now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who are not walking according to *the flesh*..."—live as the world. Just do the things that the world does; do

the things that you do automatically as a human being. *No!*

“...but according to *the Spirit*” (v 1). With the Spirit of God in you you’re concerned with

- the spiritual thing
- loving God
- how you serve God

Even though you are in the flesh with the weaknesses that you still have, you are not walking according to the flesh. You’re walking according to the Spirit.

Here’s what it’s described as, v 2: “Because the law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus...” That’s what the Law was changed to. ***The spiritual application of the Law, through Jesus Christ and through His grace brings forgiveness of sin!***

“...has delivered me from the law of sin and death” (v 2). In other words, by having the Spirit of God and being under the grace of God, He justifies you from the law of sin and death and the carnal nature that you have, that you can have the spiritual relationship with Him. He’s got to do that, otherwise you do not have access to God. That’s why the world out here has no access to God. Oh, they can play church, they can play religion, they can do all sorts of things.

But you have to have the Spirit of God, which I think is interesting. Here it is called:

“...law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus has delivered... [justified] ...me.” It doesn’t mean free! ***You haven’t been freed of sin!*** You haven’t been freed of physical death. But as far as God is concerned, ***you have been justified from sin, and you have been given eternal life!***

(go to the next track)

Hebrews 7:12: “For since the priesthood has changed, it is obligatory *that* a change of *the priestly* law also take place.” That’s quite a change. What does this ‘change of the Law’ do? *It takes away every physical apparatus of worship under the Old Covenant!*

- no sacrifices
- no physical temple
- no physical circumcision

Now you have *a spiritual requirement*, which is the law of life and Christ Jesus for *all* of these things:

- a spiritual temple
- a spiritual circumcision
- spiritual worship of God

—and so forth. That is why, at the Passover, we take the bread and the wine; Jesus gave a new definition

to it. It is *His body and His blood* of the New Covenant.

Verse 13: “Because the One of Whom these things are said belongs to another tribe, from which no one was appointed to serve at the altar.” As long as Jesus was on the earth *He followed the Law that He established through the covenant that was made with Israel and the Aaronic priesthood!* He did not put Himself forward to become a priest. Remember what happened to Uzziah back in the Old Testament, when he decided that he was going to offer incense, and the priest told him, ‘No, you’re not; don’t offer incense.’ As soon as he walked in to offer it he was struck with leprosy and died a leper.

Christ being on earth did not even intimate that He was going to be the priest. The closest He came to it was when He was talking to the Pharisees and He said, ‘Tell Me, whose son is the Christ?’ And they said, ‘David’s.’ He said, ‘Well then, tell Me, how does he in the Spirit call Him Lord, if He’s his son?’ They couldn’t answer it. That’s about the closest that He came to it; Psa. 110:4 talks about Melchisedec.

Verse 14: “For *it is* quite evident that our Lord has descended from Judah, of which tribe Moses spoke nothing concerning *the* priesthood. And it is even more evident because a different Priest arises according to the order of Melchisedec; Who was not invested according to *the priestly* law of a fleshly commandment...” (vs 14-16).

God said, ‘Aaron, you’re the high priest. I establish your descendants as the high priest. The rest of the Levites, who are descendants of Levi, will be your servants.’ Remember, they had a great rebellion about that, and it was settled with the staff of Aaron that budded. Remember that? So, it was a fleshly commandment. They were to be physical descendants. They were to be priests by birth. And when they died another one had to succeed.

But now then, compare that to what the Priesthood we have is, v 16: “Who was not invested according to *the priestly* law of a fleshly commandment, but by ***the power of indestructible life***.” You can’t have a greater power than that! I mean, the whole foundation of it is lifted so much higher.

Verse 17: “For He testifies, ‘You *are* a Priest forever... [perpetual; continuous; never changing; never running out] ...according to the order of Melchisedec.’.... [is greater than Levi (Heb. 7)] ...For there is indeed an annulment of the earlier commandment *delivered to Aaron* because of its weakness and unprofitableness... [or actually, the *uselessness*] ...because the *priestly* law brought nothing to perfection...” (vs 17-19). Now hear and

understand this very clearly:

- What is the function of law? *Law defines what sin is! Law cannot save!*
- Why cannot law save? *That's not a function of law! Law cannot bring salvation!*

Though we are required to keep the commandments of God; we are to keep them *in Spirit and in Truth!* Commandment-keeping cannot of itself save you, because commandment-keeping is required. Law can't save you. Repentance—an operation of the heart and mind through Jesus Christ, and the receipt of the Holy Spirit from God the Father—that saves you. That is an *operation of grace*, which is separate from the Law and Prophets. Within that scope God does something greater. He puts in our hearts and our minds His commandments and His laws, where it ought to be. So, it was useless!

Verse 19: “Because the *priestly* law brought nothing to perfection; rather, *perfection* is brought about by a superior hope...” What was the hope of the Israelites? *When they left Egypt the hope was to go into the ‘promised land’*; because they sinned and so forth, they were 40 years getting there. That’s a long detour, but they eventually got there. Their hope was that if they obeyed God—as you read the blessings and cursings in Deut.28 and Lev. 26—that they would be blessed physically, they would have all kinds of physical goods, they would have blessings of children, freedom from their enemies, and all of this. If they didn’t, then they would lose that hope and they would have curses and captivity, and so forth.

What is our hope? *It is a superior hope!* The King James says ‘better,’ but the Greek there means *superior*. Can there be any comparison between having a calm, blessed, physical life, and you die? *or* Having the promise of eternal life? *And at the resurrection you are given a spiritual body, and a spiritual mind and share in the glory of Christ!* Which is greater?

That’s why when you read the parables—the parable of the pearl of great price, you go sell all that you have—because all of the physical goods that you have are not equated to anything that can be compared to eternal life. What this *superior hope* is supposed to do with the Spirit of God is to help us to understand that regardless of the circumstances around us....

God did not say we are going to be blessed with peace and security. What did Christ say to His disciples on that Passover night? *He said, ‘In Me you will have peace, in the world you’ll have*

tribulation. But be courageous, I have overcome the world.’ So, with a *superior hope* we do not make a judgment based upon the physical circumstances.

This *superior* hope does this, v 19: “...through which we draw near to God.”

Now, let’s look at a comparison here. Here’s another account of receiving the Ten Commandments. After they heard the voice of God they said to Moses:

Deuteronomy 5:27: “You go near and hear all that the LORD our God shall say. And you speak to us all that the LORD our God shall speak to you, and we will hear *it*, and do *it*.” They never did it!

Today when we draw near to God, how do we understand the Word of God? How does God speak to us through His Word and His Spirit to lead us and guide us? It’s a whole lot different. Where is the Law to be written? *In our heart and in our mind!* It’s a greater, more superior thing.

But notice what he said here, v 28: “And the LORD heard the voice of your words when you spoke to me. And the LORD said to me, ‘I have heard the voice of the words of this people, which they have spoken to you. They have well *said* all that they have spoken.’”

In other words, they were sincere and well intentioned. Sincerity is absolutely no proof of right or wrong. You can be sincerely convinced in something that is wrong, and your sincerity is no guarantee of truth. Truth stands by itself without feeling. So, they intended well.

Verse 29: “Oh, that there were such a heart in them that they would fear Me and keep all My commandments always, so that it might be well with them and with their children forever!” With the *superior hope* we have a way of drawing near to God. We’re going to see when we get into Heb. 8 how near that is.

Hebrews 7:20: “And according to this *superior* measure, *it was* not without *the* swearing of an oath *that He was made a Priest*. (For those *who descend from Aaron* are made priests without *the* swearing of an oath... [again showing the superiority of the Priesthood of Christ] ...but He *was made a Priest* with *the* swearing of an oath by Him Who says concerning Him, ‘*The Lord swore...*’” (vs 20-21). We have two times when the Lord swore:

1. to Abraham when he offered Isaac
2. to Christ to be High Priest after the order of Melchisedec

Those are the only two times that God swore by Himself; showing the absolute finality of these things, and the spiritual reality of it, because God swore. God cannot lie, so He doesn't need to swear. But in swearing an oath, that makes it that much more binding, that makes it that much more powerful.

Verse 21: "...and will not revoke *His Word*, "You *are* a Priest forever according to the order of Melchisedec.") By such a greater measure then, Jesus was made the Guarantor of a superior covenant" (vs 21-22).

Everything about it is superior. There can be nothing greater. That's why we read there in John 14 that Jesus said that, 'I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life, and none can come to the Father except through Me.' *Superior covenant!* We don't need to go around and hang our heads asking, 'What are you?' *Well, I'm...um...one of these...um...I go to the Church of God. 'I'm a Baptist!'*

- we belong to God
- we have *the Spirit of God*
- we have a *superior High Priest*
- we have a *superior hope*
- we have a *superior covenant*

Not because we're greater; because in order to impart the blessing of this superior status with God, *God calls the individual*. It's not of the choosing of the individual. Yes, we have to respond and repent, that is true. *God has to call!*

He gives another comparison, v 23. "Now in the one case, there were many priests because they were not able to continue *to serve* by reason of death; but in the other case, because He is living forever, His priesthood never changes" (vs 23-24).

You don't have to worry about praying one week, and then the next week you go to pray, and all of a sudden, 'Uh oh. Who is this new guy?' *Well, the one you confessed your sins to last week died.* 'Did he pray for me before he died?' You can see the uselessness of having a system like the Catholic Church has. It doesn't get any further than the confession booth. And besides, a lot of the priests' amorous overtures are made in the confession booth to the ones that he is taking the confession from.

The corruption of human nature corrupts that process entirely, as it did with the priesthood under the Old Covenant. His priesthood never changes. We can add in there: *He is a heart-knowing God*. He knows our hearts; and that when we come to Him, everything He knows, and is able to judge the thoughts and the intents of the heart. So therefore, when you come to Christ and really repent, it's a true repentance to the core of your

being. It is no pretense to gain favor. It is no pretense to get rid of the 'heat.' It is true and deep and profound confession to Him.

Verse 25: "Therefore, He has the power throughout all time..." Here it gives the indication of absolute power. In other words, *there is no other power to forgive sin*, or to save.

"...to save those who come to God through Him *because* He is ever living to intercede for them" (v 25). We'll cover some of that when we get into our relationship with grace and confession of sin, and how God looks at us, and so forth, concerning that.

Verse 26: "For it is fitting that we should have such a High Priest..." In other words, if you're going to have a superior covenant, you're going to have a superior hope, you have to have a superior High Priest. You have to have one that fits the covenant, and *Christ is*.

"...Who is Holy, blameless, undefiled, set apart from sinners and made higher than the heavens... [as compared to]: ...Who has no need, as *do* the other high priests, to offer up sacrifices day by day, first for his own sins *and* then for the *sins* of the people..." (vs 26-27).

You know what the priest had to do every day before he started? *He had to offer up a sin sacrifice for himself!* Now he's ready to start offering for the other people. Christ doesn't have to do that.

"...for this He did once for all time when He offered up Himself. For the *priestly* the law makes high priests *of* men who have weaknesses; but *by* the word of the swearing of the oath, which supersedes the *priestly* law, the Son, Who has been perfected forever, *has been made High Priest*" (vs. 27-28).

Hebrews 8:

Hebrews 8 begins setting the stage—chapters 7-10 all come together.

Hebrews 8:1: "Now, *here is* a summary of the things being discussed: We have such a High Priest Who sat down at *the* right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens... [can't get any greater, can't get any higher than that] ...a Minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord set up, and not man. For every high priest is ordained to offer both gifts and sacrifices; therefore, *it is necessary for* this One also to have something that He can offer" (vs 1-3). He offered Himself.

If anyone wants to talk about a work, no one can do better than the work that Christ did when He was on earth. Of all the things to sacrifice and give

up to show love of God, He did the greatest. That's why He offered Himself. Now, being the Creator of all human beings, that becomes all the evermore awesome, all the greater or superior. If someone does a wonderful thing for you, you thank them, and you know they have love and concern for you. Christ has done greater: **He gave Himself!** Not only for you and me, but for the whole world, because God has a greater plan than men give Him credit for.

Verse 4: "Now, on the one hand, if He were on earth He would not even be a priest since there are priests who offer gifts according to the *priestly* law; Who serve as a representation and shadow of the heavenly *things*..." (vs 4-5).

We're comparing the true tabernacle in the heavens, compared to the shadow or the representation the shadow of it. Which would you rather have: a toy Cadillac or the real thing? Let's use that as a comparison.

"...exactly as Moses was divinely instructed when he was about to construct the tabernacle: 'For see,' says He, '*that* you make all things according to the pattern that was shown to you in the mountain'" (v 5). This indicates that He had plans; God had them all drawn up to give to him.

When you make a replica of it, that is only just a shadowy representation of the true. Now if you want to know what it's really like at the throne of God, the closest we can come to it is Rev. 4 & 5, when John saw the vision of the throne of God, and so forth.

Verse 6: "But on the other hand, He... [Christ, the heavenly Priest] ...has obtained a *supremely* more excellent ministry, as much greater as the superior covenant of which He is also Mediator, which was established upon **superior** promises." This then brings us right back to how he opened the book of Hebrews.

Let's come back to Heb. 1, where he set the stage. What he's telling us is that all the way through the book of Hebrews he's showing us how our relationship with God needs to be on the highest level possible, because of what God has done and how He has set up the New Covenant to operate.

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 ages; 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" (vs 1-3).

You talk about an opening. You talk about getting your attention instantly. This is something! Until John the Baptist it was the Law and the Prophets, and after John the Baptist it's the Kingdom of God and Christ.

Verse 4: "Having been made so much greater than *any of* the angels, inasmuch as He has inherited a name exceedingly superior to them."

These are superlatives that cannot be defined any greater in English. I want you to be inspired in prayer when you come to God; to know that you have this access through Jesus Christ. There is nothing between you and God. Therefore, we should have:

- the faith
- the hope
- the understanding
- the confidence

in God, regardless of the outward circumstances in which we find ourselves, because this is so fantastic. If you ask people, if you just ran a survey and said, 'How would you like to be an angel?' They would immediately equate it with the TV programs where there are supposedly angels that do things. Of course, they'd like to be angels. But he's saying here, this is greater. ***This is greater!***

Verse 5: "For to which of the angels did He ever say, 'You are My Son; this day I have begotten You'? And again, 'I will be a Father to Him, and He will be a Son to Me'? And again, when He brought the Firstborn into the world, He said, 'Let all *the* angels of God worship Him'" (vs 5-6).

Didn't that happen right after Jesus was born? The host of the angels appeared unto the two shepherds and were singing praises and worshipping God, and telling about the One Who had been born?

Verse 7: "Now, on the one hand, of the angels He says, 'Who makes His angels spirits, and His ministers a flame of fire.' But on the other hand, of the Son *He says*, 'Your throne, O God, *is* into the ages of eternity; a scepter of righteousness *is* the scepter of Your kingdom'" (vs 7-8). You can quote that back there in Psa. 45. That's something! Of course, then there are people who say Jesus was not God.

Verse 9: "'You loved righteousness and hated lawlessness... [that has to be the attitude we come to] ...because of this, God, *even* Your God, has anointed You with *the* oil of gladness above Your companions.'" So, that ties right in with what we're reading back here, *a more excellent ministry*. There we have a tremendous and profound thing that we look to, brethren.

Hebrews 8:7: “For if the first *covenant* had been faultless, *then* no provision for a second *covenant* would have been made.” But God made provision. He even prophesied of it. He prophesied of the Priesthood of Christ, the order of Melchisedec; He prophesied of the New Covenant. Here’s what He did:

Verse 8: “But since He found fault with them...” Not only them, but the whole physical system of the temple was flawed by the very fact that imperfect human beings were running it. It served temporarily for the purpose. One of the biggest mistakes that people assume in the world is that those who are *professing* Christians assume that under the Old Covenant they were given salvation through the physical things that they did at the temple, and so forth. No, they were not given that. He did not give the promise of the Holy Spirit.

Most people assume today, and the universal religion that they’re wanting to create, that all religions have truths, and they all lead to the same God. Now that statement is only true insofar as it relates to Satan being the ‘god of this world.’ It is not true insofar as relating to the true God the Father and Jesus Christ. Here’s what God wants to do with us. He’s going to cure the fault. The fault is carnal nature. The fault is; the law of sin and death.’

Here’s how He’s going to cure it, v 8: “But since He found fault with them, He says, ‘Behold, *the* days are coming’... [from Jer. 31] ...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. “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, and I will inscribe them upon their hearts...” (vs 8-10).

What does that do for you? *That can only be done with the Spirit of God!*

- that gives you the heart
- that gives you the attitude
- that gives you the willingness
- that gives you the consciousness

so that when you do sin you can repent rather than just ignoring God.

“...and I will be their God, and they will be My people.... [The ones that have the Spirit of God are the people of God.] ...And they will no longer teach every man his neighbor... [of course, that’s a

prophecy yet to be fulfilled] ...and every man his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord’ because all will know Me, from *the* least to *the* greatest of them; for I will be merciful toward their unrighteousnesses, and their sins and their lawlessness I will not remember ever again” (vs 10-12). That’s quite a promise!

With this promise then, we should never go before God and say, ‘I wonder if You can forgive me, God?’ ***If you repent there is always forgiveness!*** God promised that, and He cannot lie. He will grant you a clean heart and a clean mind, and will forgive you. That’s quite a promise.

Verse 12: “For I will be merciful toward their unrighteousnesses, and their sins and their lawlessness I will not remember ever again.”

The reason there needs to be the forgiveness of sin is because ***as long as sin dominates in the mind and in the heart you cannot have the laws of God written in your heart!*** That’s why with repentance and a change of heart these things can be added to you.

Psalm 103:1: “Bless the LORD, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His Holy name. Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits; Who forgives all your iniquities, Who heals all your diseases, Who redeems your life from destruction, Who crowns you with loving kindness and tender mercies” (vs 1-4).

Verse 8: “The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abundant in mercy. He will not always chasten, nor will He keep His anger forever. He has not dealt with us according to our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities, for as the heavens are high above the earth, so is His mercy toward those who fear Him. ***As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us***” (vs 8-12).

David stood before God, but it is also a prophecy that applies to us today. There’s no way.

Verse 13: “As a father has compassion upon his children, so the LORD has compassion upon those who fear Him, for He knows our frame; He remembers that we are dust. As for man, his days are as grass; as a flower of the field, so he flourishes, for the wind passes over it, and it is gone; and its place shall know it no more. But the steadfast love of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting... [that’s how far the east is from the west] ... upon those who fear Him, and His righteousness is unto children’s children, to those who keep His covenant, and to those who remember His precepts to do them” (vs 13-18).

- If you have the laws and commandments written in your heart and your mind, will

you remember them? to do them? *Of course, you will!*

- Do you remember the Sabbath, to keep it? *Yes!*
 - Do you remember to worship God because He is our God and Father? *Yes!*
 - ✓ you have no problem with idols and statues
 - ✓ you're not swearing and cursing, except may be you may slip, and can repent of that
- you're not breaking the*
- ✓ third commandment
 - ✓ fourth commandment
 - ✓ fifth commandment
 - ✓ the sixth commandment
 - ✓ or any of the commandments

Why? Because they are in your heart and in your mind!

Now then, the challenge with having it within your heart and mind and the Spirit of God is you learn through the power of the Spirit of God, and exercising the Spirit of God, and the laws and commandments of God through the *superior covenant*, through the *superior relationship* with Jesus Christ, then you learn through your faults and mistakes to overcome the source of sin, which is *the law of sin and death* within you. *The ultimate victory over that is the resurrection!* So, this is why the New Covenant is so fantastic and superior.

We'll get into how Christ mediates for us, because this is very important. Always remember: ***Christ is always there!*** He doesn't need to sleep. You don't have to worry about like you do when you call someone on the phone, 'Oh, did I wake you up?' or, 'Did I catch you busy?' ***God is always there!*** And He is ever there to answer our prayers. That's quite a thing when you really grasp and understand this, and you have this in your heart and mind and attitude when you come to pray. This opens up a great deal of understanding, Truth and knowledge, and your relationship with God then is so important. You can build on it. You can know:

- God loves you
- Christ loves you
- He has created this relationship in the New Covenant so that you can be in His family and live forever.

That is the greatest thing!

So, with that we need to understand that as we go down the rusty trail and we get older. I think a whole lot more of us senior citizens...are going to find that the brethren among us are going to die. That should come as no great surprise, because no one yet has lived forever in the flesh. The ultimate

last step—next to the last step, the last step in this physical life, and the next to the last step—is that you die and are put into the grave. If you do, look upon it as a blessing, because you don't have to go through the things that the rest of us who are living still have to go through, and they're going to be horrendous indeed.

We need to take a view of death as God does, that God is pleased in the death of His saints. He knows that *the final step is going to come at the resurrection*. That is the *superior hope* that we are looking to. Therefore, ***anything that happens to this flesh is never going to deter that promise or take away that hope.***

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*

Scriptural References

- 1) John 4:19-24
- 2) Matthew 3:1-8
- 3) John 1:19-27
- 4) Acts 6:9-14
- 5) Isaiah 66:1-5
- 6) Hebrews 7:11-12
- 7) Romans 8:1-2
- 8) Hebrews 7:12-19
- 9) Deuteronomy 5:27-29
- 10) Hebrews 7:20-28
- 11) Hebrews 8:1-6
- 12) Hebrews 1:1-9
- 13) Hebrews 8:7-12
- 14) Psalm 103:1-4, 8-18

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Acts 8
- Luke 24
- Deuteronomy 18
- Psalm 110:4
- Deuteronomy 28
- Leviticus 26
- John 14
- Revelation 4; 5
- Psalm 45
- Jeremiah 31

Also Referenced:

Books:

- *The Christian Passover* by Fred R. Coulter
- *Josephus*

Sermon: *Who Is That Prophet?*

FRC:mds/cis
Transcribed: 06/16/2003
Reformatted/Corrected: bo—January/2017

Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews XXIV Old Covenant/New Covenant Comparison #1

Fred R. Coulter

Today we're going to do a comparison between the Old Covenant and the New Covenant. Before we get into that, let's cover something very important; let's come to John 4, and I think maybe you can understand this in light of the New Testament, even more than we have in the past. We've gone over this many times, but let's see what this is really telling us in the light of what Jesus said, and in the light of other Scriptures, which help define it for us.

John 4:19—the woman at the well talking with Jesus: “The woman said to Him, ‘Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet. Our fathers worshiped in this mountain, but you say that the place where it is obligatory to worship is in Jerusalem.’ Jesus said to her, ‘Woman, believe Me, the hour is coming when you shall neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem worship the Father. You do not know what you worship. We know what we worship **for salvation is of the Jews**.... [this becomes a very important point.] ...But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in Spirit and in Truth; for the Father is indeed seeking those who worship Him in this manner. God *is* Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in Spirit and in Truth” (vs 10-24).

- What kind of Jew is Jesus talking about?
- Does this mean, as most people interpret it, that Christianity came out of Judaism?

or

- Is this the basis of what is called ‘Judeo/Christian’ religion or ethic?

Let's examine this just a little bit more. What is He talking about here? *He's talking about true worshipers!* Were the rabbis, the Pharisees and the priests true worshipers of God? What did Jesus say? *To keep your traditions you reject the commandments of God.* (Mark 7).

So, they weren't the *true* worshipers. We'll see in a minute that they had some former knowledge, but they are not the *true* worshipers. The way we answer the question is *salvation is of the Jews* so we know that it is not Judaism, and we know it's not from Jews, but from God! It says that you have to **worship Him in Spirit and in Truth!**

Let's see what Paul defines as to who is a Jew in the *spiritual* sense. Jesus was not talking about coming to the temple and worshiping. He said, ‘You're not going to be worshiping in this mountain nor at the temple.’ What He's talking about is New

Testament worship. What kind of Jew? Let's look at Paul's comparison here; let's see something concerning *physical* Jews and *spiritual* Jews. What Jesus is really talking about in John 4 are not the *physical* Jews, but the *spiritual* Jews, and Paul defines that for us; to show the difference between the *physical* Jew and the *spiritual* Jew. Some people get all excited when they find that they have Jewish blood in their *physical* genealogy background. Don't count it a blessing unless you obey God. Here's what Paul says:

Romans 2:17: “Behold, you are called a Jew, and you yourself rest in the Law, and boast in God, and know *His* will, and approve of the things that are more excellent, being instructed out of the Law... [they have the framework of the Law] ...and are persuaded *that* you yourself are a guide of *the* blind, a light for those in darkness, an instructor of *the* foolish, a teacher of babes, having the form of the knowledge and of the Truth *contained* in the Law” (vs 17-20). This is the same boast that we have clear down to this day.

Verse 21: “You, then, who are teaching another, do you not teach yourself also? You who preach, ‘Do not steal,’ are you stealing? You who say, ‘Do not commit adultery,’ are you committing adultery? You who abhor idols, are you committing sacrilege? You who boast in law, **are you dishonoring God through your transgression of the Law?**” (vs 21-23).

That's interesting! In one case there's a definite article: ‘you who boast in law’ meaning all their traditional laws, everything else, they're boasting as if it's from God. “...are you dishonoring God through your transgression of **the** Law?”—*God's Law!*

Verse 24: “For through you the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles, exactly as it is written. For on the one hand, circumcision profits if you are observing *the* Law; on the other hand, if you are a transgressor of *the* Law, your circumcision has become uncircumcision” (vs 24-25).

That's the greatest insult you can tell one who claims to be a *physical* Jew. If you don't believe that, I challenge you to go to the so-called land of Israel and go into the Orthodox section where the Orthodox Jews live and tell them that their transgression of the Law makes them uncircumcised and see if you get out of there without being stoned! That's the highest insult possible!

Verse 26: “Therefore, if the uncircumcised...” Whom they hate and call ‘goyeem’; and lie, cheat and steal to take from them because ‘it’s their right as the chosen people’ to do so.

“...is keeping the requirements of the Law, shall not his uncircumcision be reckoned for circumcision? And shall not the uncircumcised, who by nature is fulfilling the Law, judge you, who, with *the* letter and circumcision, *are* a transgressor of the Law? For **he is not a Jew who is one outwardly**, neither *is* that circumcision, which *is* external in the flesh; rather, he *is* a Jew who *is one* inwardly, and circumcision *is* of the heart, in the spirit *and* not in the letter; whose praise *is* not from men but from God” (vs 26-29). This is what Jesus was defining! The *spiritual* Jew, not the *physical* Jew!

Let’s see something else that ties in with Alan Knight has been writing in the *Primitive Christianity in Crisis*.

Revelation 3:7: “And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia, write: These things says the Holy One, the One Who *is* true...” Why is that so many ministers call Him a liar, when He says, ‘I am the Way, the Life and the Truth’?

“...the One Who has the key of David, Who opens and no one shuts, and Who shuts and no one opens. I know your works. Behold, I have set before you an open door, and no one has the power to shut it because you have a little strength, and have kept My Word, and have not denied My name” (vs 7-8).

Those who do that Paul said are *spiritual* Jews—of the heart—because circumcision is of the heart and that’s the key to understanding the comparison between the Old Covenant and the New Covenant. Very profound! Very important!

Notice what they are confronted with; notice where the battle lies, v 9: “Behold, I will make those of the synagogue of Satan, who proclaim themselves to be Jews and are not, but do lie...”

Meaning they are not converted, spirit-filled Christians who have had the circumcision of the heart! They belong to Satan the devil. And just like Satan has always done, he counterfeits what God does. He calls God a liar; calls Jesus a liar. Isn’t that the way that liars always do when they’re caught? *Yes!* Or they attack the messenger. Christ is going to take care of it. He has a way of doing that. He is going to intervene for us.

Here’s what He’s going to do. Go study the book of Esther and read about Mordecai who was distained by Haman the Agagite, and who he wanted to kill. He wanted to get rid of Mordecai. What happened? You read about the fate that came to

Haman the Agagite. This is what happened:

“...behold, I will cause them to come and worship before your feet, and to know that I have loved you” (v 9). That’s going to be very galling, indeed. The great of the world are going to ‘bow down’ to the least in the world who have been resurrected. Why?

Here’s the key of true *spiritual* Jews, v 10: “Because you have kept the Word of My patience... [constantly keeping the Word of God] ...I also will keep you from the time of temptation, which is about to come upon the whole world to try those who dwell on the earth. Behold, I am coming quickly; hold fast that which you have so that no one may take away your crown” (vs 10-11).

Even though He does not correct them for any sin, notice what He says, this is very important:

Verse 12: “The one who overcomes...” —which means you still have to overcome:

- human nature
- the world
- Satan

How do you do that?

- with the Spirit of God
- with the righteousness of Christ
- with the Word of God

That’s how you do it! ***Walk in faith, believe in hope and live in love!*** That’s how you overcome. We are to be *perfected in Christ!* That’s profound!

“...will I make a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall not go out anymore; and I will write upon him the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which will come down out of heaven from My God; and *I will write upon him* My new name. The one who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches” (vs 12-13).

- How is it that they faithfully kept the Word of God?
- How can you do it with so much religious confusion in the world, especially among professing Christianity or Christendom today.

They do not understand the Truth of the New Covenant when compared to the Old Covenant. What they say is that God has changed! God has NOT changed! What did God say? ***I change not!*** Very important! Another error that they have so that they don’t understand is that they have what is called ‘dispensationalism.’ That means that:

- those *before* the Flood received salvation one way
- those *after* the Flood received salvation

- another way
- those who were called of God from Abraham, Isaac and Jacob—the children of Israel, and were given the law—were saved another way
- now we have the new *spiritual* dispensation and are saved another way

The truth is that when you understand about the Old and New Covenants: ***Only the few prophets and righteous kings received salvation before Christ came***—the very few! God did not offer salvation—*spiritual salvation*—to the nation of Israel. There are no promises of eternal life until you come to Christ.

Let's do a little comparison here, and we're going to see that the basis of what is called *the Old Covenant* and the physical things that they did always pointed to Christ. If you want a good book on that: *The Law of the Offerings* by Andrew Jukes. He shows that the type of everything that was given with the sacrifices and so forth all pointed toward Christ.

Old Covenant—Physical Promises:

The Old Covenant is a physical covenant based upon physical promises. Nowhere does it say that you will receive eternal life. Deut. 28 defines the promises. This gives all the blessings first. Remember what's important is that ***God set before them life and death, blessing and cursing***; therefore, choose life that you and your seed may live long, physical lives. I want you to read all the blessings, we're going to skim a few of them.

Deuteronomy 28:1: "And it shall come to pass, if you shall hearken diligently unto the voice of the LORD your God to observe *and* to do all His commandments which I command you today, the LORD your God will set you on high above all nations of the earth.... [Notice: not going to heaven! Not entering the Kingdom of God!] ...And all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you if you will obey the voice of the LORD your God" (vs 1-2).

Notice the blessings, v 3: "Blessed *shall you be* in the city, and blessed *shall you be* in the field. Blessed *shall be* the fruit of your body, and the fruit of your ground, and the fruit of your livestock, the increase of your cattle, and the flocks of your sheep. Blessed *shall be* your basket and your store. Blessed *shall you be* when you come in, and blessed shall you be when you go out. The LORD shall cause your enemies that rise up against you to be stricken before your face. They shall come out against you one way, and flee before you seven ways. The LORD shall command the blessing upon you in your

storehouses, and all that you set your hand to. And He shall bless you in the land. which the LORD your God gives you" (vs 3-8). ***Nothing about eternal life!***

Verse 9: "The LORD shall establish you a Holy people to Himself, as He has sworn to you, if you shall keep the commandments of the LORD your God and walk in His ways. And all the people of the earth shall see that you are called by the name of the LORD, and they shall be afraid of you. And the LORD shall make you abound in goods, in the fruit of your body, and in the fruit of your livestock, and in the fruit of your ground, in the land, which the LORD swore to your fathers to give you" (vs 9-11). Then he goes on to open the treasures and so forth.

Then you can read all the curses; He says, v 16: "Cursed *shall you be* in the city, and cursed *shall you be* in the field. Cursed *shall be* your basket and your store. Cursed *shall be* the fruit of your body..." (vs 16-18).

New Covenant—Spiritual Promises:

Now then, let's look at the comparison in the New Covenant, when Christ came. John 3:16 tells us exactly the promise, and this is important to realize: "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, so that everyone who believes in Him may not perish, but may have everlasting life."

That's nowhere given in the Old Testament. There are conditions in order to accomplish this. It's not just divvied out. God has to do the calling.

The New Covenant is a *spiritual* covenant based upon *spiritual* promises. We need to understand that only in the New Covenant with Christ was there the offer of eternal life. Never was there in the Old Covenant, none whatsoever! Paul is giving the comparison between the priesthood of Aaron and the priesthood of Melchisedec, of which Christ was called, and the Lord swore that the Priesthood forever according to the order of Melchisedec.

Hebrews 7:22: "By such a greater measure then, Jesus was made the Guarantor of a **superior** covenant." The *King James* has 'better' but the Greek is **superior**. Why is it *superior*? *It's based upon better promises!* That's why! Which would you rather have:

- physical life with everything your soul desires and death and no more?

or

- the promise of eternal life?

There's no comparison! That's why it's a *superior covenant!*

Talking about the priesthood, v 23: “Now in the one case, there were many priests because they were not able to continue *to serve* by reason of death; but in the other case, because He is living forever, His priesthood never changes. Therefore, He has the power throughout all time to save those who come to God through Him *because* He is ever living to intercede for them. For it is fitting that we should have such a High Priest *Who is* Holy, blameless, undefiled, set apart from sinners and made higher than the heavens” (vs 23-26). ***That’s superior!*** We’re going to see you have a *superior* form of worship.

Here’s the great argument: to be circumcised or not {note sermon series on the *Circumcision Wars* (Galatians series)} You do not understand that the conflict in the early New Testament Church was this: Under Judaism—and even according to the Law of God—if a stranger wanted to participate in the worship of God he had to be circumcised. Under Judaism all proselytes were circumcised. That’s where the rub came in with the New Testament.

Old Covenant—Circumcision of the Flesh:

Genesis 17:9 is what Christ talked about concerning circumcision: “And God said to Abraham, ‘And you shall keep My covenant, you and your seed after you in their generations. This is My covenant, which you shall keep, between Me and you and your seed after you. Every male child among you shall be circumcised. And you shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin. And it shall be a sign of the covenant between Me and you. And a son of eight days shall be circumcised among you, every male child in your generations; he that is born in the house, or bought with silver of any foreigner who *is* not of your seed. He that is born in your house, and he that is bought with your silver, must be circumcised. And My covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant” (vs 9-13).

Notice, there’s no promise of eternal life. Not here! The promise of eternal life was given to Abraham *before* he was circumcised (Gen. 15).

New Covenant—Circumcision of the Heart:

So, in the New Testament we have a higher standard. What we’re going to see all the way through in this comparison is that you have one standard that is *physical*, one standard that is *spiritual*. The standard that is spiritual is a higher standard, requiring a great deal more than just physical circumcision.

Let’s see how this begins; we’ll find that this is a very important distinction. In order to receive eternal life you have to have something beyond you as a person. No one has inherent eternal life in them.

You’ve got to have an addition from God. But you don’t get that unless there is a change.

There is repentance and circumcision of the heart through baptism, Acts 2:38: “Then Peter said to them, ‘Repent and be baptized each one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for *the* remission of sins, and you yourselves shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.’” They need the gift of the Holy Spirit—the seed of the begetting—unto eternal life.

Let’s see what this repentance is to do. If you cut off a little bit of the foreskin in circumcising the male, it doesn’t change the heart. It does permanently change that part of the anatomy, which is ***a sign that spiritual circumcision is to permanently change your mind!*** That’s the comparison.

Acts 3:19: “Therefore, repent and be **converted...**” You don’t find that anywhere in the Old Testament. You have a prophecy about circumcising the foreskin of your heart (Deut. 10), but God never gave the ability to do that because He didn’t send the Holy Spirit.

Let’s see that there is a circumcision of the heart, which is a greater circumcision than the circumcision of the flesh. This is what is important!

Colossians 2:9: “For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily... [We’re to become like Christ.] ...and **you are complete in Him...**” (vs 9-10). That’s an important, profound statement! You don’t need the other teachings such as the worshiping of angels and following demonic spirits and so forth. That’s what they were confronted with.

What happens in the false Christianity, they come along and say ‘Well, if you have the commandments of God, that’s not enough, you’re not complete. We need to add a little bit more to that.’ **NO!** God is the One Who adds the more to it, which is His Spirit, through repentance and receiving the Holy Spirit.

He’s talking to those who have the Holy Spirit, v 10: “...Who is the Head of all principality and power **in Whom you have also been circumcised with the circumcision not made by hands**, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ” (vs 10-11).

You have a changed nature; your mind becomes permanently changed *spiritually* just as physical circumcision changes that part of the anatomy of a man permanently. That’s the comparison. One is *physical*; the other is *spiritual*.

Let’s understand something: The Holy Spirit was never offered under the Old Covenant, so therefore, they could not receive salvation. If you

don't have the Spirit of Christ you're none of His for eternal life! They may be of the seed of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob physically, but not for eternal life.

"...in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ... [here's how it's done]: ...having been buried with Him in baptism, by which you have also been raised with *Him* through the inner working of God, Who raised Him from the dead. For you, who were *once* dead in *your* sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has *now* made alive with Him, having forgiven all your trespasses. He has blotted out the note of debt against us *with* the decrees of *our* sins, which was contrary to us; and He has taken it away, having nailed it to the cross" (vs 11-14)—that is *our* sins!

Roman 8:7 shows the result of this *spiritual* circumcision: "Because the carnal mind..." The mind of the flesh; one that does not have the Spirit of God. The Spirit of God is an addition. Peter said to 'repent and be baptized for the remission of sins and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.' Only God can give that!

"...the carnal mind... [lacking the Spirit of God] ...*is* enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God; neither indeed can it *be*" (v 7). You can understand this whenever you talk to any carnal-minded person. Especially when you:

- tell them about the Sabbath
- tell them about the Holy Days
- tell them about eating pork, shrimp, lobster

That blows them away!

Just as aside: I heard on the news what the favorite astronaut food is—that they get in tubes? It's all processed and it's guaranteed to last for three years. Do you know how they enjoy a meal up in the space capsule? They get a tube and they squeeze it into their mouths. Do you know what their favorite dish is? *Shrimp cocktail!*

They can't understand! What is their first retort? If they supposedly believe in Christ—based on their version of Christ, they say, 'Well, Christ changed the law; you don't have to worship on that day any longer.' They don't understand the New Covenant. It didn't change the laws; it changed *how* we keep them! That's what's changed—from a *carnal* mind to a *spiritual* mind.

Verse 8: "But **those who are in the flesh cannot please God.**" You think about that whenever you want to add something on to what God says—that 'we ought to have this'; that 'we ought to have this addition to it' and so forth.

Verse 9: "However, you are not in *the* flesh... [before God; this doesn't mean you're a spirit being, capable of walking through walls] ...but

in *the* Spirit, **if the Spirit of God is indeed dwelling within you....**" That is *circumcision of the heart!* The Spirit of God takes away the carnality and the enmity and the hostility toward God and His ways and you delight in keeping His laws, His commandments. You delight in the Word of God. You are not looking for arguments for getting around keeping God's way. You're looking for every way to do the things that are right and that are good! You have to have God's Spirit dwelling in you.

Here's the dividing line: "...But if anyone does not have *the* Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him" (v 9). That's very profound and very important. Add Acts 5:32, that God gives the 'Spirit to those who obey Him.' That's what's important! You obey in the Spirit of the Law. In the two covenants, God did not do away with His laws. He did not change His laws.

- He changed *the way* that they are kept!
- He changed *the way* that you are justified!

Verse 10: "But if Christ *be* within you, the body *is* indeed dead because of sin... [that's what baptism is all about] ...however, the Spirit *is* life because of righteousness. Now, if the Spirit of Him Who raised Jesus from *the* dead is dwelling within you, He Who raised Christ from *the* dead will also quicken your mortal bodies because of His Spirit that dwells within you. So then, brethren, we are not debtors to the flesh, to live according to *the* flesh; because if you are living according to *the* flesh, you shall die; but if by *the* Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you shall live" (vs 10-13). There is a whole different requirement:

- a higher standard
- a spiritual standard
- one that supersedes the standard of the Old Covenant

That's why it's called a *superior* covenant, a *greater* covenant!

Old Covenant—Letter of the Law:

The people did not have the Holy Spirit under the Old Covenant. They would obey in the letter of the law. This is a very important point concerning the covenant, and most people do not understand what it's talking about here. When Jesus was God of the Old Covenant He was married to Israel. {note sermon: *Was Jesus Married?*} He died and that released Israel from that.

New Covenant—Spirit of the Law:

Romans 7:6: "But now we have been released from the law..." That doesn't mean He was

released from the obligation to keep the Law. That means **‘released from the law of marriage’ that bound them to the Old Covenant.** The only way a covenant comes to an end is by the death of Christ. That’s the only way that the Old Covenant came to an end.

“...because we have died *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” (v 6).

Christ says that in the ‘spirit of the Law’ if you lust after a woman you’ve already committed adultery in your heart. Is that not a higher standard? *Yes, indeed!* That’s the spirit that we are to serve in, “...*the* newness of spirit...” Paul makes this clear.

Verse 7: “What then shall we say? *Is* the law sin? MAY IT NEVER BE! But I had not known sin, except through the law. Furthermore, I would not have been conscious of lust, except *that* the law said, ‘You shall not covet.’”

So, the Law brings out what sin is. This all ties together. Under the Old Covenant, you go back and read Deut. 28, Lev. 26 all the way through the requirement is *obey in the letter of the Law*. Can people obey in the *letter* of the Law? *Yes, they can!* Even though they don’t have the Spirit of God. How many people are out there who don’t murder, commit adultery and all these things? *Billions!*

Converted believers have the gift of the Holy Spirit or obey in the spirit of the Law.

Romans 6:16: “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? But thanks *be* to God, that you were *the* servants of sin, but you have **obeyed from the heart** ... [that’s the spiritual obedience] ...that form of doctrine which was delivered to you; and having been delivered from sin, you became *the* servants of righteousness” (vs 16-18).

If obeyed in the letter of the Law they could live in the community and worship at the earthly tabernacle. Heb. 9 shows this operation, because Paul said that it’s ‘impossible for the blood bulls and goats to forgive sin.’ What were the sacrifices for them? What did it accomplish?

Hebrews 9:13 tells us: “For if the blood of goats and bulls, and *the* ashes of a heifer sprinkled *on* those who are defiled, sanctifies to the purifying of the flesh.”

Notice that it didn’t sanctify to the purifying of the spirit, only to the flesh. That’s why they had different washings and oblations and different sacrifices, which means that under the Old Covenant, when they came and offered a sacrifice

for whatever it was—whatever sin, whatever transgression that it was—it only justified to the flesh. That’s why you had the tabernacle or temple *on* the earth. It was:

- a physical tabernacle
- a physical temple
- a physical worship
- a physical obeying in the letter of the Law

—forgiveness to the tabernacle, no further!

Verse 14 shows what the blood of Christ does: “To a far greater degree, the blood of Christ... [the New Covenant] ...Who through *the* eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, **shall purify your conscience...**” Again, a permanent change of the mind; it was not possible under the Old Covenant.

“...from dead works to serve *the* living God. And for this reason He is *the* Mediator of *the* New Covenant: in order that through *His* death, *which* took place for the release of the transgressions *that were committed* under the first covenant, those who have been called might receive the promise of the eternal inheritance” (vs 14-15). So, it’s a completely different thing under the New Covenant.

Another thing that this facilitates and gives us is—which they didn’t not have under the Old Covenant—they could come to the temple. That’s why Jesus said where the woman was talking to Jesus and said, ‘You say that Jerusalem is the place that you ought to worship’—under the Old Covenant, yes!

- they came to the temple
- they offered the sacrifice
- they were justified to the temple
- God accepted them in the letter of the Law
- they could continue to receive the physical blessings of God

But now—once you have your sins *forgiven spiritually*—something new changes and that is that you don’t have to go to a temple as Jesus told the woman. *You worship God in Spirit and Truth.* How do you do that?

Hebrews 10:14: “For by one offering He has obtained eternal perfection *for* those who are sanctified. And the Holy Spirit also bears witness to us; for after He had previously said, ““*This is* the covenant that I will establish with them after those days,” says *the* Lord, “I will give My Laws into their hearts, and I will inscribe them in their minds; and their sins and lawlessness I will not remember ever again.”” Now, where remission of these *is, it is* no longer *necessary to offer* sacrifices for sin. Therefore, brethren, having confidence to enter into

the *true* Holiest by the blood of Jesus” (vs 14-19).

Now you have access directly to God! Profound difference. Before you had to go through a physical priest and a physical temple to offer physical sacrifices for physical justification of the flesh, and it didn’t change the conscience. Now you repent to God the Father and Jesus Christ in heaven above

- through repentance
- forgiveness of sin
- circumcision of the heart

Now you have direct access to God the Father and He has direct access to you with His Holy Spirit! That’s something! That’s why it’s a *superior* covenant!

Let’s see how Paul writes of it here, Ephesians 2:18: “For through Him...” Christ! He’s our Intercessor! Mediator! He’s at the right hand of God! (Heb. 4)

“...we both have *direct* access by one Spirit to the Father” (v 18). God has given you the greatest thing that He can in this physical life: His Spirit and access to Him! That’s why the New Covenant is superior!

Verse 19: “So then, you are no longer aliens and foreigners; but *you are* fellow citizens with the saints, and *are* of the household of God. You are being built up on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being *the* chief Cornerstone in Whom all the building, being conjointly fitted together, is increasing into a Holy temple in *the* Lord; in Whom you also are being built together for a habitation of God in *the* Spirit” (vs 19-22). So, it’s reciprocal, having the Spirit of God!

Old Covenant—Administration of Death:

2-Cor. 3 shows that under the Old Covenant they had the *administration of death*—execute people for certain sins.

New Covenant--Disfellowshipment:

Under the New Covenant, since the Church is scattered throughout the world in many sovereign nations, you cannot have a sovereign church in the middle of the sovereign nation executing the death penalty. The Church does not have that. The greatest authority that the Church has when someone sins is disfellowshipment, that is all! God will take care of the rest of it. That is important to realize when we understand the function of the New Covenant.

However, Paul gives us a warning! There is something to fear!

Hebrews 10:20: “By a new and living way, which He consecrated for us through the veil (that is, His flesh), and *having* a great High Priest over the house of God, let us approach *God* with a true heart... [if you have sins to repent of, you repent] (but it’s a): ...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; and let us be concerned about one another, and *be* stirring up *one another* unto love and good works; not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, even as some *are* accustomed to do; but rather, encouraging *one another*, and all *the* more as you see the day drawing near. For if we willfully go on sinning after receiving the knowledge of the Truth, there is no longer any sacrifice for sins” (vs 20-26).

This is a permanent thing! Once you receive the Holy Spirit of God ***there is no turning back!*** We do have sins, shortcomings, mistakes and backslidings; those things do take place. Happens to all of us! That’s why we’re under grace and can repent. God will forgive us and we go on again. That’s why in the model prayer that Jesus gave: ‘Give us day-by-day our daily bread and forgive us our sins’ because we need our sins forgiven every day. That keeps us in right standing with God.

As we have covered concerning the *unpardonable sin* before, if that is committed there is no longer any sacrifice for sins—*period!* The sacrifice of Christ will do you no good!

Verse 27: “But a terrifying expectation of inevitable judgment and of fierce fire, which will devour the adversaries *of God*.... [that’s pretty strong language] ...*Consider this:* anyone who rejects *the* Law of Moses dies without mercy under *the testimony* of two or three witnesses. How much worse punishment do you think he will deserve who has trampled underfoot the Son of God, and has regarded the blood of the covenant, with which he was sanctified, *as* an unholy thing, and has scorned the Spirit of grace?” (vs 27-29). The stakes are higher! The punishment is greater!

Verse 30: “For we know Him Who has said, “‘Vengeance *belongs* to Me. I will recompense!’” says *the* Lord.’ And again, ‘*The* Lord will judge His people.’ *It is* a fearful thing to fall into *the* hands of *the* living God” (vs 30-31). I tell you what, it’s something!

There is a difference. If we have the Spirit of God, have our sins forgiven, have our conscience cleansed, have direct access to God the Father in heaven above, through Jesus Christ, then there’s no turning back from that. No turning back!

Under the Old Covenant: if they transgressed the law there was *physical atonement* for certain sins and the *death penalty* for others.

Under the New Covenant: if they transgressed the law, forgiveness *upon repentance*, or the second death for the unpardonable sin.

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*

Scriptural References:

- 1) John 4:19-24
- 2) Romans 2:17-29
- 3) Revelation 3:7-13
- 4) Deuteronomy 28:1-11, 16-18
- 5) John 3:16
- 6) Hebrews 7:22-26
- 7) Genesis 17:9-13
- 8) Acts 2:38
- 9) Acts 3:19
- 10) Colossians 2:9-14
- 11) Romans 8:7-13
- 12) Romans 7:6-7
- 13) Romans 6:16-18
- 14) Hebrews 9:13-15
- 15) Hebrews 10:14-19
- 16) Ephesians 2:18-22
- 17) Hebrews 10:20-31

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Mark 7
- Genesis 15
- Deuteronomy 10
- Acts 5:32
- Leviticus 26
- Hebrews 4
- 2 Corinthians 3

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- *Primitive Christianity in Crisis* by Alan Knight
- *The Law of the Offerings* by Andrew Jukes

Sermon Series:

- *Circumcision Wars* (Galatians series)
- *Was Jesus Married?*

FRC: bo
Transcribed: 5-18-11
Reformatted/Corrected: bo—January/2017

Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews XXV Old Covenant/New Covenant Comparison #2

(Chapter 9)
Fred R. Coulter

What we need to understand is this, a very important thing: The Old Covenant was a physical covenant which contained all of the elements which would lead to the New Covenant, only it would become spiritually applied. Everything under the Old Covenant was done in the letter of the Law. The people in general didn't have the Holy Spirit. There was no eternal salvation through the Old Covenant. People cannot understand that, because they do not recognize *the resurrections* in the Bible.

- First resurrection—when Christ returns for those who are Christ's
- Second resurrection—at the end to the thousand years
 1. those who have not committed the unpardonable sin and will be raised to a second life in the flesh so they can have an opportunity for salvation
 2. all of those who have committed the unpardonable sin and will be resurrected so that all of the wicked will be cast into the Lake of Fire at the same time

In order to justify their version of the New Testament, what they have to do is say that those under the Old Covenant earned salvation by works. Well, if you can't earn salvation by works under the New Covenant, how could you possibly do it under the Old Covenant? If salvation is a gift of God—which it is—how can you earn it when Paul said, '*Not of works, lest any man should boast.*' Besides, what works did they have under the Old Covenant? *Most of it was apostasy going after other gods!* God knew they would do that!

I want to cover several things here that are very important. Beginning in Gen. 9 there's a very profound and important application of law that God instituted after the Flood. When you read the sections of the Bible before the Flood, you find that God alone was the One Who did the judging and the executing of the sentence. Adam and Eve: when they sinned, He gave His judgment, His curse; He gave the punishment to them. When Cain murdered Abel, God is the One Who gave the judgment

Apparently, from the time of creation to 1565_{B.C.}—years later—when the Flood occurred, God was the One Who was judge and did the administering. God lived in the Garden of Eden. They could come to the east gate of the Garden of

Eden. In the sermons on the tabernacle and temple you will find all of the basic things that were later in the temple such as the altar, the cherubim, the presence of God was there at the east gate. When they built the temple it faced the east and the priests faced west. It's very important to understand.

We come to Gen. 9 and the Flood is over, Noah and his family is safe. Here is a change of administration, which would come down as a sovereignty of every nation. Right after this we have the table of nations. Here's what God did: He transferred the authority of capital punishment from His jurisdiction—because men didn't want Him to do it—to man's jurisdiction. That follows in every sovereign nation. This will become a vital, important understanding in the difference between the Old Covenant and the New Covenant when we come to the administration of death.

Genesis 9:5: "And surely the blood of your lives will I require. At the hand of every animal will I require it, and at the hand of man. At the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of man. Whoever sheds man's blood, his blood shall be shed by man..." (vs 5-6).

In other words, he's saying you human beings are now responsible for capital punishment, and the execution of those who do crimes worthy of death.

"...—for He made man in the image of God" (v 6). Then He goes on and gives the rest of the covenant.

All nations—we have the table of nations given in Gen. 10—had the *administration of death* as a civil thing that they would do. Israel is different than the Church and here is the difference:

Old Covenant—Administration of Death:

The 12 tribes consisted of one nation as a whole, a sovereign nation on earth, and God gave the death penalty—and execution and use of the death penalty—to the nation of Israel. It was to be supervised by the priesthood. He also gave the basis and groundwork for how to carry out the execution of someone. Note Exo. 21-24 because there are all the *civil codes* of what would happen if there were robbery, murder, crime, stealing or any of those things. The structure of the civil government was given in Exo. 18: captains over 10, over 50, over

100, over thousands. That was not the priesthood. The priesthood was only to sit in final judgment in capital cases when it was necessary. Otherwise, it was a matter of judges; very akin to what we have in America today.

Deuteronomy 17:2—combined theological sins as well as civil crimes: “If there is found among you, inside any of your gates which the LORD your God gives you, a man or woman who does what is evil in the sight of the LORD your God, in breaking His covenant, and has gone and served other gods and worshiped them, either the sun, or moon, or any of the forces of heaven, which I have forbidden, and if it is told you, and you have heard and inquired diligently, and, behold, it is true and the thing is certain, that such abomination is done in Israel; then you shall bring forth that man or that woman who has committed that evil thing to your gates, even that man or that woman, and shall stone them with stones until they die” (vs 2-5).

However, v 6: “At the mouth of two witnesses or three witnesses shall he that is worthy of death be put to death. At the mouth of one witness he shall not be put to death.” They’re using that a lot in our courts today. They’re allowing the testimony of hearsay. They’re allowing one witness and one accuser.

Verse 7: “The hands of the witnesses shall be *the* first on him to put him to death, and afterwards the hands of all the people. So, you shall put the evil away from among you.”

We’re looking at the Supreme Court run by the priests in the land of Israel. They had theological crimes and civil crimes. Theological crimes would be the crimes transgressing the first four commandments. That’s a relationship between the person and God. The civil crimes were the last six of the Ten Commandments, which God—under the administration of death (Gen. 9) gave to all nations to execute.

Let’s see how this was carried over, v 8: “If a matter *is* too hard for you in judgment...” It says that you should go to the judges in those things (Exo. 21).

“...between blood and blood, between plea and plea, and between stroke and stroke, *being* matters of strife within your gates, then you shall arise and go up to the place which the LORD your God shall choose. And you shall come to the priests, the Levites, and to the judge... [here we have the judge—the dual—the civil] ...that shall be in those days, and ask. And they shall declare to you the sentence of judgment. And you shall do according to the sentence, which they declare to you from that

place which the LORD shall choose. And you shall be careful to do according to all that they tell you. According to the sentence of the law, which they shall teach you and according to the judgment which they shall tell you, you shall do. You shall not turn aside from the sentence which they shall show you, to the right hand or the left. And the man that acts presumptuously and will not hearken to the priest who stands to minister there before the LORD your God, or to the judge, even that man shall die. And you shall put away the evil from Israel. And all the people shall hear and fear, and do no more presumptuously” (vs 8-13). This is the *administration of death*, which we will understand the difference.

New Covenant—Administration of Spirit:

First of all, is the Church a sovereign nation? Does it have land and territory designated as this nation is the Church of God? *No, it does not!* It is not a sovereign nation. Since it is not a sovereign nation, God did not give it the administration of death. We need to understand! What is important in the Old and New Covenants is that *God gave the jurisdiction of the death penalty to all sovereign nations*—regardless of how they administer it—it is *their responsibility to put evil-doers out of the land through their process of judges and the administration of death.*

That’s why this new International Criminal Court *violates* what God has given! The New International Court says that anyone anywhere in the world can bring a charge against someone in another country and they can be arrested out of that country and tried before that tribunal and found guilty. That is contrary to what God gave the independent sovereign nations that He created through the table of nations (Gen. 10). That’s crucial to understand.

Within any sovereign nation, you cannot have a secondary sovereign nation. That’s also important to understand. That’s why they should outlaw the Nation of Islam headquartered in Chicago. They have demanded millions of acres of American land to set up their sovereign nation. A sovereign nation is sovereign unto itself and you can’t setup a secondary sovereignty in that nation to administer the death penalty.

Think for a moment if the Church of God administered the death penalty. Instead of excommunication, we shot them or hung them or beheaded them. Sound like some church in history that you know? What would happen in the United States of America if a church executed the administration of death? The local and federal governments would come down and put an end to it,

because they do not have the sovereign right to administer the death penalty.

Remember Yahweh Ben Yahweh down in Florida? He administered the death penalty to those who wouldn't obey him. Where is he now? *In prison!* He was running his church as a sovereign entity within a sovereign nation.

What is the command for the Church? '*Go you, therefore, into all the world and preach the Gospel and make disciples of every nation. And, lo, I'm with you until the end of the age.*' Therefore, Paul had to define the difference between the administration of death and the administration of spirit, because the Church being the body of believers exists within many sovereign nations. It cannot have a sovereignty unto itself to administer the death penalty. What is the greatest penalty that can be given to someone who violates the rules of the Church, or violates the commandments of God in their relationship to the Church? What is the greatest penalty? *Excommunication! Disfellowshipment!* That's all you can do! This is what 2-Cor. 3 is all about, and this is the vast difference between the Old Covenant and the New Covenant.

2-Corinthians 3:1: "Do we again begin to commend ourselves? Or do we, as some, need epistles of commendation to you, or *epistles* of commendation from you? You are our epistle, and are inscribed in our hearts, being known and read by all men; *for* it is manifest that you are Christ's epistle, ministered by us; you were not inscribed with *pen and ink*, but with *the Spirit of the living God; not on tablets of stone...* [referring to the Ten Commandments] ...but on fleshly tablets of *the heart*" (vs 1-3).

Where are the Ten Commandments to be written? *In your heart!* It's not wrong to have a monument of the Ten Commandments.

Verse 4: "Now we have this confidence through Christ toward God; not that we are competent of ourselves, *or* credit anything to our own *abilities*: rather, our competency *is* from God; Who also made us competent *as* ministers of *the* New Covenant; not of *the* letter, but of *the* Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life" (vs 4-6).

This tells us all of the theological and civil crimes that are listed in the Old Testament—subject to fines and the penalty of death—the Church does not administer in that way! It's a spiritual administration. That's why disfellowshipment is the greatest thing that a church can do. That way, a church can exist in any nation in the world, because they are not going against the sovereignty of that nation. It's important to understand.

Verse 7: "Now if the ministry of death... [the administration of death (KJV)] ...which was engraved in stones, came into being with glory, so that the children of Israel were not able to gaze upon Moses' face because of the glory of his face, which *glory* is being set aside."

Notice carefully it is *the glory* that is being set aside, not the commandments of God. What do we have? *We have the spirit, the conversion, the Ten Commandments written in our heart and in our mind!* That's being set aside. The *King James* has the words 'done away' and the Protestants love that 'done away' thing. They say this has 'done away' with the laws and commandments of God. *NO!* It is only 'done away' with *the administration of the penalty* of transgressing the theological and civil laws contained in the book of Moses—that's all! So, if that's being set aside, and that was a wonderful thing.

Verse 8: "Shall not the ministry of the Spirit be far more glorious?" *Yes*, inasmuch as:

- there is repentance
- there is forgiveness
- there is grace
- there is mercy

Paul said in Heb. 10 that under the testimony of two or three witnesses that the transgressor was executed without mercy. Under the New Covenant we have:

- mercy
- forgiveness
- love
- understanding
- a new life

Changed from *within*; not administered from without!

Verse 9: "For if *there was* glory in the ministry of condemnation, to a much greater degree the ministry of righteousness overflows with glory."

Of course, Paul was a prime example—wasn't he? Enemy of God! Killing brethren! Arresting them! God calls him, forgives him and says, 'Now, you go preach the Word.' Perfect example of the administration of spirit *vs* the administration of death.

- What would have happened under the administration of death if the Church would have had the power of the death penalty?
- *Well, they would have waited until they could have captured Saul and executed him!*
- Isn't that what the Jews wanted to do to Paul after he was converted? *Yes!*
- Why? *They carried out the execution of the*

death penalty!

That does not come over to the New Testament.

Verse 10: “And even *the ministry of condemnation*, which had glory, was not glorious in this respect, because of the surpassing glory *of the ministry of life*. For if that which is being set aside... [the administration of death and the laws of God applied that way] ...*came into being* through glory, to a much greater degree that which remains is glorious” (vs 10-11).

What remains? *Keeping of the commandments of God in the Spirit as Christ amplified them*, with the Spirit in our heart and our mind.

Verse 12: “Now then, because we have such hope, we use great plainness *of speech*; for *we are* not like Moses, who put a veil over his face, so that the children of Israel could not gaze to the end upon *the glory* that is *now* being set aside. But their minds were blinded...” (vs 12-14).

That’s why they weren’t offered salvation. In order to receive salvation, what has to happen? *Your mind has to be opened! The blindness has to be lifted!* Again, another proof that they did not have salvation under the Old Covenant. Their minds were blinded!

Listen carefully to this next part. This applies to Protestantism and carnal people in the world so clearly. “...**for to the present hour the same veil has not been removed, but remains at the reading of the Old Covenant...**” (v 14).

Isn’t that what happens? They don’t want to hear that you have to keep the commandments of God! They don’t want to hear that grace establishes law! They want the forgiveness so they can continue living in their sins—the *mystery of lawlessness!* What happens when you have circumcision of the heart and mind vs circumcision of the flesh?

“...which **veil is removed** in Christ” (v 14). Now you can see the laws and commandments of God, that:

- they are Holy
- they are spiritual
- they are true
- they must be kept in the spirit
- they are good and righteous

—and that we ourselves **are sinners and we must repent** and come to God and have Him cleanse away our sins spiritually and change our heart and mind.

Now then, when you read anything in what we call the Book of Moses—and we can say the Prophets and the Psalms included—what happens?

We understand it! But there was a time in our lives when we were blinded, because that veil was over our mind. That is not removed until the circumcision of Christ has taken place.

Verse 15: “For to this day, when Moses is read, *the veil* lies upon their hearts.” Look at Judaism today. You can look at Protestantism today. Is that true? *Yes, to a great degree!* You can look at any other ‘religion’ in the world: Catholicism, Buddhism, Mohammadism or Islam, and the same thing is true. They’ve all been blinded! If God has blinded them, then God is responsible to one day remove that blinding if He wants all men to be saved. That’s why there is the second resurrection. Very profound! God is just!

If God blinds someone so they can’t understand, is it just to say ‘I blinded you so you couldn’t understand, go jump in the Lake of Fire over here because you’ve sinned’? The first thing we’d say is ‘that’s not fair.’ That’s why you have to have the second resurrection, so they can be resurrected and God says, ‘Okay, you’ve lived one life in blindness, now here is the Truth! Now you have a chance to repent.’ That’s when the great harvest is going to take place. If you think the harvest during the Millennium is going to be something, think of what the Great White Throne Judgment harvest is going to be.

Verse 16: “But when *their hearts* turn to *the Lord*, the veil is taken away.” In other words, that’s repentance. ‘Repent and be baptized and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.’

Verse 17: “Now, the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of *the Lord is*, there *is* freedom.” Free from sin so that you can walk in the commandments of God.

Verse 18: “But we all, with uncovered faces beholding the glory of *the Lord* as in a mirror, are being transformed... [conversion] ...*into* the same image... [of Christ] ...from glory to glory, even as by *the Spirit of the Lord*.” That’s the difference between the Old Covenant and the New Covenant.

Now, let’s look at the administration that we have in the New Covenant. Let’s see the process. You’re not hauled before a tribunal. This is why confession of sin is never to any man. You’re dealing with God and God is dealing with you. Besides, I know myself and you know yourself; if you had to confess your sins to a man, what would you do? *You would minimize them as much as possible though admitting them* so you would have a reduced sentence of ‘hail Marys’ and ‘our fathers.’

Here is what we are to do, 1-John 1:8: “If we say that we do not have sin, we are deceiving

ourselves, and the Truth is not in us. If we confess our own sins..." (vs 8-9). We're going to see that's to Christ. You confess them to Jesus Christ and God the Father.

"...He is faithful and righteous, to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (v 9).

- Isn't that better than going before a civil magistrate or a judge for every little thing that you have done? *Yes, indeed!*
- What happens with this when you do that and you know your sins are forgiven?
- What does that do because of God's love and mercy to provide this way?
 - ✓ that gives you incentive to live better
 - ✓ that gives you incentive to fight against sin and not give into it, because God is merciful and just

Whereas, if you had to come before a council or before a church board, that would really be 'hell on earth.' Only God judges the heart! That's why the *administration of the Spirit* is that much more glorious.

Verse 10: "If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His Word is not in us."

1-John 2:1: "My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin...." God doesn't want us to sin, but because of our nature, we do sin. That's why we stand under the umbrella of grace and live in that grace, so that we can come to God and have forgiveness of sin, which in turn gives us more incentive to grow and overcome.

"...And yet, if anyone does sin, we have an Advocate with the Father—Jesus Christ the Righteous—and He is the propitiation... [the atoning mercy seat] ...for our sins; and not for our sins only, but also for *the sins of the whole world*" (vs 1-2). That will be in God's time!

In this situation for the Christian, if you are faithful to the end you will receive eternal life. Those who commit the *unpardonable sin* and reject Jesus Christ, God then executes the death penalty, the second death! Far different! It's far more glorious! You can see why the things that they did under the Old Covenant were only just a type of what was to come under the New Covenant, that's all.

If you want to understand the sacrifices of the Old Covenant in relationship to Jesus Christ get the book by Andrew Jukes: *The Law of Offerings*. That's quite a book!

Old Covenant—Earthly Sanctuary:

The Old Covenant had physical ordinances of Divine service in an earthly sanctuary. You can go back and read all of the priest's laws and everything that applied there.

New Covenant—Heavenly Sanctuary:

We have an actual Divine service in a heavenly sanctuary to where we pray directly to God the Father. Jesus Christ is our High Priest. Rev. 8 gives us a glimpse as to what happens when we come before God and we pray. We know that Paul wrote that the Holy Spirit helps our weaknesses, so that our prayers are answered and go to God in a form that strips away from it all the carnality of self. That's wonderful to know.

When you are praying and some silly idea flits through your head, because you're a human being, that doesn't go to God. I'm very thankful to understand this, because every once in a while you listen to a commercial and that thing sticks in your head. That's the intent of the commercial. What happens when you're praying and all of a sudden here comes this commercial coursing through your brain? Does that go up to God? *No!* God does not care that 'Coke is the real thing!' or whatever. So today, what I do when I'm watching television—and it drives everybody absolutely nuts and they cannot watch television with me—I hit the mute! That's filtered out by the Holy Spirit! (Rom. 8).

Revelation 8:1: "Now, when He opened the seventh seal, *there* was silence in heaven *for* about a half hour. Then I saw the seven angels who stand before God, and seven trumpets were given to them. And another angel, who had a golden censer, came and stood at the altar; and much incense was given to him, so that he might offer *it* with the prayers of all the saints on the golden altar that *was* before the throne. And the smoke of the incense went up before God from *the* hand of the angel, ascending with the prayers of the saints" (vs 1-4).

So, your prayers go right directly to God; right directly to that 'golden altar' that receives the prayers of all the saints! That's far better than having an earthly sanctuary and a physical priesthood and once year the priest would go into the Holy of Holies on the Day of Atonement. Here your prayers go directly to God anytime you pray—anytime of the day or night—because it's an eternal process and it's never stopped! That's why we can have full confidence in our prayers. This shows the actual sanctuary service that goes on.

Paul also intimates this in Heb. 1. The angels are also involved in carrying out many of these things.

Hebrews 1:13: “But unto which of the angels did He ever say, ‘Sit at My right hand, until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet’? Are they not all ministering spirits, being sent forth to minister to those who are about to inherit salvation?” (vs 13-14). We just saw how the operation takes place (Rev. 8).

Have you ever had something happen to you that you know an angel had to intervene and save your life or keep you whole or well? Every once in a while something will happen that you will change your mind about and you look back and you see that God spared you from a disaster. That’s all the work of the power of God’s Holy Spirit with the ministering angels to watch out for us. As Paul says at the end of Hebrews, ‘to entertain strangers because many have entertained angels unawares.’ That is the actual sanctuary and the service that takes place.

Old Covenant—Blood of Animals:

At the institution of the Old Covenant and earthly tabernacle, the blood of animals was used for consecration (Exo., Lev., Numb., Deut.). At the institution of the New Covenant and the heavenly tabernacle, consecrated with the blood of Christ.

(go to the next track)

Hebrews 9:6: “Now with these things prepared in this manner, the priests enter into the first tabernacle at all *customary* times *in order* to perform the services; but the high priest *enters* alone into the second *tabernacle* once a year, not without blood, which he offers for himself and for the sins that the people committed in ignorance.... [Lev. 16—talking about the Day of Atonement and all the ritual that went with that] ...The Holy Spirit signifying this: *that* the way of the Holiest... [the Holy of Holies in heaven above] ...has not yet been made manifest, while the first tabernacle is still standing” (vs 6-8).

In other words, the very fact that they had a tabernacle, the very fact that the high priest could only go in there once a year, signified that no one had direct access to God the Father and Jesus Christ in heaven above. It was only to the tabernacle or temple with the exception of those like David and the prophets and so forth.

Verse 9: “Which *is* a symbol for the present time, in which both gifts and sacrifices are being offered *that* are not able to perfect the one performing the *service*, as pertaining to the conscience.” It’s important to understand: In the New Covenant your conscience is changed because of the circumcision of the heart and conversion.

All of these things, v 10: “*These services consist* only of meat and drink *offerings*, and various washings [purifications] and physical ordinances, imposed until *the* time of the new *spiritual* order.... [The *King James* says ‘reformation’—I wonder where they got that word?] ...But Christ Himself has become High Priest of the coming good things, through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made by *human* hands (that is, not of this *present physical* creation). Not by *the* blood of goats and calves, but by the means of His own blood, He entered once for all into the Holiest, having *by* Himself secured everlasting redemption *for us*” (vs 10-12).

There’s a vast difference between the Old Covenant and the New Covenant. Maybe you can understand why Jesus was so vehement against the doctrines of the Pharisees, Sadducees and Herodians.

Verse 13: “For if the blood of goats and bulls, and *the* ashes of a heifer sprinkled *on* those who are defiled, sanctifies to the purifying of the flesh.”

- What happened when they went through all these rituals? *God said that if you offered this sacrifice your sins would be forgiven!*
- In what degree? *Obviously, as it says here, you were not coming before God the Father in heaven above!*
- To what were they forgiven? *To the sanctuary only!* Which was fine because God was not dealing in eternal salvation with them.

They were purified there and that’s why the difference between the two—“...sanctifies to the purifying of the flesh.” In other words you were made physically acceptable before God for the physical worship at the physical tabernacle or temple, and God accepted you on the terms that He gave.

New Covenant—Blood of Christ:

Notice the comparison, v 14: “To a far greater degree, the blood of Christ, Who through *the* eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, shall **purify your conscience** from dead works to serve *the* living God.... [that’s exactly what this is all about; that is the difference] ...And for this reason He is *the* Mediator of *the* New Covenant: in order that through *His* death, *which* took place for the release of the transgressions *that were committed* under the first covenant...” (vs 14-15).

- What happened here?
- How did God do it?

- *They were forgiven to the tabernacle or temple!*

When Christ died, that released all of those sins that were only forgiven to the tabernacle or the temple under the first covenant.

“...those who have been called might receive the promise of the eternal inheritance” (v 15).

Old Covenant—Levitical Priesthood:

The sons of Aaron were high priests of the earthly tabernacle. That’s very evident. You can go back in the book of Exodus and see the dedication of the priests and the Levites and so forth—all of that is there.

New Covenant—Priesthood of Christ:

However, under the New Covenant, Christ is High Priest of the heavenly tabernacle *forever*. Let’s see the operation of it.

Stop and think about this for just a minute. Isn’t it a fantastic thing that God has given us His Spirit, we have direct access to Him, have our sins forgiven upon repentance and have our conscience purified and our mind changed and converted all of this sort of thing in preparation for eternal life. What is so great about that is this: There is no army of men or demons or Satan that can destroy that temple and destroy that relationship. Whereas, with the physical temple—when the people sinned—God destroyed it. What did the people themselves do to it? *They converted it into pagan worship!* This can’t be done under the New Covenant. We have:

- a living way
- a pure way
- a righteous way
- a spiritual way

—and Christ is always there ready! Here is what’s important concerning the Word of God. It’s not just a textbook.

Hebrews 4:12: “For the Word of God *is* living... [like Jesus said, ‘the words that I speak to you, they are spirit and they are life’] ...and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword...”

God does not have to come down here when people sin and execute some kind of penalty against them. The penalty is automatic. If you murder, commit adultery, lie, cheat, steal or any of these things, the penalty is automatic. Granted, the civil law may also intervene, too. But God’s penalty is there! Especially for those who have consciousness of God. What happens when you sin? *Immediately, God makes it known to your conscience!* You feel

badly. What is this designed to do? *To lead you to repentance!* That is the *living Word of God!* Through the power of the Holy Spirit, written in your heart and mind to give you the active governance of God by your free choice and will. That is tremendous! That’s how God’s Word is!

This is why people pull the veil down: “...piercing even to the dividing asunder of both soul and spirit, *and* of both *the* joints and *the* marrow, and *is* able to discern *the* thoughts and intents of *the* heart” (v 12).

There’s no other book in the world that can do that. *None!* You can read Mark Twain. How many repent of sin after reading Mark Twain? or the philosophers: Aristotle, Plato or Pythagoras? *None!* When you read the Bible it does something to you that no other book does, because it’s described right here. If you have any conscience at all, it is going to work with you to whatever degree that you allow it to work with you. That’s a tremendous thing! No other book in the world like that!

Verse 13 has to do with the administration of the New Covenant and also everything in the whole world besides that:

Verse 13: “And there is not a created thing that is not manifest in His sight...” What does God say about a sparrow that falls? *He takes note of it! A sparrow!* Christ said, ‘Understand, you’re worth many sparrows.’ So, if God takes note of a sparrow, He’ll take care of you. You don’t have to worry. You don’t have to be fearful. You don’t have lack in faith. Trust in God, He’ll help you! A tremendous thing! That’s why the New Covenant is called *superior!*

“...but all things *are* naked and laid bare before the eyes of Him to Whom we must give account” (v 13). Because this is the awesome power of God, He gives us hope—not to cut us asunder, but to lead us to repentance.

Verse 14: “Having therefore a great High Priest...”—as compared to those who die of the line of Aaron and they have to go into the Holy of Holies once a year.

“...*Who* has passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, we should hold fast the confession *of our faith*” (v 14). Here’s why:

- regardless of your circumstances
- regardless of your trials
- regardless of what you are going through

Verse 15: “For we do not have a High Priest Who cannot empathize with our weaknesses... [this is why He came to the earth as a human being] ...

but *One Who* was tempted in all things according to the likeness of *our own temptations*; yet, *He* was without sin.... [his is given to give us hope] ...Therefore, we should come with boldness to the throne of grace..." (vs 15-16). Tie this all together with the things that we covered with the New Covenant:

- love
- kindness
- mercy
- forgiveness
- understanding

"...so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need" (v 16). That is a tremendous thing. That's why Christ is High Priest over a heavenly tabernacle forever. That is marvelous!

- Anytime you need to pray to God, *Christ is there!*
- Anytime you need understanding because of sin and temptation—and you confess that to God the Father and Jesus Christ—*He is there!*
- Anytime you are in trouble and facing difficulties, you can pray to Him for strength and help and guidance, *because He is there!*

Always! He doesn't need to sleep. He's not going to die. That's why God the Father proclaimed Him Priest after the order of Melchisedec forever. That's a marvelous thing. That's why the New Covenant is a *superior* covenant.

Old Covenant—Works of Law:

The priest offered animal sacrifices for physical justification to the earthly tabernacle and the purifying of the flesh and the high priest went into the Holy of Holies once a year.

Hebrews 10:1: "For the *priestly* law, having *only* a shadow of the good things that are coming, *and* not the image of those things, with the same sacrifices, which they offer continually year by year, is never able to make perfect those who come to *worship*." That's the key, the New Covenant makes you perfect.

Verse 2: "Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered? For once those who worship had been purified, *they would* no longer be conscious of sin. On the contrary, in *offering* these sacrifices year by year, *there is* a remembrance of sins, because *it is* impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins" (vs 2-4).

Very key thing. How could there ever have been spiritual salvation under the Old Covenant if

what they did never took away sins. You need the forgiveness of sin in order to receive the gift of eternal life. Those things are important to realize.

By the time we're done with this, you're going to see how great that the New Covenant is. How marvelous it is, and to understand that God has called us, given us His Spirit and given us all these blessings and has given us direct access to Him. Why, this is absolutely the most marvelous thing that can be in this life. If we understand that, then this will give us *the drive, the zeal, the impetus, the desire* to do what is right: To love God because He has done this!

New Covenant—The Grace of God:

Understand this: *Law can never convert*, only God can! *Even the laws of God cannot convert, you must repent!* It's important! That's why, as you look at the world today, they make new laws and what happens? There's more crime! Why? *Because law cannot change the heart! Law cannot convert!* That's the difference between the Old Covenant and the New Covenant.

Christ offered Himself once—*once for all!* Now you understand why God has to do the calling. Now you understand why Jesus said, 'I am the Way, the Truth and the Life and none can come to the Father except through Me.' After what Christ has done, it's not going to be done any other way except through Him. Amazing, isn't it? *Amazing!*

These verses are ones that Protestants trip over more than anything else. These verses are the verses that people misunderstand more than anything else.

Romans 3:20: "Therefore, by works of law... [any kind of law, any kind of works, anywhere, concerning anything] ...there shall no flesh be justified before Him..."

Why? *Because justification only comes through repentance and the application of the sacrifice of Christ!* The work that anyone does is repentance. If someone goes to a Catholic priest and confesses his/her sins, and he says: 200 'hail Marys,' 300 'our fathers' and you've got to come to Mass for six months and not miss. That's forgiveness and salvation by works. *No work of any law anywhere can justify anyone from anything because that is through the sacrifice of Christ and nothing can equal to or be substituted for the sacrifice of Jesus Christ!* It's that simple! It's what Paul is talking about.

"...for through *the Law is the* knowledge of sin.... [that's what law does] ...But now, *the* righteousness of God... [the justification of God that

puts you in right standing with God] ...*that is* separate from law... [doesn't mean there's an absence of law, as many Protestants believe] ...has been revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets; even *the* righteousness of God *that is* through *the* faith of Jesus Christ..." (vs 20-22).

Jesus Christ's own faith; the faith that He had to come here to become a human being; to live a perfect life before God the Father; to accept and willingly give Himself to be the sacrifice; to be beaten and scourged and crucified; the faith to trust God the Father to that. ***That is the faith that saves you!*** There's no such thing under the Old Covenant. That's why this is so profound.

"...*the* faith of Jesus Christ toward all and upon all those who believe..." (v 22). This belief also implies repentance, because if you believe that you're a sinner—all have sinned and come short of the glory of God—you will repent.

"...for there is no difference. For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; *but* are being justified freely..." (vs 22-24). It's not like the Catholic system as William Tyndale said, 'The popes have another kingdom that God Himself doesn't have.' It's the kingdom over the dead called purgatory, so they can make more money.

"...being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that *is* in Christ Jesus; Whom God has openly manifested *to be* a propitiation through faith in His blood, in order to demonstrate His righteousness, in respect to the remission of sins that are past... [God is showing us how to be justified] ...through the forbearance of God; *yes*, to publicly declare His righteousness in the present time, that He might be just, and the One Who justifies the one who *is* of *the* faith of Jesus" (vs 24-26). That's why the New Covenant is so great.

Verse 31: "Are we, then, abolishing *the* Law through faith? MAY IT NEVER BE! Rather, we are establishing *the* Law." Because through this kind of forgiveness, through this kind of justification, God gives you the desire with His Spirit inwardly to do what God wants. As you grow in perfection and grace and knowledge, you do the things that please God.

Direct access to God the Father through Jesus Christ. We covered that in part 1, how you can have entrance right into the Holy of Holies.

Old Covenant—a person could not be made perfect concerning conscience.

New Covenant—sins are forgiven spiritually; purges the conscience through the operation of the

Holy Spirit.

Let's look at the end result of that by going to Eph. 4. This is the whole goal that God is achieving in everything in the New Covenant. He says in Romans, 'How shall they be here unless a preacher is sent.' There has to be teachers. It's God's responsibility to raise up teachers. Once He raises them up, it's the responsibility of the teacher to remain faithful to the Word of God. It's the responsibility of the teacher to teach the people the Word of God so that they can have access to God, receive God's grace and Spirit and have the desire to love God with all their heart, mind, soul and being.

Ephesians 4:11: "And He gave some as apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists; and some pastors and teachers for the perfecting of the saints..." (vs 11-12).

That is what the New Covenant is to do, to perfect you day-by-day, week-by-week, month-by-month, year-by-year—through your whole life:

- that you come to have the mind of Christ
- that you come to have the love of God as the greatest, most important thing in your existence
- that's why God has created you
- that's why God has called you
- that's why God has given you His Holy Spirit

"...for *the* work of *the* ministry, for *the* edifying of the Body of Christ" (v 12)—to build it up; to inspire you; to help you. Too many times in the past you've gone to Church and you'd get beat up and leave with fear and trepidation. ***NO!*** You're to be inspired! You're to be uplifted! You're to be given the desire—through the teaching and preaching and the power of God's Holy Spirit—to repent; to change; that you see your own weaknesses and faults and bring those before God—***and He will help you!*** That's what it's about.

Verse 12: "For the perfecting of the saints, for *the* work of *the* ministry, for *the* edifying of the Body of Christ; until we all come into the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God... [that will happen in full at the resurrection] ...unto a perfect man, unto *the* measure of *the* stature of the fullness of Christ" (vs 12-13).

That's why the New Covenant is *superior!* There is no comparison between the Old Covenant and the New Covenant to have any equal footing whatsoever.

Sacrifices and Oblations:

The sacrifices and oblations ceased at the

time the new spiritual order was established by Jesus Christ. Christ's one Supreme Sacrifice to apply to all men and women who accept it, from the time of Adam to the end of humanity.

This tells the whole story, Hebrews 10:5: "For this reason, when He comes into the world, He says, 'Sacrifice and offering You did not desire, but You have prepared a body for Me.'"

He's talking about Christ. Nowhere is it every recorded that He Himself went to the temple and offered any sacrifice at all. The only sacrifice that was offered on His behalf was at the purification of His mother Mary after 40 days.

Verse 6: "You did not delight in burnt offerings and *sacrifices* for sin. Then said I, 'Lo, I come (as it is written of Me in the Scroll of the Book) to do Your will, O God'" (vs 6-7). That's greater than any sacrifice. That's what Christ came to do.

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

Read Isa. 1—what did they do? *They had all these sacrifices, but their hearts weren't changed!* You can read Isa. 66—what does God care for any sacrifice or temple if those coming to it have hard hearts and living in sin? God wants a change of heart and mind, so He didn't delight in that.

Christ on the other hand, v 9: "Then He said, 'Lo, I come to do Your will, O God.' He takes away the first *covenant* in order that He may establish the second *covenant*... [to bring in the *superior way*] ... by Whose will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ **once for all**" (vs 9-10).

Verse 14: "For by one offering He has obtained eternal perfection *for* those who are sanctified." That's something! That's what God wants! That's what Sabbath services are about. That's what daily prayer and Bible study are about! To be perfected in Christ!

The Temple System Ceases:

The *temple system* ceased when Jesus died. The Old Covenant ceased after the death of Christ. We have a very dramatic way that God showed that it ceased. You can read this in *The Christian Passover* book. Let's see what happened when Christ died. See what happened to the temple. This is when Jesus was hanging on the cross:

Matthew 27:50: "And after crying out again with a loud voice, Jesus yielded up *His* spirit. Then

suddenly the veil of the temple was ripped in two from top to bottom..." (vs 50-51).

At that time there was a special veil that was a huge curtain—probably as thick as the width of your hand—that was made in 12 sections signifying the 12 tribes of Israel. I think it was seven stories high—70 feet. Here is this big, special veil covering the front of the temple. When Jesus died, the huge stone lentil that held that up there broke in two and the veil was rent right down the middle. You talk about tearing cloth that is as thick as the width of your hand. That was a tremendous, supernatural event! It wasn't just the huge stone lentil that came down and tore it. It was probably an angel that whacked it right down the middle.

"...and the earth shook, and the rocks were split" (v 51). This was to signify that ***the way to the Holy of Holies in heaven above was opened!*** To signify that the whole temple system on earth was coming to an end! God gave them another 40 years to repent before He officially ended it. *They didn't do it!*

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*

Scriptural References:

- 1) Genesis 9:5-6
- 2) Deuteronomy 17:2-13
- 3) 2 Corinthians 3:1-18
- 4) 1 John 1:8-9
- 5) 1 John 2:1-2
- 6) Revelation 8:1-4
- 7) Hebrews 1:13-14
- 8) Hebrews 9:6-15
- 9) Hebrews 4:12-16
- 10) Hebrews 10:1-4
- 11) Romans 3:20-26, 31
- 12) Ephesians 4:11-13
- 13) Hebrews 10:5-10, 14
- 14) Matthew 27:50-51

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Genesis 10
- Exodus 21-24; 18
- Romans 8
- Leviticus 16
- Isaiah 1; 66

Also Referenced: Books:

- *The Law of Offerings* by Andrew Jukes
- *The Christian Passover* by Fred R. Coulter

FRC:bo
Transcribed: 5-18-11
Reformatted/Corrected: January/2017

Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews XXVI Covenant Law

(Chapter 9)
Fred R. Coulter

Why is it that Christianity, especially in the world, but even in the Churches of God is in such disarray? Why is it that there is no stable belief among the people of God, and that they're '*driven to and fro*,' and like James said, *with the wind*—follow after '*every wind of doctrine*'? Why is that so, when they have the Truth of God and they all have the Bible? How can we, all having the same Bible—and we'll include in this all of the Protestants and so forth—be so mixed up when the Bible says it's the Truth of God?

Well, one of the reasons is—though they have it and they study it—if they have 'religion' and they preach from it, they *selectively* believe what they desire. They do not really comprehend what God has done, what Jesus Christ has done, in order to save them from their sins. Being saved from sin for most people is to be a *feel-good* experience. Eternal life, for most people is that hopefully your soul will go to heaven. There are those—in the Church of God—who believe in the resurrection. All of this comes from the problem that ***they do not understand what God has done***. So therefore, they don't value the Word of God as the Truth of God. They don't value it from the point of view that Jesus said, 'Heaven and earth will pass away, but My Word shall never pass away.'

Let's look at some things in the book of Hebrews so that we can understand what it is exactly that God has done. In going through the book of Hebrews, many people go through it and they look at what is in the Old Testament with the utmost of contempt rather than understanding that these were types and sign-pointers and prophecies leading to Christ, and telling us what God was to do. Heb. 9 is an extension beyond what we have covered with the comparison between the Old and New Covenants.

We will review just a little here. He is talking about how the tabernacle and the temple were prepared:

Hebrews 9:6: "Now, with these things prepared in this manner, the priests enter into the first tabernacle at all *customary* times in order to perform the services."

In that first part they had the showbread. They had the seven golden lamp stands and they had the laver for the washing of the priests and so forth.

Verse 7: "But the high priest *enters* alone

into the second *tabernacle*... [the second part of it] ... once a year, not without blood, which he offers for himself and for the sins that the people committed in ignorance. The Holy Spirit signifying this: *that* the way of the Holiest... [in a personal relationship with God] ...has not yet been made manifest, while the first tabernacle is still standing" (vs 7-8).

What was the first sign that that temple was going to be destroyed? In effect, though it was not destroyed immediately, it was as good as destroyed and rendered the functioning at the temple of no value. What was that event that took place that did that? They had a special veil that covered the whole length of the front of the temple, and that veil was about as thick as a hand width and it was 72-feet long and covered the front of it. It was suspended at the top by a huge stone lintel which, when Christ died, that was struck in two—probably by an angel—and the whole veil ripped from top to bottom, signifying that the way to 'the Holiest' was now open. So, when that event occurred, everything at the temple was a non-functioning ritual of absolutely no value, and the only reason it stood was for a 40-year overlap from the Old Covenant to the full establishing of the New Covenant.

Verse 9: "Which *is* a symbol for the present time, in which both gifts and sacrifices are being offered *that* are not able to perfect the one performing the *service*, as pertaining to the conscience. *These services consist* only of meat and drink *offerings*, and various washings and physical ordinances, imposed until the time of the new *spiritual* order.... [the Protestant reformers have there 'the reformation' (KJV)] ...But Christ Himself has become High Priest of the coming good things, through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made by *human* hands (that is, not of this *present physical* creation). Not by *the* blood of goats and calves, but by the means of His own blood, He entered once for all into the Holiest, having *by* Himself secured everlasting redemption *for us*" (vs 9-12).

That's what's important. That's where it becomes a personal Savior and this is why God does not want hierarchies to control people. He wants to send His Holy Spirit to dwell within all of those who are His begotten children.

How close is God? How involved is God in our lives? Even in the Church today—not only in

Protestantism, but even in the Churches of God—God is somehow way up out there. But in fact, *He is not!* With the Holy Spirit, ***He is part of you.*** What's important is that more brethren understand this, and grasp it and realize that God did this *because He loves each one that He calls!*

I did a sermon concerning the operation of a little baby, where it showed the hand of the 21-week-old baby almost as if it was reaching up and shaking the doctor's hand to say, 'Thanks, Doc.' I showed that even in the physical realm, even in physical life, God is involved with all human beings. *Yes, He is!* But because there is free moral agency, which God gave, and it is so profound that God made His creation as such, that even though God is involved in their lives—through their creation, through the way they think and walk and where they live and all of these things—they don't know it. Isn't that a fantastic thing how great God is that He could do that, and how profound free moral agency is! If we understand that and what God has done and with God's Spirit in us, then we will realize that God is not close to us; ***He is in us!***

2-Corinthians 6:14: "Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. For Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and lawlessness *have* in common? And what fellowship *does* light *have* with darkness? And what union *does* Christ *have* with Belial? Or what part *does* a believer *have* with an unbeliever? And what agreement *is there between* a temple of God and idols? For ***you are a temple of the living God...***" (vs 14-16).

- that's how much God loves you
- that's how much God is involved in your life
- this is how the conscience is changed and purged

And the only way it can be is with the addition of the Holy Spirit of God!

"...exactly as God said: 'I will dwell in them and walk in *them*; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people'" (v 16).

Have you thought about wherever you're walking with God's Spirit in you, He is walking with you? How close is God? *Right there!* He can't get any closer in this life. If everyone really understood this, don't you think there would be far fewer of those who would fall away? Don't you think there would be more with love and hope and conviction? *Yes, indeed!* God wants you to understand something: ***Christ has personally redeemed us from our sins!*** God the Father has begotten us with His Holy Spirit so the He can dwell

in us. And we'll see in just a minute that Christ *can* dwell in us.

"... 'I will be their God, and they shall be My people. Therefore, ***come out from the midst of them...***'" (vs 16-17). Is there anything in the world, *anything at all*, that can possibly compare to that? *Not a thing! Absolutely nothing!*

"...and ***be separate,***' says *the* Lord, 'and touch not *the* unclean, and I will receive you; and I shall be a Father to you...' (vs 17-18). Isn't that how we are to pray? *Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name*, and we have the privilege to call Him Father.

"...and you shall be My sons and daughters,' says *the* Lord Almighty." (v 18). We have to understand what God did in order to make that possible. It was not an easy thing. We'll see that the receiving of the Holy Spirit is a joint operation of the begetting of God the Father, the seed of eternal life and the mind of Christ. Remember, He said, 'I will dwell in them.'

John 14:23: "Jesus answered and said to him, 'If anyone loves Me... [that is the key to truly love God with all you heart and mind and soul and being] ...he will keep My Word...'"

- No argument!
- No dispute!
- No keeping some and throwing others away!
- No carnal excuses and justification!

You can read the theological arguments of so many people that are the agents of Satan the devil, that look like they are ministers of righteousness, and they just blither along with their own disbelief.

"... 'If anyone loves Me, he will keep My Word; and My Father will love him...' (v 23).

{Note sermon: *When All Else Fails, Remember, God Loves You*} Everything else in this world is going to fail. The very fact that we have the Holy Spirit of God and we live *in* the world, but we're not *of* the world:

- we are going to have challenges
- we are going to have trials
- we are going to have difficulties

What did Jesus say? '*In the world you will have tribulation, but be courageous, I have overcome the world.*' He is dwelling in you. Can you overcome the world? *Of course, you can!* But you have to know and believe and have that conviction that that is so.

Verse 23: "...My Father will love him, and

We... [together] ...will come to him and make Our abode [dwelling] with him.... [It's like it says there in 2-Cor.6: *dwelling in us!*] (On the other hand): ...The one who does not love Me does not keep My words..." (vs 23-24)—and that's what's wrong with the world.

- they want to be saved, but *my* way
- they want to be blessed, but *on my terms*
- they want to accept Christ as *we* recreate Him in our image

Therefore, they don't keep His Words. How important are these words?

Verse 24: "The one who does not love Me does not keep My words... [Whatever Jesus said, and whatever He inspired the apostles to write. What is it?] ...and **the Word that you hear is not Mine, but the Father's, Who sent Me.**"

- Who is communicating this to you? *God the Father!*
- Who gives you understanding when you read the Bible? *God the Father and Jesus Christ with the power of the Holy Spirit!*
- Who gives you the discernment to rightly divide the Word of God and live by every Word of God? *God the Father and Jesus Christ!*

When you strip away all the things that human beings have and get rid of all of the religious apparatus that they have, you realize that God is doing a profound thing in each individual that He calls. That's why we are called *brethren*. What did God have to do to do this?

All of this centers around *covenant*, and the biggest lack in the world, especially in the so-called Christian religions of the world, is that they do not understand *covenant*. They do not understand how a covenant is and what it is and the terms of a covenant. They do not understand what God did in order to make a covenant to do this.

Hebrews 9:14: "To a far greater degree... [this sums up what we just said here] ...the blood of Christ, Who through *the* eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, shall purify your conscience from dead works to serve *the* living God."

Once you understand that the forgiveness of God that He gives you is also to give you forgetfulness of those sins and cleanse your conscience, so that over a period of time of growing and overcoming those will be expunged from your mind, though you still may have some remembrance of it from the point of view that you sure learned a good lesson from it. But you're not running around

with a guilt feeling concerning it. That's why it says there in Rom. 8 the that to those who are in Christ there is not condemnation provided there is repentance, provided there is everything that God shows.

Verse 15: "And for this reason He is *the* Mediator of *the* New Covenant: in order that through *His* death, *which* took place for the release of the transgressions *that were committed* under the first covenant, those who have been called might receive the promise of the eternal inheritance." We are going to see what God did to make that possible.

Verse 16 is one of the most mistranslated, misunderstood verses; let's read it in the *King James*. Let's understand something that is important: All the way through the New Testament the Greek word 'diatheke' is translated *covenant* with the exception of several places which this is one of those here:

Verse 16 (KJV): "For where a testament *is*..." A testament is not like a covenant. Testamental law is that you *write out* a last will and testimony. When you have that last will and testimony, as long as you are alive you can change it any time you want to; that's called adding a codicil to it. You can also change the heirs—can't you? Covenant law is different. We are going to focus on covenant law. Covenant law is not that way and this should not be testament here, as we will see in just a minute.

Verse 16 (KJV): "For where a testament *is*, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament *is* of force after men are dead... [that is a completely wrong translation when it comes to covenant] ...Otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator lives" (vs 16-17).

Verse 16 (FV): "Now where *there is* a covenant... ['diatheke'] ...*it is* obligatory... [there is something that you must do] ...to bring forth *a symbolic sacrifice to represent* the death of the one who personally ratifies *the* covenant... [we are going to see how that was done in just a little bit] ...because a covenant *is* ratified *only over the* dead *sacrificial* animals..." (vs 16-17).

The translators have never been able to figure out the plural 'ton nekron'—which is in the Greek there in v 17—the *dead ones*. How could you have 'ton nekron' and apply it to one person? *You can't!* These are the dead ones, or the dead sacrificial animals.

"...since there is no way that it is legally in force until the living ratifier *has symbolically represented his death*" (v 17).

That's why a covenant is entirely different. A testament you can write out, you can sign it, and it can sit there and you can change it any time you want. Not with a covenant. Once a covenant is made then it is ratified by the symbolic death of the one who makes it, otherwise it is of no force, it is just tentative. We are going to see what God did with Abraham to show the in-viability of what He was going to do.

footnote from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order*:

In the OT, ratification of a covenant based on sacrifice frequently entailed a self-maledictory procedure.

What does self-maledictory mean? *Those animals that are sacrificed symbolize what will happen to the ratifier if he does not fulfill his obligation!*

The ratifying party invoked a curse upon himself when he swore commitment to comply with the terms of the covenant.

We have done that with baptism. Why is it that when we are baptized we are put completely under the water? You see why the churches in the world have nothing to do with God and don't understand covenant theology in the Bible. Many of them just sprinkle or daub. Why emersion in water? *It is symbolic of your death!* That's what it is.

In the transaction, the ratifying party was represented by animals designated for sacrifice.

We are going to see this is not on an altar. We are going to see this is not like any other sacrifice that is listed in the Bible. It is a special sacrifice.

The bloody dismemberment of the representative animals signified the violent death of the ratifying party if he proved faithless to his oath.... Until the oath of allegiance had been sworn and validated by the action of cutting the animals in two and walking between the pieces...the covenant remained merely tentative. It was legally confirmed on the basis of the dismembered bodies of the sacrificial victims. In its context, the unusual formulation 'epe nekrois' 'on the basis of the dead bodies,' refers to the bodies of representative animals used in the self-maledictory rite of covenant ratification. It finds an exact parallel in Ps. 49[50]:5 LXX, where 'epe thoseus' means 'on the basis of sacrificial animals.' The thought is amplified with the strong negative assertion that a covenant is never

operative 'while the ratifier lives.' The formulation accurately reflects the legal situation that a covenant is never secured until the ratifier has bound himself to his oath by means of a representative death.

Now then, let's look at the death of Christ for just a minute. We are going to see that Jesus Christ in fact did this and it has everything to do with His crucifixion, and we will also see that He pledged it even before the foundation of the world.

This is interesting because it shows the division that's coming in the world, Revelation 13:8: "And all who dwell on the earth will worship him... [the beast] ...whose names have not been written in the book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."

When Adam and Eve sinned, what was the very first thing that God revealed to them? *That there was coming a coming sacrifice for sin!*

Genesis 3:15: "And I will put enmity between you... [the serpent] ...and the woman... [symbolic of the Church] ...and between your seed and her Seed... [Christ] ...He will bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel." A promise of a coming sacrifice.

Let's see that this is all wrapped up in the covenant that God made with Abraham {note sermon series: *The Three Covenants of Abraham*} I also have quite an extensive section, a couple of chapters, in *The Christian Passover* book which goes through this and shows it, so I'm not going to spend a great deal of time concerning it. Sufficient to say, God promised that Abraham would have a physical seed; Isaac was born.

Genesis 15:5—here is the promise of *spiritual* seed: "And He brought him outside and said, 'Look now toward the heavens and number the stars—if you are able to count them.' And He said to him, 'So shall your seed be.'"

That is the glorified, spiritual sons of God. Jesus said the righteous at the resurrection shall shine as the sun in its strength. Daniel said that those who turn many to righteousness shall 'shine as the stars of heaven.' Paul wrote that we are going to share the 'glory of the inheritance of Christ' and also that our 'vile bodies will be transformed and made like His body.' That is symbolized by the stars. Since it is impossible to count the stars, there was no work to perform.

Verse 6: "And he [Abraham] believed in the LORD. And He accounted it to him for righteousness." This is an important thing, not only believe in Him, but **believe Him**. Why is that

important? *If you believe God, you will do what He says! If you believe God, you will believe His Word!* That is counted as righteousness to you. That means that puts you in right standing with God, Isn't that something? Everyone wants to know, 'How do I stand before God?'

- in right standing
- unimpeachable
- Holy
- without blame

That's all part of the *grace of Christ!*

This is done because God, in believing wants you to be inspired! When you are inspired and motivated to do something, do you need a taskmaster there with a whip, whipping you along to do it? *No!* You will do it because you desire to from the heart. No one has to tell you to pray, because you want to communicate with God because He has put His Spirit in you! No one has to tell you to study, because you realize that these are the words of God, the greatest most magnificent book in the world. So therefore, these things are done to give you conviction.

Abraham had to perform a special sacrifice. This special sacrifice was a covenant maledictory oath, which God took upon Himself. That's why it's fundamental *to know and believe* that Jesus Christ was the LORD God of the Old Covenant, because if that is not understood and believed, then you cannot understand the crucifixion and the New Covenant.

God wanted to make sure that Abraham *knew*, v 7: "And He said to him, 'I *am* the LORD that brought you out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give you this land to inherit it.'"

He never inherited it. That is a future promise, and one of the most surprised persons in the world at the resurrection is going to be Abraham. We live at the tail end of the history of Israel and Judah in world history, and we can look back in hindsight and we have much more understanding. But remember Abraham had none of that. That's why he is called the father of the faithful, because he had to believe and accept the Word of God as true.

Now let's look at this covenant that God made with Abraham, and we are here because of it. Now you can read of the timing of it in *The Christian Passover* book. But let's jump ahead so we understand what we are talking about.

Verse 18: "In the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying..." He made a covenant. We'll see what was involved in this covenant, that it goes along exactly with what we find there in Heb. 9.

Verse 6: "And he believed in the LORD. And He accounted it to him for righteousness." Since he could not number the stars, but he believed God in what He said. Therefore, that was reckoned to him for righteousness or right standing with God. That does not mean that it is a substitute for commandment-keeping. A lot of people get that confused.

Never at any time did Abraham not keep the commandments of God. A lot of people when they talk about 'reckoned' as righteousness or imputing of righteousness, they misunderstand and think that once they have that right standing with God then they don't have to keep the commandments anymore because they're righteous, which is double-speak nonsense. There is a righteousness of God that He counts as righteousness, meaning you are *in right standing with Him because you believe Him*. There is a righteousness that comes with commandment-keeping, which is an obligatory thing for everyone to do.

God is talking to Isaac and He says to Isaac, carrying on the covenant that He made with Abraham:

Genesis 26:4: "And I will multiply your seed as the stars of the heavens... [we are of the children of promise like Isaac (Gal. 4)] ...and will give to your seed all these lands. And in your seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, **because Abraham obeyed my voice**..." (vs 4-5).

That is the whole sum of the matter! Everything that you read in the Bible is part of the voice of God, are the words that God breathed the writers to put in it, whether it's a genealogy, or a geographical location; it is all God-breathed and it is all equally inspired, though, with a different purpose. And the sum of everything that there is, that God wants you to do is ***to obey His voice and that means anything that He has said.***

"...obeyed My voice and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws" (v 5).

So, the righteousness that we are talking about in Gen. 15:6 is not the righteousness of commandment-keeping, but the righteousness of being in right standing with God. If you are in right standing with God, isn't that a greater righteousness than anything that can be? *Yes, indeed!* So that's what it is talking about here.

(go to the next track)

Genesis 15:7, God says: "...to give you this land to inherit it.' And he [Abram] said, 'Lord GOD, by what shall I know that I shall inherit it?'" (vs 7-

8).

God told him to do something very strange, and this is the maledictory covenant sacrifice. This is where in Heb. 9 it talks about the representative sacrificial animals, comes right from here.

Notice there was no altar, because if you are going to have a burnt offering you build an altar of twelve stones. So here is what God said:

Verse 9: "And He said to him, 'Take Me a heifer of three years old ... [that's a pretty good size cow] ...and a she-goat of three years old, and a ram of three years old, and a turtledove, and a young pigeon.'" These are all mature animals signifying that this is a mature thing that is going to be done. The turtledove and the young pigeon signify the lack of wealth, but also it signifies innocence and tenderness.

Verse 10: "And he took all these to himself..." He probably went into his herd and he selected out the best three-year-old heifer, the best three-year-old ram, the best three-year-old she-goat and took them out there. This sacrifice was entirely different and this maledictory oath was a foreshadow of the crucifixion.

When the movie *The Passion* came out I saw it. I don't go to see very many movies and maybe that can have an impact on some people to understand what God really went through to pay for the sins of the world.

This is similar to it. Instead of cutting the throat and then putting it on an altar to be burned, he cut the throat and then turn them over on their backs and cut them down the middle. So, the only way this could be done was to not only have a knife to cut the gut, but the under part. What did this do? *This strew the intestines all over the place!* And then he had to have a very sharp, heavy-duty hatchet to cut these animals right down through the spine to get two parts, and he did this with the heifer, the she-goat and the ram.

Verse 10: "And he took all these to himself, and divided them in the middle..." That means he hacked them right down the middle. That's going to be a bloody and terrible mess.

I don't know if any of you have ever had the experience of seeing an animal slaughtered or helped slaughter an animal. Some people can't even stand to see a chicken have its neck wrung. I know when I was five-years-old, my grandma did that. We went out to visit her ranch and she wrung a chicken's neck and she held the head in her hand and the chicken ran around all over. But imagine: this is blood, guts, manure, urine, spreading of the animals apart.

Verse 10: "...and laid each piece opposite the other... [that is the back sides were parallel to each other] ...but he did not divide the birds." He put a turtledove on one side, the young pigeon on the other side.

Verse 11: "And when the birds of prey came down upon the carcasses, Abram drove them away.... [then here came something very important] ...And it came to pass, **as the sun was going down**, that a deep sleep fell upon Abram...." (vs 10-12).

You can read in *The Christian Passover* book that this happened at exactly the same time in which Christ died on the cross. And so this deep sleep that came upon him was a symbolic death that Abraham experienced so he would know that's what God was going to do.

"...And, behold, a horror of great darkness fell upon him!" (v 12). Just like he was dead. Then God made the pledge.

Verse 17: "And it came to pass—when the sun went down and it was dark—behold, a smoking furnace and a burning lamp passed between those pieces."

That means that God passed between the pieces. What do you suppose happened to those carcasses? Don't you suppose they were all burned to a crisp, nothing but ashes? "...**and a burning lamp that passed between...**" signified the One Who would become Jesus Christ, walking down between the parts of those sacrificial animals and then the smoking furnace came right behind it and consumed them.

God did this for a great and a profound purpose, not only to guarantee that He would give the land to the descendants of Isaac, but that He also guaranteed *the spiritual seed* to be as the stars of heaven. He also portrayed His future death! All of those are encompassed in this. When you make a covenant like that, it's binding! God bound Himself and told Abraham in so many words, though he may not have understood it completely, that He was going to die to fulfill His promise to the spiritual seed.

Let's see how serious a covenant is. Let's see what happened when the men of Judah made a covenant with God, right at His temple. That's why the New Testament says, 'Let your 'yea' be *yea* and your 'nay' be *nay*.' God is going to hold you to it—right? God gave them an opportunity. He said, 'All right, I won't send you in to the land of Babylon in captivity **if you will obey My voice**. Let all the Hebrew slaves go free, and I won't send you into captivity.' And they all said that they would do that.

Jeremiah 34:8: “The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD, after King Zedekiah had made a covenant with all the people at Jerusalem, to proclaim liberty to them, that each man should let his male slave, and each man his female slave—if a Hebrew man or a Hebrew woman—go free, that none should enslave a Jew, his brother among them. And all the rulers obeyed, and all the people who had entered into the covenant allowed them to go free, each man his male slave, and each man his female slave, so that not any should be enslaved among them any more; and they obeyed and let *them* go” (vs 8-10). They were bound to do that, because they made a covenant with God.

Verse 18: “And I will give the men who have sinned against My covenant, who have not done the words of the covenant which they made before Me *when they* divided the calf in two and passed between its part.” So, they did exactly what was done in Gen. 15. When someone does that:

- ***You cannot go back on a covenant!***
- ***You cannot change a covenant!***
- ***You have pledged your death!***

We’ll see how this ties in with baptism.

They all obeyed and let them go. What happened? *They were just like the Egyptians after they let the Israelites go!* They said, ‘What have we done? We can’t work; we’ve had slaves do this for us!’

Verse 11: “But afterward they turned and took back the male slaves and the female slaves whom they had set free and enslaved them *again* as male slaves and female slaves.... [they went back on God] ...So the Word of the LORD came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying... [directly from God] ...‘Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel... [this is pretty powerful stuff] ...“I made a covenant with your fathers in the day that I brought them out from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, saying, ‘At the end of seven years each man should let go *free* his brother, a Hebrew, who has been sold to him. And when he has served you six years, you shall let him go free from you.’ But your fathers did not hearken to Me, nor incline their ears. And you had turned today, and had done right in My sight to call for liberty, each man to his neighbor. And you had made a covenant before Me in the house, which is called by My name”’” (vs 11-15). That’s pretty powerful stuff!

Verse 16: “‘But you turned *back* and defiled My name, and each of you has taken back his male slave and his female slave whom you had set free to do as they pleased. But you forced them *again* to become your male and your female slaves.’ Thus

says the LORD, ‘You have not hearkened to Me to proclaim liberty... [you agreed to it and you made the covenant] ...each man to his brother, and each man to his neighbor! Behold, I proclaim freedom for you,’ says the LORD, ‘to the sword, to the plague, and to the famine. And I will cause you to be a horror to all the kingdoms of the earth’” (vs 16-17).

- Is that a reality today, ***even today?***
- Is God’s Word effective?

Yes!

Verse 18: “And I will give the men who have sinned against My covenant, who have not done the words of the covenant which they made before Me... [right in My presence, right at My temple where I placed My Name] ...*when they* divided the calf in two and passed between its parts; the rulers of Judah, and the rulers of Jerusalem, the officials, and the priests, and all the people of the land who passed between the parts of the calf; I will even give them into the hand of their enemies, and into the hand of those who seek their life. And their dead bodies shall be for food to the birds of heaven and to the beasts of the earth” (vs 18-20). That’s how severe a covenant is. It is immutable; it is unchangeable once it has been ratified with the sacrifice.

How does that apply to us? When Christ came, He knew that He was going to go through this sacrifice. Remember the covenant that God made with Israel and how that was done; it was sanctified with the blood of animals. When that happened, the Lord God of the Old Testament—the One Who became Jesus Christ—bound Himself in that covenant with Israel in a marriage covenant. A marriage covenant is *binding until death*. The only way that God could be released from that covenant—or Israel could be released from that covenant—to establish a new one what had to happen? *One of the two parties had to die!*

Either God had to exterminate all the Israelites, which would make void the promise that He gave to Abraham; or He would have to come in the flesh and die. That’s why He chose to come in the flesh to die. God was the One Who had to do it, that’s why Jesus Christ cannot be, under any circumstances, a supernaturally impregnated being that did not exist until He was conceived in the womb of the virgin Mary! He had to be the One Who made the covenant with Israel that He came and died to eliminate that covenant with Israel so that after His resurrection a New Covenant could be given.

Matthew 26:26: “And as they were eating, Jesus took the bread and blessed *it*; *then He* broke *it* and gave *it* to the disciples, and said, ‘Take, eat; this

is My body.” The sacrifice becomes His body, not animals. We are talking about the only way that God could die was to become human to make it possible to die. And as we read in other places, ‘which is broken for you.’

Verse 27: “And He took the cup; and after giving thanks, He gave *it* to them, saying, ‘All of you drink of it; for this is My blood, the *blood* of the New Covenant... [**not testament** (*KJV*). The Greek here is ‘*diatheke*’ and should be *covenant* and should be so translated.] ...which is poured out for many for the remission of sins” (vs 27-28).

Jesus taught the same thing to Paul. We go into great detail in *The Christian Passover* book. Some people have complained against it, some people railed against it, but no one has proven anything in it that has been wrong. When anybody does, and if there is something in it that’s wrong, we will be very happy to change it, no doubt about it, but in the meantime it just shows what a lot of people do. They complain and they attack and they go after without even knowing the facts.

1-Corinthians 11:23: “For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus in the night in which He was betrayed took bread; and after giving thanks, He broke *it* and said, ‘Take, eat; this is My body, which *is* being broken for you.... [it is the present passive tense in the Greek.] ...This do in the remembrance of Me.’ In like manner, *He* also *took* the cup after He had supped, saying, ‘This is *the* cup of the New Covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink *it*, in the remembrance of Me” (vs 23-25).

I explain fully the term there in great detail in *The Christian Passover* book, which shows that being a memorial as often as you drink it once a year until Christ comes, not as often as you desire to do so; because you can’t do it in the ‘remembrance’ of Him if you don’t do it on the Passover Day.

Verse 26: “For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you *solemnly* proclaim the death of the Lord until He comes”

If we don’t take it properly, then we bring judgment upon ourselves exactly like the men in Jer. 34 took judgment to themselves when they didn’t keep the covenant. When we enter into covenant with God, it is for keeps, *for the rest of our lives*.

Let’s see how this applies, how this is done, how God views it, and how the baptism puts us into a covenant relationship with God because we in fact participate through baptism in the crucifixion of Christ.

Romans 6:1: “What then shall we say? Shall we continue in sin so that grace may abound?”

That’s what Martin Luther thought. Commit adultery and murder a thousand times a day, ‘God’s grace is greater than that.’ I have never read a more horrendous statement than that! As a matter of fact, that was not translated until just a few years ago.

“...MAY IT NEVER BE! We who died to sin, 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?.... [that’s why baptism is a burial] ...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 if we have been conjoined together in the likeness of His death...” (vs 2-5).

He made a covenant with us through His death, we make a covenant through baptism and join His death, which then pays for all of our sins, and pledges us—just like God pledged His body and His death—to guarantee it, so likewise when we are baptized we pledge our lives and our bodies and we die in the watery grave.

Verse 5: “For if we have been conjoined together in the likeness of His death, so also shall we be *in the likeness* of *His* resurrection.” That’s what God is promising. God has promised to give you eternal spiritual life, which has been guaranteed by the very body of the One Who was the Lord God of the Old Testament Who became Jesus Christ of the New Testament. ***That is the covenant!*** That’s why in Heb. 9 to understand the tremendous significance of covenant and how God through this is directly involved in our lives is profound!

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 shows that we have some overcoming to do] ...so that we might no longer be enslaved to sin; because the one who has died *to sin* has been justified from sin.” (vs 6-7). Obviously, when we get closer to the Passover time and Unleavened Bread, we’ll get into that even more.

We’ll see if we can tie all the loose ends together here. I hope you understand a little bit more about *covenant*. Covenant is profound. ***Covenant obligates us to walk as He walked!*** God has promised because of that He gives His Spirit and He walks in you. ***You are a temple of the Living God!*** There can be no higher calling in this life; there can be no greater guarantee because of the covenant that Jesus Christ performed. The death of Jesus Christ served two purposes:

1. to release the Old Covenant

2. the pledge of the New Covenant

—because you have to have the sacrifice. Instead of animals, it was Himself, so that makes it even more powerful and more binding.

Hebrews 9:18: “For this very reason, neither was the first *covenant* inaugurated without blood because after Moses had spoken every commandment of *the* law to all the people, he took the blood of calves and goats, with water and scarlet wool and hyssop, *and* he sprinkled both the book of *the covenant* itself and all the people, saying, ‘This *is* the blood of the covenant that God has ordained for you.’ And in the same manner, he sprinkled with blood the tabernacle, too, and all the vessels of service. Now, almost all things are purified with blood according to the *priestly* law, and without *the* shedding of blood there is no remission of *sins*. Therefore, *it was* indeed obligatory *for* the patterns of the heavenly things to be purified with *the blood* of these *animals*...” (vs 18-23). It was only a type

“...but *the* things in heaven themselves with superior sacrifices than these. For Christ has not entered into the Holy places made by *human* hands, *which are mere* copies of the true; rather, *He has entered* into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us” (vs 23-24). So, the whole magnitude and the scope of everything becomes absolutely just mind-boggling!

Since God has done all of this, how interested is He in His creation? How interested is He in everyone that He calls?

- profoundly so
- to give His Spirit
- to walk in them

Verse 24: “For Christ has not entered into the Holy places made by *human* hands, *which are mere* copies of the true; rather, *He has entered* into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us”—to be our High Priest, to be our Mediator, to be the propitiation of our sins.

Verse 25: “Not that he should offer Himself many times... [once is quite sufficient] ...even as the high priest enters into the Holy of Holies year by year with *the* blood of others; for then it would have been necessary for Him to suffer many times since *the* foundation of *the* world. But now, once and for all, in *the* consummation of the ages... [that was the beginning of the consummation of the ages] ...He has been manifested for *the* purpose of removing sin through His sacrifice of *Himself*” (vs 25-26). It can’t be done any other way.

- as God He put into us the *law of sin and death*
- as God only He can remove it

Verse 27: “And inasmuch as it is appointed unto men once to die... [because in Adam we all die] ...and after this, *the* judgment; so Christ, having been offered once to bear *the* sins of many, will appear *the* second time without sin unto salvation to those who are eagerly awaiting Him” (vs 27-28).

Where it says *without sin* that’s referring to where He was made a sacrifice for sin for us. ***He’s going to come back in glory and power and honor!***

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

Scriptural References

- 1) Hebrews 9:6-12
- 2) 2 Corinthians 6:14-18
- 3) John 14:23-24
- 4) Hebrews 9:14-17, 16-17
- 5) Revelation 13:8
- 6) Genesis 3:15
- 7) Genesis 15:5-7, 18, 6
- 8) Genesis 26:4-5
- 9) Genesis 15:7-12, 17
- 10) Jeremiah 34:8-10, 18, 11-20
- 11) Matthew 26:26-28
- 12) 1 Corinthians 11:23-26
- 13) Romans 6:1-7
- 14) Hebrews 9:18-28

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Romans 8
- Galatians 4

Also referenced:

- Sermon: *When All Else Fails, Remember, God Loves You* (#1 Love Series)
- Sermon Series: *The Three Covenants of Abraham*
- Book: *The Christian Passover* by Fred R. Coulter

FRC/jea
Transcribed: 04/30/07
Formatted/Corrected: bo—January/2017

Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews XXVII The Covenant Between God the Father and the Son

(Chapter 10)
Fred R. Coulter

This is going to be a different kind of sermon from the point of view of trying to uncover and understand even more the Word of God. We're told in Isa. 28 that the Word of God is understood 'line upon line, precept upon precept, a little here and a little there,' and that it has to be put together rightly, as Paul told Timothy: 'Rightly divide the Word of God.' And also there are degrees of understanding. Let's take one verse in particular, John 3:16, and let's look at this for just a minute. There are degrees of understanding that people have concerning this verse

- depending upon their involvement with God
- depending upon what they've been taught in whatever church that they go to
- depending upon their personal relationship with God
- depending upon the experiences that they have gone through

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, but may have everlasting life." Some people read that and they think or say: 'We're going to heaven' or 'All you've got to do is believe.' They don't understand much more beyond that.

- How is it that God loved the world?
- How is it that He gave His only begotten Son?
- How did it come about the way that it came about?

The only way we're going to understand this is to realize that in the Word of God—since it's inspired by the mind of God—that there are certain things that come along that God reveals to give us a deeper understanding of it. Paul wrote of that.

It's not something that anybody can pick up like a book and just read it. It isn't understood that way. Yes, it can be read that way, but whether it is understood that way or not is another whole question. We show, not only from the Scriptures themselves but also from history and from the textual criticism that all the words in the Bible are God-breathed. This comes out at a time when the world is saying, and even those who are supposed to be ministers or what the world calls 'men of the cloth.'

If you want some real shocking things and you are online, go to Dr. John S. Spong and look at some of the things that he has written. There is a vast movement, not only out in the world to get rid of God and have a Christianity without God, but there is also a vast movement of lying 'men of the cloth' within what is called the church establishment of the world, and they are preaching directly against God; directly against the inspiration of the Word of God.

When you read some of the things that they have it's almost like reading the myth of the story of evolution. They have a story that they tell, and the substance of it is that those who said—in the New Testament or the Old Testament—who wrote it, they didn't write it, but that their disciples told the story verbally and it was gradually formed together. Then they lay it all at the footsteps of the Roman Catholic Church, that they created the New Testament. So, this is the commonly perceived thing that's in the world. What we show is the exact opposite: God intended the New Testament to be written; and it was written by the ones who said they wrote it; and it is the inspired Word of God; and it is the Word of God that is only understood by the Spirit of God.

1-Corinthians 2:6: "Now we speak wisdom among the *spiritually* mature; however, *it is not the* wisdom of this world, nor of the rulers of this world, who are coming to nothing." I think Saddam Hussein is a good example of that. Did he not come to nothing?

Verse 7: "Rather, we speak *the* wisdom of God... [which is different; that has to be with the Word of God] ...in a mystery..." A mystery to the world, and even a mystery to religionists who do not read the Word of God as it is the Word of God.

"...*even* the hidden *wisdom* that God foreordained before the ages unto our glory" (v 7). What Paul is saying here is that the understanding of the plan of God and the Word of God was foreordained before the ages for the very purpose that we be born into the Kingdom of God. That's quite a statement. This means that God is calling the weak of the world, which we all are. As he says over here in 1-Cor. 1, that we are to bring to nothing the things that are.

God has given us a high calling and a great mission according to His plan and His purpose and His will *in His timing*. Not that we go out and we

take over the reins of government now, but when we do all those things that have infuriated you when you watch the news and watch the government speakers speak their doublespeak and all this sort of thing, and the things that are going on—guess what? *Christ is going to give us the authority to straighten it all out!* Salvation is more than just people living a good life; people having some understanding of the Word of God. It is a fantastic and a tremendous calling which was set forth before the foundation of the world, and today we're going to see some of the deep things that Paul talks about here of the things between God the Father and Jesus Christ.

Verse 8: "Which not one of the rulers of this world has known (for if they had known...)" It's no surprise that when you hear the rulers of the world speak they don't know anything. The Bible tells us they don't.

"(...they would not have crucified the Lord of glory); but according as it is written, '*The eye has not seen, nor the ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him*'" (vs 8-9).

That's a key thing that's important. Note Rom. 8:28, that '*all* things work together for good to those who love God and who are called according to His purpose.' *All things!* Not one thing excluded. Even the difficult things, the problematic things, the disappointments, and yes, even death. That's the whole point and the purpose of Jesus' coming.

Verse 10: "But God has revealed *them* to us... [First to the apostles and then to the brethren.] ...by His Spirit..." That's the whole important thing concerning the calling of the Apostle Paul who was a very high mucky-muck in Judaism. What did he know about God? *Very little!* What did he understand, though he was one of the most righteous of Pharisees that could have been, and the son of a Pharisee? What did he say of all of that? *I count it but dung to win Christ!*

- God had to reveal it to him
- God had to reveal it to the apostles
- God has to reveal it to us by His Spirit
 - ✓ as we study His Word
 - ✓ as we hunger and thirst after righteousness
 - ✓ as we yield to God to understand

Verse 10: "But God has revealed *them* to us by His Spirit, for the Spirit searches all things—even the deep things of God." Today we are going to understand, hopefully, a little bit more about one of the deep things of God.

Verse 11: "For who among men understands the things of man except by the spirit of man, which is

in him? In the same way also, the things of God no one understands except *by* the Spirit of God." To whom does God give His Spirit? *To those who obey Him!*

Verse 12: "Now we have not received the spirit of the world..." I was given me a tape from the Jesus Seminar concerning the Nag Hammadi Gnostic gospel of Mary Magdalene. And I tell you it was so evident that that made this verse just stand out. Here they are intelligent, studied for years and years. Dr., *Dr.*, *Dr.*, Ph.D., *Ph.D.*, *Ph.D.*; study all these languages, know all of them, be able to read the fragments of the Nag Hammadi Library and all of that and *they don't have a clue!* They're all wandering out here in the mist of their super-intellectual thoughts and emotions. It was awfully hard getting through that tape, but I got through it. Nevertheless, that's the spirit of the world.

"...but the Spirit that *is* of God... [is what we have received] ...so that we might know..." (v 12). God wants us to *know*, but He wants us to search for it. And He wants us to search for it in the right way

"...so that we might know the things graciously given to us by God; which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in *words* taught by the Holy Spirit *in order to* communicate spiritual things by spiritual *means*. But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand *them* because they are spiritually discerned" (vs 12-14).

Some of what we're going to cover today falls exactly in that category, because you go along and you study and you grow in knowledge and understanding and all of these things come together bit-by-bit, step-by-step, week-by-week, month-by-month, year-by-year, decade-by-decade. Look around and see all of our gray heads, and yet, there is still more to learn. And the way that we learn these things is because we still ask questions.

Let's see what we can learn here. I preached on this once some years ago, but what we're going to do is examine *the covenant between God the Father and Jesus Christ*. A lot of people claim that Jesus was under the Old Covenant. *No!* He was not under the Old Covenant. If He were under the Old Covenant then He would have offered sacrifices. Jesus was not under the New Covenant because the New Covenant hadn't been given. What we are going to see is that *Jesus was under a special covenant between Him and God the Father!* Where do we find this? Well, Paul leads up to it.

Hebrews 10:1: "For the *priestly* law, having

only a shadow of the good things that are coming, and not the image of those things, with the same sacrifices, which they offer continually year by year, is never able to make perfect those who come to worship. Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered? For once those who worship had been purified, *they would* no longer be conscious of sin” (vs 1-2).

That’s part of our repentance and coming to God and asking God to cleanse our heart, mind and conscience, and to get rid of the sin within. That’s the whole goal of overcoming.

Verse 3: “On the contrary, in *offering* these sacrifices year by year, *there is* a remembrance of sins, because *it is* impossible *for the* blood of bulls and goats to take away sins” (vs 3-4).

Why is that even though it was for the removal of sin to justify them to the temple? *It requires something greater than a human being to forgive human sin!* And it’s also true that no animal is even equal to a human being let alone greater. That’s why this was given to show that there has to be something greater than that.

Verse 5: “For this reason, when He comes into the world, He says, ‘Sacrifice and offering You did not desire, but You have prepared a body for Me.’”

This is talking about Christ. And we’ll go back and we’ll look at the Psalm concerning this and where it came from, and we will see that this is accurately quoted from the Septuagint. We’ll see in the *King James* it’s just a little bit different.

Someone sent me a study using the latest *Tanakh*. The *Tanakh* is the Hebrew publication of the Old Testament. Well, what do you suppose they’ve done in the latest ones? They’ve gone through and sanitized all of the prophecies concerning Christ to make them read slightly different. If you want to study the English translation by the Jews of the Hebrew Old Testament, what you do is go back and you get a 1908 or 1905—I have one of those—and you compare that with the newest *Tanakh*.

“...You have prepared a body for Me” (v 5)—a physical body for Christ. We will see there were certain things that God promised in doing that. Also this has to do with the Church, because the Church is the Body of Christ of which Christ is the Head. We can get many things out of this.

He repeats it, v 6: “You did not delight in burnt offerings and *sacrifices* for sin. Then said I, ‘Lo, I come (*as it is written of Me in the Scroll of the Book*) to do Your will, O God” (vs 6-7).

Where is ‘the *Scroll of the Book*’? Where in

the Old Testament is this scroll? Let’s see where it’s quoted from in Psa. 40, and we will see that this is just a quote, and then we’ll ask some questions concerning ‘the scroll of the book’ and so forth, and see what we can come up with.

Psalm 40:6: “Sacrifice and offering You did not desire... [instead of saying ‘You prepared a body for Me,’ it says]: ...My ears You have opened; burnt offering and sin offering You have not required. Then I said, ‘Lo, I come; in the Scroll of the Book it is written of Me... [Where can you find that? What book? What scroll?] ...I delight to do Your will, O My God; and Your Law is within My heart” (vs 6-8).

Are there books in heaven? *Yes, there are!* What do we have? *We have the Book of Life!* And all those who have the Spirit of God, their name is written there. The Book of Life, by the way, includes first and second resurrection. *It would have to!* And consider this: God says that a sparrow doesn’t fall that the Father’s not aware of it. So God is in close communication with the earth through the things that He has created. A lot of people think that God is way off someplace, but He’s not way off someplace. The wicked have to be resurrected and judged. Then there has to be a book of those whose names are written in there for the resurrection of the incorrigible wicked.

Now then there are other books; here is *a special book*, Revelation 10:1: “Then I saw another strong angel coming down out of heaven, clothed with a cloud, and *with* a rainbow on his head; and his face was like the sun, and his feet were like pillars of fire; and he had in his hand **a little book** that was open.... [there’s another book in heaven] ...And he placed his right foot on the sea, and *his* left *foot* on the earth, and cried with a loud voice, as a lion roars. And when he cried, the seven thunders uttered their voices. And when the seven thunders spoke *with* their voices, I was about to write. But I heard a voice from heaven say to me, ‘Seal what the seven thunders spoke, and do not write them.’” (vs 1-4).

Apparently it’s going to be so devastating that it would be such a horrible thing to write it.

Verse 5: “Then the angel whom I had seen standing on the sea and on the earth lifted up his hand to heaven, and swore by Him Who lives into the ages of eternity, Who created the heaven and the things in it, and the earth and the things in it, and the sea and the things in it, ‘*There* shall be no more delay.’ But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he is about to sound *the* trumpet, the mystery of God shall also be completed, according to the Gospel *that* He declared to His servants the

prophets. Then the voice that I heard from heaven spoke to me again, and said, 'Go, take **the little book** that is open in the hand of *the* angel who is standing on the sea and on the earth.' And I went to the angel, *and* said to him, 'Give me the little book.' And he said to me, 'Take *it* and eat it; and it shall make your belly bitter, but in your mouth it shall be sweet as honey'" (vs 1-9). He took the book and what he was to do then was to prophecy.

Let's see that there is what we call the 'book of prophecy.' The first three chapters of Rev. are the letters to the seven churches. The fourth chapter is showing the throne of God and where everything is taking place.

Revelation 5:1, to show that there is a book there: "And in the right hand of Him Who sits on the throne I saw a book, written within and on *the* back, which had been sealed with seven seals. And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, 'Who is worthy to **open the book** and to loose its seals?' But no one in heaven, or on the earth, or under the earth was able to open the book, or to look inside it" (vs 1-3). What do we have? What does this book contain? *All the rest of the book of Revelation!*

There were certain things that were done before the foundation of the world. God had this all planned out before He even began the process. And part of the scroll that it was written in was a **special scroll**.

Rev. 13 talks about the coming beast and how the world's going to worship him and so forth. The only ones who are not going to worship him are those whose names are in the Book of Life.

Revelation 13:8: "And all who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from *the* foundation of *the* world." This was planned before the foundation of the world. How did they plan it? How did they work it out? Let's see if we can pick up some clues.

Hebrews 10:5: "...You have prepared a body for Me.... [v 7]: ...*as it is written of Me in the scroll of the book...*"

Since God is a covenant God, what do we have here contained in the Bible? We have the Old Covenant, we have the New Covenant, we have lesser covenants and promises and things given, and it's *written*. Do you suppose that there was a special book written that contained the agreement of God the Father and Jesus Christ? *Between themselves alone they wouldn't need it written down! Why would they write it down? So that when all of those who were resurrected enter into the Kingdom of God they can see the record of how it was planned!*

Let's look at the body. Could this have been written in the *scroll of the book*? "...*as it is written of Me in the scroll of the book...*"? So, everything to do with the ministry of Christ was written there.

Let's just review something we already know. What do we know concerning God in the Old Testament? '*In the beginning, God...*' What is the Hebrew word? *Elohim!* In studying the Bible and searching it out, the Bible reveals that there were two that were Elohim: One became the Father, one became the Son. They had an agreement.

Psa. 2—Let's pick it up before the body is formed and we will see what God had to do, what the One Who became the Son had to do. There had to be **absolute trust, absolute belief** and **absolute faith** in each other—God the Father and Jesus Christ—in order to do what God did. Today in this world they break every agreement that they have. If God the Father were not righteous and a God Who loves, and if Jesus Christ were not righteous and God Who loves, then the One Who became a human being could have been snuffed out by the One Who didn't. There was a time when the One Who became the Son gave up His power and glory as God to be begotten in the virgin Mary.

Psalm 2:7: "I will declare the decree of the LORD. He has said to Me..." This is probably written in that scroll because everything about Christ was going to be written in that scroll.

"...'*You are My Son; this day I have begotten You*'" (v 7). There was a day when that happened. We have that recorded in Luke 1. What did God have to do to do that? What did Jesus have to do; the One Who became Jesus Christ?

Let's see what Jesus had to do in order to become a human being. This is what is so confounding to people in the world, religious people who whatever their theology is. Some of these religionists, you wonder if you can do anything to get the Truth into their heads.

The One Who became the Son had a body prepared for Him. What does *prepared* mean? The first thing that had to happen before the body could be prepared—and, of course, in preparing the body, Christ reduced Himself down in power and glory—it had to be made compatible with genes and chromosomes in order for that begetting in Mary to produce a human being. Now with the knowledge we have of science today we can understand that a little bit more.

Philippians 2:5: "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus... [setting the example of humility and giving up] ...Who, although He existed in *the* form of God... [and that

is the correct translation] ...did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but emptied Himself..." (vs 5-7). It means He gave up:

- His power
- His glory
- His splendor
- His rule
- His authority

and handed it all over to God the Father. I'm anxious to see if there is that book—which I'm convinced that there is—to understand what's in it, because this was a tremendous thing for God to do.

Verse 7: "...and was made in *the* likeness of men, and took the form of a servant; and being found in *the* manner of man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even *the* death of *the* cross" (vs 7-8). We're going to see there are some other things that were promised.

When He was born, God commanded that the angels worship Him. That's something! They did! Remember the account in the book of Luke? The shepherds were out there and all of a sudden the heavens lit up and here were a host of angels singing *Glory to God in the Highest*.

Hebrews 1:1, Paul writes: "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." How profound is that when compared to a human being even though He became a human like we are human.

Verse 2: "Whom He has appointed heir of all things, by Whom also He made the ages." The very Creator Who made the heavens and the earth under the authority of God the Father was the One Who divested Himself and became a human being. ***You can't have any greater authority and power than that to forgive your sins!***

Verse 3: "Who, being *the* brightness of *His* glory and *the* exact image of *His* person, and upholding all things by the word of *His* own power..." You think about that for a minute! The very One Who upholds the universe by the Word of *His* Power says that 'If you confess your sins, I will forgive your sins.' That's why you need to believe that that is so. That's why we need to have faith and love and all the attributes that God can give us.

"...when He had by Himself..." (v 3). Since He was the Creator of human beings; since He gave the judgment of 'the law of sin and death' to Adam and Eve and that passed on to all human beings, *He alone* This is why it cannot be that the One Who was Jesus Christ was just another man, because this has to save all humanity.

"...purged our sins, sat down at *the* right hand of the Majesty on high; having been made so much greater than *any of* the angels, inasmuch as He has inherited a name exceedingly superior to them. For to which of the angels did He ever say, '**You are My Son; this day I have begotten You**'? And again, '**I will be a Father to Him, and He will be a Son to Me**'?" (vs 3-5). That was part of their agreement.

Verse 6: "And again, when He brought the Firstborn into the world..." The *King James* says 'begotten,' but that's incorrect; it's 'firstborn.' It means when He was born of the virgin Mary, remember what he was commanded to call Him? *Jesus!* What's another name? *Emmanuel!* And what does that mean? *God with us!*

"...He said, '**Let all *the* angels of God worship Him**'" (v 6).

Now then we are ready for Psalms 16; here's part of the promise. We can pick up a few clues from some of the Psalms and some of the other Scriptures. Here is a promise of the resurrection. Since He was going to become a human being and suffer death, He had to have the promise that God would fulfill.

Psalms 16:10: "For You will not abandon My soul to the grave; neither will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption." You can go back to Acts 2^[transcriber's correction] and see where Peter preached that on the Day of Pentecost concerning Christ.

Verse 11: "You will make known to Me the path of life; in Your presence is fullness of joy. At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore." He promised that He would not let His body corrupt.

(go to the next track)

Isaiah 9:6 is a very profound section of Scripture: "For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government shall be upon His shoulders; and His name shall be called Wonderful..." All of these are names and attributes of God.

Here it's said of this little child that would be born: "...Counselor, The Mighty God..." (v 6).

As much of God as could be in the flesh, that's what Jesus had. We've also seen that it's impossible for God in His glorified form to fill a human body. Why? *It would disintegrate it!* That's what God told Moses. He said, 'You cannot see My face and live.' Therefore, God had to divest Himself of His glory, power and honor and become a human being to become a child to be born.

"...His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father,

The Prince of Peace” (v 6). I’ve had a lot of people ask me:

- When is Jesus going to be the everlasting Father?
- What about God the Father?
- Does this not present a conflict?

No! God the Father is the Father of all of those who are going to be in the first resurrection. He will not be the Father of all those who come into the Kingdom of God during the Millennium. Jesus Christ will be the Father of all of those, and the Church ruling with Christ will be the Mother of them. So henceforth then at that time the One Whom we know as the Father is our Father but will be their Grandfather, if we could put it into human terms.

That’s when Jesus will be v 7: “Of the increase of *His* government and peace *there shall be* no end... [just like there’s no end to the universe] ...upon the throne of David, and over His kingdom, to order it and to establish it with judgment and with righteousness from henceforth, even forever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.”

When Jesus came in the flesh now you will understand even more. The current thing that is going around about Jesus, one of the stories that keeps coming out over and over again is that Jesus was a Jew born into a Jewish family and He was taught by the rabbis, and Jesus Himself was a rabbi.

I believe that this is part of the covenant that was written in that scroll), since Jesus gave up everything to become a human being. When a baby is born—outside of just certain functions that God has programmed into the mind of a baby such as responding to love, being able to nurture, being able to have some few rudimentary movements and things like that—the brain is virtually empty of any knowledge. There is no programmed knowledge in there. They don’t come out speaking a language: ‘Oh, Hi Mom. Boy, I’m sure glad to be here. It was kind of dark and wet in there for all these nine months.’

God could not leave the mind of Jesus Christ to be taught and programmed by liars, because what the rabbis follow is based upon their traditions, which are lies against the Word of God. He was taught by the Father directly, and I think beginning at a very early age, probably almost immediately. Do newborn babies begin responding to mother and father and the environment around them? *Yes, immediately!*

Isaiah 50:4 is a prophecy, as we have noted in *A Harmony of the Gospels*, of Jesus education: “The Lord GOD has given Me the tongue of the learned...” Isn’t that what they wanted even at age twelve when He was there at the temple and He was

talking to all the teachers and priests. ‘My, where did he get all this understanding?’

- At age twelve, where did He get it?
- Did Mary teach it to Him?
- Did Joseph teach it to Him? *No!*

Verse 4: “The Lord GOD has given Me the tongue of the learned...” It came from God; the One Who became God the Father taught His Son.

“...to know to help the weary *with* a word.... [which is a prophecy of the Gospel of the good news] ...He awakens *Me* morning by morning... [every morning God the Father woke up Jesus] ...He awakens my ear to hear as one being taught” (v 4).

That’s how He was taught. God didn’t leave it to sinful men to teach Jesus. He taught Him directly. And we would have to conclude that that is absolutely necessary, otherwise Jesus would, as a young child, be led into sin—correct? *Yes, indeed!* So, it couldn’t have happened except this way.

“...He awakens *Me* morning by morning, He awakens My ear to hear as one being taught. The Lord GOD has opened My ear, and I was not rebellious, nor turned away backwards” (vs 4-5). Then it jumps forward into the things that would happen at the crucifixion. And you find this in the Old Testament. That’s why the Old Testament is a ‘precept here, a line here, a bit here,’ and you put it together.

Verses 4 and 5 are about His first coming and His education. Then immediately it jumps forward to His scourging, and you find that in the Old Testament. When you understand that’s how the Old Testament is written then you’ll be able to understand it. But what is the key for understanding the Old Testament? *The New Testament!* That’s what Jesus said: He opened their minds to the things concerning Him out of the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms. So the New Testament interprets the Old Testament.

With this in mind, let’s see what was part of the covenant that Jesus had to respond to, because He had His part. His part was that when He was here as a human being He had an obligation of what He was going to say and what He was going to do, and God the Father taught Him that.

They came to Him because He healed a man on the Sabbath John 5:17: “But Jesus answered them, ‘My Father is working until now, and I work.’” They did not understand that there is a spiritual work always going on. The greatest work that is accomplished on the Sabbath is the spiritual work, which comes through study, prayer, God’s Spirit, fellowshiping with God the Father and Jesus

Christ—all come together on the Sabbath Day. It has to be a participation *spiritually* with those who are teaching and those who are learning that altogether with God's Spirit that we all learn. That's a spiritual work. Of course, on the Sabbath the Jews couldn't understand that.

Verse 18: "So then, on account of this *saying*, the Jews sought all the more to kill Him, not only because He had loosed the Sabbath..." The *King James* says 'broke the Sabbath,' and as we went through the series: *Refuting Sunday-Keeping*, those who do not understand the Greek nor understand what the New Testament is teaching say He *broke* the Sabbath to set the example that we can keep Sunday. That's a carnal mind trying to understand something spiritual. *No!* He *loosed* that law which said you can't carry a sleeping bag on the Sabbath. He *loosed* the Sabbath.

"...but also *because* He had called God His own Father, making Himself equal with God [here's part of what was Jesus' responsibility]: ...Therefore, Jesus answered and said to them..." (vs 18-19). What I want you to do is also keep in mind what the Scriptures tell us of Lucifer and Satan, who rebelled and went against God and said, 'I will be like God,' and 'I will exalt my throne above the stars of heaven.'

Compare that with the attitude of what Christ had here. Of course, this had to be, because Christ has to judge Satan the devil. In order to judge Satan the devil, that's part of the reason He came in the flesh so that He could overcome him as a human being, which is a lesser existence than God, a lesser existence than an angel. God can overcome Satan any time. Angels fight back and forth, the good angels and the evil angels. You can read that in Dan. 9 & 10. But to overcome Satan as a human being—who did not do it? *Adam and Eve!*—Christ had to do it.

He had an obligation. Now keep that in mind when we read v 19: "Therefore, Jesus answered and said to them, 'Truly, truly I say to you, the Son has no power... ['dunamis'] ...to do anything of Himself...' That was His agreement. He would take no power to Himself to do anything of His own.

"...but only what He sees the Father do.... [Does that not verify Isa. 50, that He saw the Father? *Yes, indeed!*] ...For whatever He does, these things the Son also does in the same manner. For the Father loves the Son, and shows Him everything that He Himself is doing...." (vs 19-20).

What I want you to do is think of the tremendous spiritual relationship that Jesus Christ had with God the Father all during His life while this

was going on. It's really something! That's why He was given authority as the Son of man and so forth.

John 3:31 was also part of it and this also verifies it: "He Who comes from above is above all. The one who is of the earth is earthly, and speaks of the earth. He Who comes from heaven is above all." Isn't it interesting ? People wonder where Jesus came from. He comes from heaven.

Verse 32: "And what He has seen and heard... [That's what the Father taught Him—right? *Had to be!*] ...this *is what* He testifies; but no one receives His testimony. The one who has received His testimony has set his seal that God is true; for He Whom God has sent speaks the words of God..." (vs 32-34). That was Jesus' obligation under this covenant.

Just like when we are baptized and put into the watery grave and we enter into that covenant relationship with God, it is a covenant relationship unto death. That's why it is a burial, and we are co-joined to the death of Christ Who paid for our sins. Now then, when we come out of that watery grave we have an obligation to do, based upon the terms of the covenant.

- we are to obey God
- we are to love God
- we are to believe God
- we are to trust in Him

All of those things are our obligation. Just like with the covenant that Christ had between Him and God the Father, He had an obligation. His obligation was to *speak what God told Him to speak!* Whatever the commandment was He told Him to speak, He spoke. That we understand, and then this becomes much more profound that these words are the words which God the Father has given. So when anyone rejects Christ they reject the Father. That's why John said, 'He who has not the Son has not the Father.'

Verse 34: "For He Whom God has sent speaks the words of God; and God gives not the Spirit by measure *unto Him*. The Father loves the Son and has given all things into His hand. The one who believes in the Son has everlasting life; but the one who does not obey the Son shall not see life, for the wrath of God remains on him" (vs 34-36).

Isn't it interesting that a lot of these things that we're picking up, which had to be part of that covenant that was written in the *scroll of the book*, we find in the John 7. Let's look at just a couple of things that are important here. Let's just talk about the Feast of Tabernacles for a minute because this is what John 7 is talking about.

Would Jesus command His brothers and mother to sin? *No!* Did He tell them to go up to the

Feast? *Yes, He did!* So therefore, anybody who says that keeping the Feast of Tabernacles is a sin is accusing Jesus of commanding sin. They don't think of it that way, but that's what they're doing. His brother said, 'Go up and show yourself to the world.'

John 7:6: "Therefore, Jesus said to them, 'My time has not yet come, but your time is always ready. The world cannot hate you; but it hates Me because I testify concerning it, that its works are evil. You go up to this Feast.... [there it is, He said go to the Feast of Tabernacles] ...I am not going up to this Feast now....'" (vs 6-8).

What He wanted to happen was for them to leave and be on their way then He would come up privately, because He was going to the Feast but He had a plan in mind what He was going to do when He got there, and He couldn't do it if He went with them. What would happen? I'm sure they didn't have binoculars in those days, but I'm sure they had everybody up there looking: 'Well, there's Mary, James, Joseph and so forth. There they are. Where's Jesus? *We don't see Him.*' He had a plan in mind, we'll see what it is.

He says, v 8: "'You go up to this Feast. I am not going up to this Feast now... [at this present minute] ...for My time has not yet been fulfilled.' And after saying these things to them, He remained in Galilee. But after His brothers had gone up, then Jesus also went up to the Feast, not openly, but as it were in secret. As a result, the Jews were seeking Him at the Feast, and said, 'Where is He?' Now there was much debating about Him among the people. Some said, 'He is a good Man.' But others said, 'No, but He is deceiving the people.' However, no one spoke publicly about Him for fear of the Jews" (vs 8-13). He was there keeping the Feast all the time but didn't show Himself till the middle of the Feast.

Notice the reaction, v 15: "And the Jews were amazed, saying, 'How does this man know letters... [How does He understand the Scriptures?] ...having never been schooled?'"

Now, let's stop here and think for a minute:

- we have the Sadducees
- we have the Pharisees
- we have the Essenes
- we have all of the rabbis
- we have the school of Hillel
- we have the school of Gamaliel

—those were the two main schools in Jerusalem. So, if you wanted to become some mucky-muck in Judaism you had to go to one of these two schools. Don't you think, since this is the Feast of

Tabernacles just before His crucifixion, all of the leading Jewish rabbis checked out with one another from the very beginning and said:

- Did he go to your school?
- Did he go to your school?
- Who taught this guy?

What do you think they would have done to the rabbi who had taught Him? *Sayonara!* He would have been tried and convicted. 'How dare you teach someone to usurp our authority'—whatever you want to add to it.

Verse 16: "Jesus answered them and said, 'My doctrine is not Mine, but His Who sent Me. If anyone desires to do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it is from God, or *whether* I speak from My own self'" (vs 16-17).

There it is, His obligation. This was part of His covenant with God the Father. So, the One Who became the Father said, 'All right, I'll watch over You, I'll teach You while you grow up, and when the times comes for the beginning of Your ministry'—which we find there in Mark 1, the beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and so forth—'then You are to teach and say only My words'; which is what He did all the way through.

John 8:28: "Then Jesus said to them, 'When you have lifted up the Son of man, then you yourselves shall know that I AM, and *that* I do nothing of Myself. But as the Father taught Me, these things I speak.'.... [How many times did He say that over and over and over again?] ...And He Who sent Me is with Me. The Father has not left Me alone because I always do the things that please Him'" (vs 28-29).

Was keeping the Feast of Tabernacles in the manner that He kept it pleasing to God? *It had to be!* That was part of His obligation: ***always speak the words that God the Father taught Him; always do the things that please Him!*** This is the separate covenant that Jesus was under, and ***the covenant between Him and God the Father.*** It's going to be very interesting when we're resurrected and we meet the Father and we see where these books are written. I'm sure that They're going to open them up and say—however they keep time in heaven in relationship to the earth—***This was Our agreement.***

John 10:14: "I am the good Shepherd, and I know those who *are* Mine, and am known of those who *are* Mine. Just as the Father knows Me, I also know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep" (vs 14-15). That was part of His agreement, ***to lay down His life!*** He had to do the hardest thing than any human being could do, lay down His life

into the manner that it was taken.

Verse 16: “And I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring those also, and they shall hear My voice; and there shall be one flock *and* one Shepherd. On account of this, the Father loves Me: because I lay down My life, **that I may receive it back again**” (vs 16-17).

Now, that’s the proper translation. He didn’t take it back. This is passive, *receive*. God the Father had to give it back to Him. Remember what happened when Jesus was on the cross, one of the very last things He said? ‘*Father, into Your hands I commend My Spirit,*’ and He gave up the Spirit. That’s when He died, because He had to be dead. It’s not Docetism where a spirit being called Christ imposed itself into the body of a man called Jesus, and therefore, Jesus Christ did not die. The Spirit Christ went back to the Father, and the man Jesus died. That’s not what it was. “...**that I may receive it back again**.”

Verse 18: “No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself.... [of His own accord He did it] ...I have authority to lay it down... [that’s part of the covenant agreement that they had] ...and authority to receive it back again. This commandment I received from My Father.”

That’s quite a thing! That helps you understand the voluntary choice and will of God to do this. Think back and go back to the verse we started with, John 3:16, where it says that ‘God so loved the world.’

- think about what the Father and the Son worked out
- think of what they did
- this is a tremendous thing
- this is a tremendous covenant that they had

Let’s look at some other things concerning this. Let’s look and see and understand when He says ‘*I lay My life down,*’; let’s see what He *knew* was going to happen. He gave this prophecy Himself. Did Jesus understand exactly what was going to happen to Him? *Yes, He did!* This is why the sacrifice of Jesus Christ saves all who repent. This is why God alone can help people in these situations because He went through it all.

Isaiah 53:1: “Who has believed our report?.... [How many people really believe God?] ...And to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed? For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant... [that’s Christ’s childhood] ...and as a root out of a dry ground; He has no form nor comeliness that we should look upon Him, nor beauty that we should desire Him” (vs 1-2). He’s just an ordinary looking

man.

Notice what kind of life He lived. You think you’ve got troubles, this is what God had to suffer in the flesh among His own. It says there in John 1 that ‘*He created the world and the world didn’t know Him and He came to His own and His own didn’t receive Him.*’

- if you’re down and out
- if you’re alone
- if you think nobody likes you
- if you think no one loves you
- if you think no one cares for you
 - ✓ look up, pray to God
 - ✓ look to Jesus Christ
 - ✓ He’ll help you

Verse 3: “*He is* despised and rejected of men; a Man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief... [this has to do when they saw Him on the cross] ...and we hid as it were our faces from Him, He was despised, and we esteemed Him not. Surely He has borne our infirmities, and carried our sorrows...” (vs 3-4). That’s why it says, ‘All you who are heavy burdened, come unto Me for My yoke is easy and My burden is light’ (Matt. 11). You can put all of those on Christ.

“...yet, we esteemed Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted” (v 4). Yeah, they came by and said—and even one of the two robbers said—‘Well, if You’re the Christ save Yourself and save us.’ The other one said, ‘You don’t even know what you’re talking about. We’re here because we did it. We’re here justly, but He not justly.’ Then he said, ‘Lord, remember me when You come into Your kingdom.’

Verse 5: “But He *was* wounded for our transgressions... [not for anything He did] ...*He was* crushed for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace *was* upon Him...” In other words, in order for us to have peace with God, the penalty of our sins had to be slashed upon His back with the scourging of crucifixion to bring peace.

“...and with His stripes we ourselves are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned each one to his own way; and the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.... [because He was responsible] ...He was oppressed, and He was afflicted; yet, He opened not His mouth. He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter; and as a sheep before its shearers is dumb, so He opened not His mouth. By oppression and judgment He was taken away; and with His generation who did consider that He was cut off out of the land of the living; for the transgression of My people He *was* stricken. And He made His grave with the wicked...” (vs 5-9).

All of this was there. All of this had to be written in *the scroll that is all about Christ and the covenant that God the Father and Jesus Christ had*, and then we are given some of it here and some of it there and put all together. The key thing that really got me started on this was there was no place in the Bible where that part which says ‘*it’s written of Me in a scroll of a book*,’ where you can find what was written, except you get a bit here and a bit there.

Verse 9: “And He made His grave with the wicked, and with the rich in His death; although He had done no violence, nor was any deceit in His mouth. Yet, the LORD willed to crush Him...” (vs 9-10)—even though He did. That goes back to Gen. 3:15.

Even though it pleased God to do it to solve the problem of sin and His creation of human beings, it still was so gruesome that when it came down to the final three hours of Christ on the cross, it became dark and Jesus had to do it alone. That was something! That’s why they had this covenant. That’s why this agreement was there.

“...and He has put Him to grief: You shall make His life an offering for sin.... [then out of that]: ...He shall see His seed...” (v 10). As it is in the great congregation: ‘*I will declare Your name unto My brethren in the great congregation*’ (Heb. 2)

That, brethren, has got to be at the resurrection. Here is Christ, all of us are resurrected and we meet Him in the air, and He turns to God the Father and says, ‘Here are the children that You have given Me.’ And He’s going to go right down the line and give everyone a new name.

“...He shall prolong His days, and that the purpose of the LORD might prosper in His hand. He shall see of the travail of His soul. He shall be fully satisfied.... [takes care of all sin] ... By His knowledge shall My righteous Servant justify many; and He shall bear their iniquities” (vs 10-11).

Only God can do that. No human being, no animal. This had to be carefully prepared and worked out well ahead of time.

Verse 12: “Therefore, I will divide to Him *a portion* with the great, and He shall divide the spoil with the strong... [that’s giving a reward to all of us] ... because He has poured out His soul to death; and He was counted among the transgressors; and He bore the sin of many, and made intercession for transgressors.”

Maybe this will give us more understanding. It’s one of these things that we come to realize after we’ve been converted a long time and have really

studied the Word of God.

Hebrews 10:5: “For this reason, when He comes into the world, He says, ‘Sacrifice and offering You did not desire, but You have prepared a body for Me. You did not delight in burnt offerings and *sacrifices* for sin. Then said I, “Lo, I come (*as it is written of Me in the Scroll of the Book*) to do Your will, O God”’” (vs 5-7).

That’s something brethren! We’re part of it! Here we’re living right at the end of the age and it’s going to be really profound to see what God is going to do. ***That is a covenant***—since God is a covenant God—***that God the Father and Jesus Christ made when He came to the earth!***

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*

Scriptural References:

- 1) John 3:16
- 2) 1 Corinthians 2:6-14
- 3) Hebrews 10:1-7
- 4) Psalm 40:6-8
- 5) Revelation 10:1-9
- 6) Revelation 5:1-3
- 7) Revelation 13:8
- 8) Hebrews 10:5, 7
- 9) Psalm 2:7
- 10) Philippians 2:5-8
- 11) Hebrews 1:1-6
- 12) Psalm 16:10-11
- 13) Isaiah 9:6-7
- 14) Isaiah 50:4-5
- 15) John 5:17-20
- 16) John 3:31-36
- 17) John 7:6-13, 15-17
- 18) John 8:28-29
- 19) John 10:14-18
- 20) Isaiah 53:1-12
- 21) Hebrews 10:5-7

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Isaiah 28
- 1 Corinthians 1
- Romans 8:28
- Luke 1
- Acts 2
- Daniel 9 & 10
- Mark 1
- John 1
- Matthew 11
- Genesis 3:15
- Hebrews 2

Also referenced:

- Book: *A Harmony of the Gospels* by Fred R. Coulter
- Sermon Series: *Refuting Sunday-Keeping*

FRC:cis

Transcribed: 11/07/2005

Formatted/Corrected: bo—July/2016

Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews XXVIII How We Are Perfected for Eternal Life

(Chapter 10)

Fred R. Coulter

We covered last time the covenant that God the Father and Jesus Christ had, so we'll review just some of these verses and we'll go on from there. In going through and understanding about the book of Hebrews, it really becomes evident that people have been so 'religionized' and 'traditionized' that what is Christianity? Of course, it's a misnomer to say 'Judeo-Christianity,' because *Christianity did not come out of Judaism. Christianity came from Christ* Who was the Son of God, and that's what the book of Hebrews is telling us and teaching us.

In the sermon series *Scripturalism vs Judaism*, we do a survey of the book of Matthew to show right from the very beginning of the ministry of John the Baptist, there was a complete severing of ties with Judaism and the temple. That's why God chose John the Baptist who was the son of a priest, and he did not begin his ministry at the temple; he began his ministry away from the temple down at the River Jordan and that's why the priests and the scribes and the Pharisees all came down—because they knew he was the son of a priest—and asked him:

- Who are you?
- Are you the Christ? *No!*
- Are you that prophet? *No!*
- Are you Elijah? *No!*

Later, Jesus said he was Elijah, but John didn't know that. What did he answer? *John said, 'I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness.'* What is that telling you? *That the whole religious system and the perversion of the temple worship that was there in Jerusalem was a spiritual wilderness*, and it was so overrun with *traditions and religion and false teachings*. However it hung on the framework of the Sabbath and Holy Days, which then becomes a very profound and *clever* counterfeit. You can look in the Bible and say, 'Oh yes, you have to keep the Sabbath, true.' The Pharisees come along and say, 'Then you must keep it this way.' That's why Jesus came along and said, 'No, here is what the Sabbath is for.'

The book of Hebrews is an extension beyond that, and it's written to those who were Greek-speaking Jews who were formally in Judaism, as we have seen. What the book of Hebrews does is that it tells us what God is doing and what Jesus Christ is doing

- compared to the law
- compared to the temple
- compared to the sacrifices
- compared to the washings and rituals and oblations

After the temple was destroyed, Judaism had a tough time. Since we can't offer sacrifices for the removal of sin, what do we do? They added a lot of other traditions, and that's where you get into a lot of 'good' works. The big mistake that they made was that they said, 'Since the temple is no longer standing, and since we can't go to the temple to do these things, therefore, we're going to create all of these laws so that each follower of Judaism will be as clean as a priest'—which is an impossibility! You cannot have your house as clean as the temple was. That's why they have all of these laws.

If you don't have the book *The Code of Jewish Law*, or if you have never heard of it, then:

- you do not understand Judaism
- you do not understand what Christ did
- you do not understand what dead works are;
- you do not understand what Paul has written in Romans or Galatians either one

—and it's hard for you to understand what has been written here in the book of Hebrews.

Hebrews 10:1: "For the *priestly* law, having *only* a shadow of the good things that are coming, *and* not the image of those things, with the same sacrifices, which they offer continually year by year, is never able to make perfect those who come *to worship*."

Verse 11: "Now, every high priest stands ministering day-by-day... [not only is it year-by-year, but it's day-by-day] ...offering the same sacrifices repeatedly, which are never able to remove sins." They had forgiveness and justification only to the temple; that was it. They did it year-by-year, day-by-day.

Verse 2: "Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered?...?" That's compared to Christ. How many times was He offered? *Once!* Is He offered again? *No!*

Hebrews 9:24 shows that it's one sacrifice: "For Christ has not entered into the Holy places

made by *human* hands...” He never went into the temple, into the Holy of Holies; He could not do that because He was not of the family of Aaron, of the tribe of Levi.

“...which are mere copies of the true; rather, *He has entered* into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us” (v 24). This is a greater thing, and we have a living priest.

Verse 25: “Not that He should offer Himself many times, even as the high priest enters into the Holy of Holies year by year with *the* blood of others; for then it would have been necessary for Him to suffer many times since *the* foundation of *the* world....” (vs 25-26).

Let’s stop and think about something here for just a minute. One of the greatest misnomers that there is in the world; one of the greatest deceptions that there is in the world, which lies in the so-called Judeo-Christian religion—especially in the Catholic Church—is that they have a priesthood. Nowhere does the New Testament show that there is a priesthood or a hierarchical priesthood over the people. They also say that the priest is halfway between God and man, and that when they have the Eucharist or the Mass, this becomes important, that they are literally sacrificing Christ *again*. That’s why it’s called the sacrifice of the Mass.

And furthermore, blasphemously, they claim that the priest has the power to call the presence of Christ into the bread and wine! Such a practice completely negates the work of Jesus Christ and binds people in slavery to a hierarchical priesthood, ***which is not teaching the Truth of God!*** We need to understand and realize that. If that makes you angry, and if you think that is anti-Catholic, then you need to understand something very clearly: ***The Truth of God cuts across everyone’s life because they are all sinners!*** These things are stated not to attack or be against, but to expose the error from the Truth.

Stop and ask before you get angry and mad, why is it that the Word of God is called the Truth of God? Yet, the priests say, ‘You can’t understand unless I’m there to interpret it, and if you read the Bible, you’ll go crazy.’ Sure enough, if you try to reconcile the practices of the churches of this world with what is in the Bible; if you take the Bible literally as the Truth of God, you’re like a person standing on a crack that has been opened by an earthquake, and you’ve got one foot in the Bible and one foot in the church and it is going to split you in two because you cannot reconcile it. What you have to do is choose God’s way. With this kind of practice, they are crucifying Christ every single time they offer the Mass. You need to think about that.

“...But now, once and for all, in *the* consummation of the ages, He has been manifested for *the* purpose of removing sin through His sacrifice *of Himself*. And inasmuch as it is appointed unto men once to die, and after this, *the* judgment...” (vs 26-27).

As in Adam we all die because we have *the law of sin and death* in us and we’re going to die. No one has turned it back, not even the Pharaohs. Every time you look at a mummy, you’re looking at a dead man.

Verse 28: “So Christ, having been offered once to bear *the* sins of many, will appear *the* second time without sin ... [without being a sin offering] ...unto salvation to those who are eagerly awaiting Him.”

As we go through this in Heb. 10, I want you to understand what Christ has done what and God the Father has done to make if possible for *you* not only to have salvation and forgiveness of sin, but to go on beyond that *to be perfected for eternal life*, and to have the great and fantastic blessing of—through prayer and God’s Spirit—direct access to God the Father through Jesus Christ in the true sanctuary in heaven above. And you don’t need a man as an intercessor, except the One Who became Jesus Christ—*He* is your Intercessor.

Since He is your Intercessor, can any man do better than Him? Can any saint do better than Him? And if you pray to saints and if you pray to Mary, you’re praying to people who have died and are not in heaven and await the resurrection; *that system binds you to idolatry*. That’s why this book of Hebrews was written. The temple was soon to be destroyed, and God was now letting it be known to all those that He has called that it doesn’t matter what happens to the temple, you have direct access to God the Father in heaven above, and that’s the whole sum of Heb. 10.

Hebrews 10:2: “Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered? For once those who worship had been purified, *they would* no longer be conscious of sin.”

This is something that we need to understand: Though we have the law of sin and death in us and though we are fighting human nature to overcome—which we need to and the Scriptures show that there’s no doubt about that—***God has a process with His Spirit, through Jesus Christ, that you can put the sins behind you and not have consciousness of those sins*** except as a lesson to not do that. The reason is because God’s way is so fantastic that He is bringing you to Him, which then has a profound and deep and lasting and tremendous

change in your life to where you don't have consciousness of sin. If you do sin, you repent and have that wiped away so that you won't be living in sin.

Verse 3: "On the contrary, in *offering* these *sacrifices* year by year, *there is* a remembrance of sins, because *it is* impossible *for the* blood of bulls and goats to take away sins" (vs 3-4).

Let's understand something else here: If it's impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sin, how can the sacrifice of the Mass take away sin when a man is the key figure in commanding God? *It cannot! God will not be bound by any man!*

Just as the animal sacrifices were only of a minimal effect and in the long run could not do away with sin, likewise with many of the things called the Eucharist, the sacrifice of the Mass, communion and so forth, fall into the same category. The truth is, unless you take the Passover the way that Jesus did at the time He commanded, and understand that the bread and wine are only symbols of the New Covenant—not His actual body, not His actual blood—then you have no forgiveness of sin and you are not in covenant with God. That's the big lie that is out there!

I have been thinking of doing an article and entitle it *Lies from the Pulpit*. If you come to church, what do you come to church for? If you're interested in God, you want to hear the Word of God. You come to church to hear the Truth. Then lies are presented to you as Truth! Isn't that the cleverest invasion of Satan the devil, to get right into the pulpit, to have men actually use the Bible and preach lies? That's astounding!

We have already covered vs 5-10, how they prepared a body. He came to do His will. This is in this series #27: *The Covenant Between God the Father and Jesus Christ*.

Verse 12: "But He, after offering one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at *the* right hand of God."

Since Paul is comparing the *physical* priesthood of the tribe of Aaron and the temple with the *priesthood of Christ*, the comparison is this: The priests went into the Holy of Holies only once a year on the Day of Atonement; only long enough to offer the sacrifices and sprinkle the blood as described in Lev. 11. It is important to understand that *no physical priest has ever sat down in the presence of God!* This gives you a great comparison between the priesthoods. That's why it says, 'higher than the heavens' is the priesthood of Christ (Heb. 7 & 8). He

went into the Holy of Holies in heaven above and has sat down on the right hand of God.

We're going to learn how great this is and what a fantastic blessing and privilege that it is to actually be able to do this. That's why Satan comes into the pulpits and brings his lies, because if there is a lie it cuts you off from God, and that's what he wants to do. If he can cut you off from God while *you think* you are in contact with God, he has got you perfectly wrapped up, *without a doubt!*

"...sat down at *the* right hand of God." Let's look at some things concerning the right hand of God. I tell you what God has done, what Christ has done, is absolutely fantastic, and I want you to see we are going through here when we talked about the covenant between Christ and the Father and 'prepare me a body,' we're going to go to the application of the blood of Christ. What are we talking about with the body and the blood? *We are talking about the New Covenant, and it all ties together just fantastically!*

Psalms 16:7—this is a prophecy of Christ, a prophecy of His relationship with God: "I will bless the LORD Who has given me counsel; my heart also instructs me in the nights. I have set the LORD always before me. Because He is at my right hand..." (vs 7-8).

If Jesus Christ is at the right hand of God the Father—which He is—Jesus Christ is there to be at *your* right hand. Think about that! How much power does Christ have to strengthen us to overcome sin? to strengthen us to love Him? *Just like your right hand!*

"...I shall not be moved. Therefore, My heart is glad, and My glory rejoices; My flesh also shall rest in safety, for You will not abandon My soul to the grave... [a direct prophecy of the resurrection of Christ] ... neither will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption. You will make known to Me the path of life..." (vs 8-11).

That's what Christ is doing for us. This is part of some of the things that we need to realize that the Word of God is doing for us:

1. **Walk in faith!**
2. **Believe in hope!**
3. **Live in love!**

What is the quickest summary of the New Testament? *You have it right there: Walk in faith, believe in hope and live in love!*

Psalms 17:5: "My steps have held fast to Your paths, my feet have not slipped. I have called upon You, for You will answer me, O God; incline Your ear to me; hear my speech" (vs 5-6).

We are going to see how absolutely marvelous that is in the New Testament and with access to God the Father and Jesus Christ. We have all lived in a world that's so filled with 'religion,' we do not understand the relationship that God wants to have with us, and the strength and power of Christ in us and use of the Holy Spirit of God in *growing, changing and overcoming*.

It has to be like it is here: "...incline Your ear to me; hear my speech. Show Your marvelous loving kindness, O Savior of those seeking refuge in You; by Your right hand *save them* from those who rise up against them" (vs 6-7). Every battle, every difficulty you have, God can overcome.

Let's again see some of the words of Christ, Psalm 118:16: "The right hand of the LORD is exalted; the right hand of the LORD does valiantly."

These are given so that in our battles and fights in overcoming we can come to God rather than let ourselves get frustrated and depressed and downtrodden. Some people get downright mad at God because God doesn't make things comfortable. 'Religious' people think that they should not have a single trial, absolutely nothing go wrong, and anybody who has anything go wrong or has a trial has got to be in wrong-standing with God.

Of course, Jesus Christ showed that's not the case. Look what He did! Look what He went through! Whatever trials or difficulties we have, those are there so that we will turn to God and trust in His strength and look to Him, and He is right there to help.

There it is, v 16: "The right hand of the LORD is exalted; the right hand of the LORD does valiantly. I shall not die, but live and declare the works of the LORD" (vs 16-17).

God has promised you ***eternal life!*** Most people would be satisfied to have wealth and riches and a pleasant life now, but even as Christ said, 'If you gain the whole world and lose your soul, what do you have?' *You have nothing!*

Verse 18: "The LORD has sorely chastened me; but He has not given me over to death. Open to me the gates of righteousness; I will go through them, and I will praise the LORD" (vs 18-19). God is going to provide a way. It says that with every temptation that comes along, 'He'll provide a way of escape' (1-Cor. 10:13).

Verse 20: "This is the gate of the LORD; the righteous shall enter through it.... [then this blends into the resurrection and so forth] ...I will praise You, for You have answered me and have become

my salvation" (vs 20-21). Understand this:

- God ***will hear*** every prayer
- God ***will answer*** every prayer

according to:

- ✓ His will
- ✓ His power
- ✓ in His way

—because we have a High Priest that's after the order of Melchisedec that lives forever.

Psalm 110:1: "The LORD said unto my Lord..."—showing the Father and the Son, both called *Lord*. We know that David didn't have another Lord over him. Did David have someone over him beside God? *No!*

"... 'Sit at My right hand until I make Your enemies as Your footstool.' The LORD shall send the rod of Your strength out of Zion *saying*, 'Rule in the midst of Your enemies'" (vs 1-2).

Have you ever had it where people were after you? I mean, really after you? I have had that within the Church. {See sermons: *The Resignation; The Rest of the Story #s 1 & 2*}

I had some of the top men in the church that I belonged to—that was a hierarchical church—in which I was a minister and I was fighting against all their lies, deception, infighting and things like this, and they were after me. Sometimes God will let you get in a situation that it seems like you're going to be absolutely devoured with their threats. But God took care of all of the enemy, just like it says here, *He took care of them!* He will take care of your enemies, but you have to leave it in God's hands. You have to do what you can do. What you do is that ***you always stand for the Truth and you always are faithful to God regardless of the circumstances around!*** That's what God wants you to do, and leave the battle to Him.

He took care of them. It was actually fantastic: On a Tuesday, with the threat of being kicked out of the ministry and accused of many things that were not true, Dolores and I went home very shattered. On Thursday, the man who gave the accusations left the Church. On Friday, his boss who was the administrator of Church Administration—who, in vengeance, was coming after me—was fired! So, this just goes to show you that God can take care of things better than you.

- Did we have low times? *Oh, yes!*
- Was there a fierce battle going on? *Yes!*
- Was it difficult? *Yes!*
- Did God give the victory? *Yes!*

Always does!

Verse 3: "Your people will offer themselves

in the day of Your power, in the beauties of Holiness from the womb of the morning: Yours is the dew of Your youth.... [that's just a metaphor for eternal life] ...The LORD has sworn and will not repent..." (vs 3-4).

When God swears, let's understand that's pretty powerful. Every word that God speaks is truth. Men swear because they're giving an oath that they are going to tell the truth. God doesn't need to swear, but when He does, and He swears by Himself, this is a statement *based upon His very existence!* If it is based on His existence, what's going to happen? *It's going to come to pass!*

Verse 4: "The LORD has sworn and will not repent, 'You are a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec.'" That's of Christ! That's why we don't need any other priest. That's why we do not need any man to intercede for us. Christ became a man and He is our High Priest and lives forever to make intercession for us, and He has given us so many promises.

Someone said, 'Why don't you give a sermon on the promises of God?' I'd have to read the whole Bible, because the whole Bible contains the promises of God *fulfilled, being fulfilled, and yet to be fulfilled*. Every word is part of the Covenant of God. Every word is viable through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

Someone asked me: 'When did you decide to translate the New Testament?' And I said, 'Well, I really didn't sit down one day and say I'm going to do it and start out.' We used study translations like we have here with Hebrews—first one book, then another book, then another book, then another book. Then one day I got the *New Testament and Psalms an Inclusive Version*. By that time I had done about half the books in the New Testament, and that was in 1995, and the *Inclusive Version* is the neuter-gender version.

It blew me away when I read that they had changed the name of God the Father from *the Father*, to 'Father/Mother' and the *Son of God* to the 'Child.' I said that's it! If no answer is given to that and that is allowed to stand, then we're going to be held liable by God for not standing for the Truth. That's when I decided to do the whole New Testament, because they were so corrupting the Word of God.

Christ is the ultimate Word of God. Through the ultimate Son of God and Hebrews is the proof of the Divinity of Christ. Of course, it starts right out in the very beginning how much greater Christ is.

Hebrews 1:1: "God, Who spoke to the fathers at different times in the past and in many

ways by the prophets... [it covers the greatest prophet, Moses (Heb. 3)] ...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 ages" (vs 1-2).

If you want to have contact with someone important, are not God the Father and Jesus Christ the most important in the whole universe? What we are going to come to is that ***God has called us so that we can fellowship with Him in preparation for eternal life!*** You stop and think of it! If you attain to the Kingdom of God, you're actually going to have lived in three levels of existence:

1. conception and in the womb

That's a short existence, only nine months, but nevertheless it is an existence different than after you are born into the world—is it not? *Yes, indeed!*

2. the existence after you are born

You are breathing air and eating food and all this sort of thing and you live 70-80 years, provided nothing untoward happens.

And all of that is in preparation

3. for eternal life, where at the resurrection you are born again

Now You have another whole level of existence. So this is quite something when you think of it.

(go to the next track)

I gave a sermon at the Feast of Tabernacles years ago called, *From a Speck of Dust to a Son of God*. {Note book: *From a Speck of Dust to a Son of God: Why were You Born?*} Our existence began as small as a pen-point mark on a piece of paper! Isn't that astounding? All of this testifies to the glory of God anyway, so He has spoken to us by His Son, by Whom He made all things.

Verse 3: "Who, being *the* brightness of *His* glory and *the* exact image of His person, and upholding all things... [the universe and everything that there is] ...by the word of His own power... [that's how faithful and trustworthy that Jesus is] ...**when He had by Himself purged our sins...** [God is the One Who purged our sins and this is the whole theme and story of the book of Hebrews] ...**sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high.**"

You can get out your concordance and look up *the right hand of God* and that's where Christ is.

Hebrews 10:13: "Since that time, He is waiting until His enemies are placed *as* a footstool for His feet."

God has a unique way of dealing with His enemies. He doesn't intervene and cut them off right

when they start coming to power; witness Pharaoh and the account of the Exodus. God let him exalt himself tremendously. God cuts down the enemy at the height of his power. It's easy to defeat an enemy if he's just starting. Project that forward to the end-time and what do we have?

- We have mankind at the greatest height of his power.
- We have *the beast* who is the greatest human being that has ever been of the human system under Satan the devil.
- We have the *false prophet* who has great miracles that he does, unheard of in the history of the world—outside of the miracles of Christ—and rules the world and control the world.

That's when Christ is going to intervene and fight against them, and He is going to make them *His footstool*. The earth is the footstool of God. That's something! You can also look up *footstool*. Look up all of those things concerning overcoming the enemy and how He has done it and the way He will do it.

Verse 14: "For by one offering He... [How this goes right back to Heb. 1 that we just read] ...has obtained eternal perfection *for* those who are sanctified"—*to be set aside for a Holy use and purpose. You are sanctified by God through the power of the Holy Spirit!* You then are Holy to God.

That's why we are referred to in the New Testament as 'Holy brethren.' That's why we are also called 'saints.' Notice it is a continuous, progressive thing. Those who are being sanctified—present tense, passive participle—God is doing the work. What is He doing this for? *He is qualifying us for fellowship with God!* That's what it's for.

We are sanctified by the Spirit; we are also sanctified by the Word of God. That becomes important when we read the statement that *He is writing His laws and His commandments in our hearts and in our minds*. That's how we are being perfected. This perfection is happening in our lives because we are sanctified; we are being perfected for eternal life. That's why it's called *eternal perfection*. It can only come from God Who is eternal. This is all part of the grace of God as we grow and overcome, and we are being prepared for eternal life while we now have fellowship with God. That's the tremendous thing that we need to comprehend.

John 17:17—Jesus is praying to the Father says here the Lord's Prayer: "Sanctify them in Your Truth... [Why so many lies from the pulpit?] ...**Your Word is the Truth.**"

Let's see that not only the Word of God, but also by the Spirit of God. God is doing something special in our lives.

Romans 15:13: "May the God of hope fill you now with all joy and peace in believing that you may abound in hope *and in the power of the Holy Spirit.*"

That in itself is a whole sermon really. You look at this and go back the other way: *If you are not believing, you don't have peace!* Just like James says, that if you ask for something and you don't have faith, you're like a wave that's 'tossed to and fro by the wind.' "...that you may abound in hope..." Never giving up even though circumstances look the worst.

Let me just mention something here that we need to face. Someone saw a picture of a Feast site and said, 'My, we are an *old church*'—which is basically true. We are *because God is perfecting you*, that's why. You don't take brand new babes in Christ and perfect them instantly. They may be perfected at their stage where they are, but they have a long way to go. God delights in the very fact that there are many who have been faithful and are enduring and are going to cross the finish line before Christ returns. That is going to happen. We need to look at it in the sense of *God has finished the work in them*, so we can rejoice in that. When they pass and go to their *place of safety* in the grave, we are sad because they have gone, but we're happy because they have endured to the end and they shall be saved.

That's why we need to keep abounding in hope and so forth and just realize that when you come to the very crisis of your life—which we all will, because we read earlier that as 'in Adam we all die'—and there comes a time to die; God made it that way. This old 'corpus nephesh' is not eternal, it's just not. God is going to give you:

- a new mind
- a new body
- eternal life
- glory

So therefore, as we come down the line, because when all of the seniors are perfected and cross the finish line, God still has work for us to do for those who are left behind. God will open a way and He'll provide the means, and all of those of you who *have* endured to the end and *will* endure to the end, you have great hope and the promise of God Who cannot lie. When you come to the last moments of the weakness of your life in the flesh:

- God is still there with you
- God is still there helping you

- God will see you through to the end

Then you will be raised, when Christ returns, to eternal life. That's why this verse is so profound. In that you can also rejoice in this part of the joy, that if you cross the finish line before the Tribulation comes, God has spared you a great deal.

I'm getting older and older myself. I don't know how long I'm going to live. Whatever, it doesn't make any difference how long there is because we live day-by-day and ***trust in God, walk in faith, believe in hope, and live in love***, and that's how we conduct our lives and that's how we are perfected. Let every trial become something, which will be a building block.

Verse 14: "But I myself am also persuaded concerning you, my brethren, that you are full of goodness... [you have the Holy Spirit, you have the laws of God written in your heart and mind] ...and are being filled with all knowledge..." All the knowledge that God can give you, and today we live in a time with more knowledge than when he wrote this.

"...and are able to admonish one another" (v 14). In other words he is saying, 'Look you're able to help and encourage one another without me being there on a continuous basis.'

Verse 15: "So then, I have more boldly written to you, brethren, in part *as a way of* reminding you, because of the grace that was given to me by God, in order that I might be a minister of Jesus Christ unto the Gentiles to perform the Holy service of teaching the Gospel of God; so that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by *the* Holy Spirit" (vs 15-16).

So, in a sense *we* become a sacrifice. Not only did Christ give His life by the power of God the Father, we give our lives by the power of God the Father and Jesus Christ.

Romans 12:1: "I exhort you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, Holy *and* well-pleasing to God, which is your spiritual service."

As we grow, as we overcome, as we put away the works of the flesh, develop the mind of Christ; *we are a living sacrifice*.

Verse 2: "Do not conform yourselves to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind..." That's what God wants, having the laws and commandments of God written in our hearts and in our minds.

"...in order that you may prove what *is* well-pleasing and good, and the perfect will of God" (v

2). That's how you are perfected with eternal perfection.

This is what becomes important for us to understand: ***your sins have been purged or forgiven forever!*** That's how you come to the point in your life and mind—with God's Spirit and with God's Word—that you have no more consciousness of sin because you are not focusing on sin, you are focusing on the spiritual things. As the Proverb says, 'As a man thinks in his heart so he is.' If you have Christ in you and you have the Word of God in you, so you are!

Hebrews 10:15: "And the Holy Spirit also bears witness to us; for after He had previously said, "This *is* the covenant..." (vs 15-16). We need to understand this. This is the covenant.

We know what the covenant is that we are going to take, as far as the Passover is concerned and the renewing of the New Covenant every year on the Passover. This is a covenant; this is the purpose; this is the goal, contrary to the lawless Christianity of Sunday-keepers who say there is no law to keep!

Someone sent me a book, which is quite interesting. It's called *Free At Last*; by Larry Huch. I don't necessarily recommend that you buy the book because it falls in line with the kind of writing that Alan Knight spoke of in his book *Primitive Christianity in Crisis*. But he says, 'Break the chain of the family curse,' which all sounds good and so forth. He said that families are cursed to the third and fourth generation, which is true. But in that whole book he does not quote the second commandment where it says:

You shall not make unto yourself any graven image of any likeness which *is* in heaven above, that is in the earth beneath, or the water under the earth, and you shall not bow yourself down to them to serve them, for I the LORD your God *am* a jealous God, visiting the iniquities of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth *generation* of those that hate me; and showing mercy unto thousands of those that love me and keep my commandments."

A lot of these Protestant ministers, because they can't preach the whole Truth, preach enough of it to help people a little bit. The reason that the curse comes is because of sin, but they never say what sin is!

Here is why it is important that this be defined that way, v 16: "This *is* the covenant that I will establish with them after those days'... [that means, obviously, referring to the days of the

ministry of Christ and His resurrection] ...says *the* Lord. 'I will give My Laws into their hearts, and I will inscribe them in their minds.'"

- this is the process of conversion
- this is what gives you fellowship with God
- This is what gives you the mind of Christ.
- this is how you can overcome.
- Is the New Testament also the Law of God? *Yes it is! It surely is!*
- Did not Jesus in Matt. 5, 6 and 7 show how to apply the laws of God in the full spiritual application? *Yes, He did!*
- Did not everything He did and taught and preached all based on the laws of God?

So therefore, the whole New Testament is considered part of the Law of God.

That's why John starts out his Gospel, 'In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God.' That's to substantiate that when you read in the prophets where it says, 'And the Word of the Lord came to Ezekiel saying... or to Isaiah... or to Jeremiah...' that you know Who it was that came, Who spoke it. This is what God wants, that's why we have been given the minds that we have.

Let's understand something: When people are born into the world and have the mind and the *spirit of man* in them—which all human beings do so they can have intellect and so forth—God created that mind to receive His Spirit. In a sense, we can say that all of those who are carnal-minded are *half-minded*, because they don't have the Spirit of God. That doesn't mean they're dimwits, they may be very smart and intelligent. That's not the point. The point is:

- God made you to receive His Spirit
- God created you for that purpose
- God created you to walk in His ways and in His laws and have it written in your heart and in your mind so that as you think in your heart so you are

That's a profound thing! I mean you talk about a wonderful process.

Now then, He gives a promise, v 17: "And their sins and lawlessness I will not remember ever again." Isn't that something?

Let's see where all of this begins as far as with the Law of God and what God requires. Here's the foundation of it, this is how we are to live. This has to be the central function, the desire of our heart and mind, which only you can do, and only God can give you the power and the means to do so.

Matthew 22:34: "But after the Pharisees heard that He had silenced the Sadducees, they came together *before* Him. And one of them, a doctor of the law..." (vs 34-35).

Do we have lots of lawyers today? Watch any news channel. Like someone said, 'Whenever a lawyer comes in and gets involved, you're in trouble.' He was a lawyer and a lawyer is always looking to trip you up, so was this lawyer.

"...questioned *Him*, tempting Him, and saying..." (v 35). For all of you who believe that Christ abolished the Law, listen! If you believe that you are contrary to God, you are contrary to what Jesus is doing, and you are not a Christian. You may profess, but you are not a Christian! There is a vast difference!

Notice, he came to Him saying, v 36: "'Master, which commandment *is the* great commandment in the Law?' And Jesus said to him, 'You shall love *the* Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind'" (vs 36-37). No reservations.

That's why we have to **walk in faith, believe in hope and live in love**, because that's how we operate. This is the whole purpose of what Paul is writing about there in Heb. 10! This is part of the Law of God. It's to be written in our heart and our mind.

Verse 38: "This is *the* first and greatest commandment; and *the* second *one is* like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets" (vs 38-40).

In other words, the love of God and the love of neighbor supports all of the rest of the laws and commandments of God. They are all done for that reason and that purpose. This is what we are to have written in our heart and in our mind. When a trial and temptation comes, we can overcome with the Word of God, with the power of His Spirit. If Satan comes along to tempt us, we can do as Jesus said, 'Get you behind Me, Satan.' That way then, instead of fellowshiping with the world and Satan the devil, we fellowship with God. Is God pleased with that? Of course, He is! That's the whole purpose and reason.

Isn't that something? That's why I made the statement that your sins are purged forever. He 'removes our sins as far as the east is from the west' (Psa. 103). They are purged forever. He won't remember them ever again.

Hebrews 10:18: "Now, where remission of these *is*, *it is* no longer *necessary to offer* sacrifices

for sin.” This concludes the whole section from Heb. 9:1. This is an ending statement for that whole section, and it’s all connected together. What does this do for us?

Verse 19: “Therefore, brethren, having confidence [boldness]... [Why?] ...to enter into the *true* Holiest by the blood of Jesus.... [that’s something] ...by a new and living way, which He consecrated for us through the veil (that is, His flesh)” (vs 19-20).

This is what Christ has done. Let’s look at the *confidence*. In other words, *God has given you authority or authorized you to have direct access to Him through Jesus Christ*. Remember what Jesus said, He said, ‘Don’t pray to Me that I ask the Father; *you ask the Father* for He loves you.’

If there is any one thing that we need to get through the book of Hebrews it is this: ***God has given us the privilege of fellowship with Him through prayer and His Word and His Holy Spirit in belief and hope and love to have fellowship with Him as a prelude to the resurrection!***

The life that we have from conception to birth is one level of existence. Now, in this level of existence—after birth, and then life and conversion and death—when we are resurrected it’s going to be a whole new way. Just like a baby in the womb is fed and nourished by the mother, so likewise, through the Holy Spirit of God, we are fed and nourished to develop the spiritual character. God is there through Christ to do everything for us, but we have to apply ourselves.

- we have to be *zealous*
- we have to be *renewed*
- we have to be *changed*

Let’s look at some things that we can have confidence in, boldness in, by the blood of Christ. Isn’t it interesting:

- v 5 says “body”
- v 19 says “...the blood of Jesus”

When we prepare for the Passover, what did Jesus say? He said, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you.’ See how this goes right back to what Jesus taught: *the body and the blood!* Goes right back to the New Covenant. He gave them the bread and said, ‘This is My body which is broken for you’ and He gave them the wine and said, ‘This is the New Covenant in My blood.’ and we overcome.

If you have *The Christian Passover* book, be sure and read the chapter there The Meaning of the

Blood of Jesus Christ. We need to understand, brethren, that we need the blood of Christ every day not only for the forgiveness of sins, but also for the confidence and for the power that God has given to us through the blood of Christ and that is namely beginning with ***authorization to have boldness to come before the throne of God into the Holy of Holies***. *God knows everything!* He has called us *knowing* every fault and difficulty and sin that we have:

- to have mercy on every one of us
- to give us of His grace
- to give us of His Spirit
- to give us of His power so that we come to Him

We’re to have the Word of God, His laws written in our heart and mind.

Hebrews 4:12: “For the Word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of both soul and spirit, *and* of both *the* joints and *the* marrow, and *is* able to discern *the* thoughts and intents of *the* heart.”

By the Word of God—*through the power of the Holy Spirit of God, through the blood of Jesus Christ*—you are able to have those sins purged from within so that you no longer have consciousness of sin. You will be conscious of sin when you sin because the Word of God and the Spirit of God in you will convict you of it, and that is done so that you can repent.

Verse 13: “And there is not a created thing that is not manifest in His sight...” In other words, you can never fool God at any time.

I saw on the news that they raided a Catholic parish and in the back room the priest was growing marijuana, and he and a fellow parishioner were selling it. How many times have you heard of ‘religious’ leaders who have committed adultery, pedophilia, lying, cheating, stealing and all of this sort of thing, and yet, in the very Bible that sits in their pulpit, ‘there isn’t anything that isn’t manifested in His sight’ and He knows it.

Verse 14: “Having, therefore, a great High Priest, *Who* has passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, we should hold fast the confession of *our faith*. For we do not have a High Priest Who cannot empathize with our weaknesses, but *One Who* was tempted in all things according to *the* likeness of *our own temptations*; yet, *He* was without sin” (vs 14-15). So that we can always come to Christ, always come to the Father.

Verse 16: “Therefore, we should come with

boldness to the throne of grace... [which is where God the Father sits and Christ is at the right hand] ...so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need" (vs 14-16).

FRC/jea
Transcribed: 09/23/07
Formatted/Corrected: bo—January/2017

When is that time of need? *Always!*

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*

Scriptural References

- 1) Hebrews 10:1, 11, 2
- 2) Hebrews 9:24-28
- 3) Hebrews 10:2-4, 12
- 4) Psalm 16:7-11
- 5) Psalm 17:5-7
- 6) Psalm 118:16-21
- 7) Psalm 110:1-4
- 8) Hebrews 1:1-3
- 9) Hebrews 10:13-14
- 10) John 17:17
- 11) Romans 15:13-16
- 12) Romans 12:1-2
- 13) Hebrews 10:15-17
- 14) Matthew 22: 34-40
- 15) Hebrews 10:18-20
- 16) Hebrews 4:12-16

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Hebrews 10:5-10
- Leviticus 11
- Hebrews 7; 8
- 1 Corinthians 10:13
- Hebrews 3; 1:12
- Matthew 5-7
- Psalm 103

Also referenced:

Sermon Series: *Scripturalism vs Judaism*

Sermons:

- *The Covenant Between God the Father and Jesus Christ* (Hebrews Series #27)
- *The Resignation*
- *The Rest of the Story #s 1 & 2*

Books:

- *From a Speck of Dust to a Son of God*
- *The Code of Jewish Law* by Ganzfried & Goldin
- *New Testament and Psalms an Inclusive Version*
- *Free at Last* by Larry Huch
- *Primitive Christianity in Crisis* by Alan Knight
- *The Christian Passover* by Fred R. Coulter

Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews XXIX The Unpardonable Sin

(Chapter 10)
Fred R. Coulter

I want us to understand the parallel between the times near the close of the apostolic age in which Hebrews was written. Hebrews was written in 61^{A.D.} and sent first to all of the Jewish congregations, and it went to Jerusalem and I'm sure that copies went to all of the churches in Judea and Galilee and Samaria. The reason that this is important and the reason that it was written in 61^{A.D.} and not centuries later, is because there had to be a warning given to those churches, and subsequently the warning went out to all the churches not just the Jewish churches, because James was going to be martyred in 62^{A.D.}

The reason we know that the book of Hebrews was written before James was martyred is because his name is not mentioned in here as being martyred. At the end when we get to Heb. 13 he says, 'Follow your leaders'—not in the past tense but in the present tense.

The events beginning with the martyrdom of James, which was during the Feast of Unleavened Bread, 62^{A.D.}, also began to unleash the events leading up to the end of the apostolic age. The first phase of the end of the apostolic age was the destruction of Jerusalem, which happened after the death of Peter, after the death of Paul and probably several of the other apostles. John and Andrew and Philip continued to live until close toward the end of the first century. The things that were taking place then, we are seeing taking place now. {note sermon: *The Two Generations*}

You can read in the writings of John—the Epistles of John especially—just like it is today it's like it was then, John says, 'They went out from us; they were not part of us, that it may be manifest that they were not of us. Beloved, many antichrists have arisen.' That's the day we are living in now. What we are going to see is a re-enactment in our day, what was occurring back in their days.

Because all of the apocryphal: The Gospel of Mary Magdalene, The Apocryphal Gospel of Peter, The Gospel of Thomas, the Gospel of different ones there, all came from the Nag Hammadi Library in southern Egypt. Those things were beginning to be circulated from the time of the destruction of Jerusalem until after the death of the Apostle John.

We are living in the same time where we are getting so many of these assaults against The Bible,

and against the New Testament in particular, and a direct subversion of the Words of God that are printed like this one that I just did the sermon on: *Good As New, A Radical Retelling of the Scriptures*. That's what was going on at the close of the apostolic age. At the close of the age before Christ returns we're going to see a repeat of it.

We are going to see that Paul in writing the book of Hebrews was preparing the brethren who were there in Judea, Galilee and Samaria—as well as the rest of the Church as a whole—for the destruction of the temple and the removing of everything that they thought and understood up to that point was what God desired and represented. Which then gets back to a very profound principle: ***Before God corrects people in the world, He corrects His Church first!*** Have we not seen that today? Have we not seen a destruction—though not by armies but by infiltration and changing of doctrines—of one of the largest Churches of God that we have ever witnessed probably in the history of the world to this time? *Yes, we have!* So, there is a similar parallel.

We all know these Scriptures, so I'll go through them quite rapidly. This is so that we have a key and understanding as to what it was like, and so we can see the same things are being done here and we are gradually going into this in exactly the same manner that Jesus outlined.

Matthew 24:1: "And after going out, Jesus departed from the temple; and His disciples came to Him to point out the buildings of the temple. But Jesus said to them, 'Do you not see all these things?....'"

Remember from the top of the Mount of Olives looking across over to the temple area as you view the temple, it was at the top of a 450-foot wall that went clear down into the Kidron Valley. Then on top of the temple area it had the wall around it, and then the highest pinnacle was 105-cubits high above it. So, here they are looking at this and this is, like a 45-60 story building as you're looking at it. Very impressive! It would be almost like today saying, 'See these twin towers here? I tell you that in one day they are going to fall.' And you would say, 'This guy is out of his mind.'

So likewise, v 2: "But Jesus said to them 'Do you not see all these things? Truly I say to you,

there shall not be left here even one stone upon a stone that shall not be thrown down.’.... [that was absolutely true, did happen] ...And as He was sitting on the Mount of Olives, His disciples came to Him alone, saying, ‘Tell us, when shall these things be? And what *shall be* the sign of Your coming and of the completion of the age?’.... [then false prophets]: ...Then Jesus answered *and* said to them, **‘Be on guard, so that no one deceives you.’** (vs 2-4). Later on we have ‘...no one deceive you by any means.’

Verse 5: “For many shall come in My name, saying, ‘I am the Christ’...”—and that can be interpreted two ways:

1. many will say that *Christ* is the Christ
2. that the individual himself will proclaim that he is Christ

Like ‘Reverend’ Sun Yun Moon today who was supposedly just anointed with a crown back in Washington, D. C., to be ‘the savior of the world.’

“...and they shall deceive many” (v 5). Were the people attending there deceived? *Yes, indeed!* Even some congressmen were there, too.

Verse 6: “And you shall hear of wars and rumors of wars. See *that* you do not let *these things* disturb you. For it is necessary *that* all *these things* take place, but the end is not yet” (vs 5-6). Today you can pick up your paper or watch the news and every one of these things are happening.

Verse 7: “For nation shall rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom; and there shall be famines and pestilences and earthquakes in *different* places. Now all these *things are* the beginning of sorrows” (vs 7-8).

As I have said before, I think we have entered into the time which is the beginning of sorrows and we’re going to see the groundwork laid to bring about all of the rest of the things that it says here for our age, just like it was done back at their time.

Verse 9: “Then shall they deliver you up to affliction...” *It will happen!*

I got an e-mail from a man in Egypt who wants to know about baptism. He says, ‘I am afraid for my life. I have repented, I keep the Sabbath, I want to keep the Holy Days, and if I let anyone know it they will surely kill me because they think that it is Jewish. Even members of my own family would do this.’ So, those of us who live in modern Israel today—United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, parts of Europe—we don’t know what it’s like, but it is going to come here.

“...and you shall be hated by all nations for My name’s sake” (v 9)—because we’re going to be made the enemy and the terrorists. All you have to do is make the definition lower and lower and lower and pretty soon they will get to us. Robert Reich said in an article, that religionists and those who believe in God are worse than terrorists! So, it’s going to happen!

Verse 10: “And then shall many be led into sin, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another.” Is that not already set up? *Yes, it is!* Do you not have 800-numbers you can call and anonymously leave a tip or an accusation against someone? *Yes, indeed!*

Verse 11: “And many false prophets shall arise, and shall deceive many.” That sure is true. There are more religions; there are more prophets; there are more Bibles. If I set before you all of the spurious Bibles that I have, plus a lot of those if I could get my hands on that I don’t have, and show you how men are so absolutely dedicated to destroying the Word of God, being tools of Satan the devil to work within the seminaries, work within the colleges, work within the translation committees. And people read it and say, ‘Oh, that’s wonderful.’ Just like the Archbishop of Canterbury said of *A Radical Retelling of the Scriptures, Good as New*: ‘An extraordinary work of power.’ *Absolute lie!*

Here’s where we are, v 12: “And because lawlessness shall be multiplied...” That’s what we’re into. Lawlessness can be best defined not only against the laws of God, but where your standard of behavior becomes what you believe to be true, whether or not it is true. Because you have no standard of the Word of God—which is absolute Truth—to base your conduct, or base your morality, what you believe, your set of values and ethics, to you is true. That also affirms the Proverb, which says, ‘Every man is just in his own eyes.’

That’s what we are living in today. You can hear it on any radio or television program. If you think when you watch the news, that you’re getting the news, *you’re not!* That’s all that the person sitting there telling you the news is, is a reader of what the editors behind the scenes want you to know. The more they have their private agendas to do what they want, and in this world we are living in a time when people are making their own reality by thinking that their thoughts will create the reality they want. There is nothing that describes better this coming Presidential election than that. That’s what lawlessness is multiplied everywhere: deception, lies and so forth. {note sermon: *True Lies* #1 & #2}

Verse 13: “But the one who endures to *the* end, that one shall be saved.” We have to endure to

the end, very important. The problem with the book of Hebrews was too many were not enduring to the end; because it didn't turn out the way they *thought*, therefore, God is wrong, rather than thinking, 'Well, it didn't turn out the way I thought, maybe God has something else in mind.'

We can understand that those at the close of the apostolic age really had a very difficult time, and it was very difficult for them to comprehend that Christ wasn't going to return in their lifetimes. If we can understand that then we can see how important faith becomes because the way God is going to work it does not depend on our complete understanding of the situation, but it depends on:

- our faith
- our belief
- our steadfastness
- our enduring to the end

That's what it depends on. Look just from the turn of the century here:

- Jehovah Witnesses: Jesus was to return in 1918—*He didn't!*
- Seventh Day Adventists: Jesus was to return in 1844—*didn't happen!*

You can come down through our age:

- It was going to happen because the WWII and all the armies were gathered around Jerusalem—*didn't happen!*
- It's going to be in 1975—*didn't happen!*

How many people subsequently *gave up and fell away* because they didn't have the faith of God and weren't grounded in the Truth enough to endure to the end? *Many did, unfortunately!*

Verse 14: "And this Gospel of the Kingdom shall be proclaimed in all the world for a witness to all nations, and then shall the end come."

This doesn't tell us by whom, how many, what duration. *No it doesn't!* It doesn't tell us, or give us permission that since we're a small group or whatever you could use for an excuse, that we shouldn't do that, we'll leave it to the two witnesses. Well, we can't do that either.

Here is an admission by the apostles to tell us that they understood that when the temple was destroyed that the 'abomination of desolation' did not occur in that timeframe 66½_{A.D.}-70_{A.D.} with the destruction of the temple

Verse 15: "Therefore, when you see the abomination of desolation, which was spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the Holy place (the one who reads, let him understand)."

When Jesus spoke these words, that parenthetical statement was not there. It was put there probably by John and the elders who helped canonize the New Testament and in reading that, they realized they did not understand that prophecy even though the temple was destroyed. But they did know that the words of Christ were true and it was going to happen some time. So therefore, they added the parenthetical statement "... (the one who reads, let him understand)..."—because 'we don't understand it.'

Now we live at the end of the age when we can understand some of these things. But even at that, even though we have the framework of these things, do we really know what's going to happen in detail? *No!* But when something happens, we can recognize it for what it is. We are also given the promise back in Dan. 12 that the wise, at the time of the end, *shall understand*. That understanding has to come from God because of being faithful and enduring to the end.

You can take that *enduring to the end* and you can break that down in many ways. You can start out this way:

- you have a problem or difficulty, you endure until there is a solution and an end to the problem
- you endure to the end of your life and are safely tucked in the grave, your place of safety

If you live in the time of the end, which we probably are—how close the end is we really don't know—but you still have to *endure to the end*. He's saying here: What do you have to endure unto the end? *Everything:*

- false prophets
- wars
- famines
- earthquakes
- pestilence
- betrayal
- affliction
- arrest
- martyrdom

—all of those things. I am afraid that too many today are like many were back then in Jerusalem; they didn't believe that it was going to happen when the book of Hebrews was written in 61_{A.D.}, and they could not see the gradual apostatizing from the Truth because it didn't work out the way that they thought. And that's the whole purpose of the book of Hebrews.

Heb. 10—we will do a little review. It's talking about the New Covenant, because we are going to talk about the *unpardonable sin* in this sermon in a very direct and profound way. The people who worry about the *unpardonable sin* are the ones who won't commit it. The ones who don't care whether they commit the *unpardonable sin* are the ones who will commit it.

Here is the reason for the *unpardonable sin*. A lot of people don't like it that there is going to be a *lake of fire*. A lot of people are angry at God because He is going to sentence the incorrigible wicked to the second death. But we will see how profound the *unpardonable sin* is.

Hebrews 10:16: "'This is the covenant that I will establish with them after those days,' says the Lord... [and this is a prophecy going back to the book of Jeremiah] ...'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.' Now where remission of these is, it is no longer necessary to offer sacrifices for sin" (vs 16-18). That is animal sacrifices.

Verse 19: "Therefore, brethren, having confidence to enter into the *true* Holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which He consecrated for us through the veil (that is, His flesh)" (vs 19-20).

Here's why there has to be an *unpardonable sin* and the penalty for it, because God has given people direct access to Him through prayer right into the Holy of Holies in heaven above.

- doesn't need to be a temple
- doesn't need to be a priesthood
- doesn't need to be a go-between except Christ

That's what's important. God has not given that to the world. Though there are some in the world who could commit the *unpardonable sin*. But since He has given that to us and has given us His Spirit, He wants us to respond back to Him.

We're going to see some parallels here between Heb. 6 and 10. Let's see where he talks about this in relationship to Abraham. We have the covenant that God has given to us because of Abraham. If you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise.

Hebrews 6:12: "So that you do not become lazy..." That's the whole purpose of this book. When do people become lazy? *When everything becomes easy and you can just lie back*, or as they say today, 'Just kick back', or 'Just hang out' just kind of sitting there sort of quivering, doing nothing

except maybe flapping the tongue. The truth is laziness is a choice just like anything else.

Verse 12: "...but *that you be* imitators of those who through faith and steadfast endurance inherit the promises. For God, after promising Abraham, swore by Himself, since He could swear by none greater" (vs 12-13).

That's what's so profound! God is personally involved in your life, and you are personally involved with God. He has given you His Holy Spirit. He has given you His Word. Great treasures and blessings! That's not to be treated lightly.

Swearing by Himself, v 14: "Saying, 'Surely in blessing I will bless you, and in multiplying I will multiply you.' Now, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise" (vs 14-15).

That was that Isaac was born. Before you can become like the stars of heaven—as the promise was given to Abraham concerning his spiritual seed—you must become part of the *sand of the sea* first. You must become human first. The *physical* offspring of Isaac becoming as the *sand of the sea*, and then the *spiritual* offspring becoming as the *stars of heaven*, you must be a grain of sand first and, pray tell, you're not much bigger than that when you are first conceived. Amazing!

Verse 16: "For indeed, men swear by the greater, and confirmation by an oath *puts* an end to all disputes between them. In this way God, desiring more abundantly to show the heirs of the promise the unchangeable nature of His own purpose, confirmed *it* by an oath" (vs 16-17).

This is the thing that's profound and important: **God changes not!** His purpose is not going to change irrespective of the choices that people make.

Verse 18: "So that by **two immutable things...**" That He would *bless*, that He would *multiply*, having sworn by Himself.

"...in which *it was* impossible for God to lie..." (v 18). That's what's profound and important and all these false prophets have the same attitude as Satan the devil, because they come from him, 'Yea, has God said?' They always accuse God of being a liar, one way or the other.

"...*it was* impossible for God to lie, we who have fled for refuge might have strong encouragement to lay hold on the hope *that has been* set before us" (v 18).

I am going to reiterate again, and we will see again and again, as we've said in the past: **We are to walk in faith, believe in hope and live in love!**

Those are the things that are going to see us through. Everything else is extra.

Verse 19: “Which *hope* we have as an anchor of the soul, both secure and steadfast...” — which means that regardless of the trial—and there will be many—that we will go through. As long as we understand and know the hope and realize that it is going to be by the power of the resurrection and through the power of the Holy Spirit of God, *it doesn’t matter what the circumstances around us are God is with us and in us* and He is going to work His purpose. *It doesn’t matter!*

Notice how this ties in with what we just read, v 19: “Which *hope* we have as an anchor of the soul, both secure and steadfast, and which enters into the *sanctuary* within the veil; where Jesus has entered for us *as* a forerunner, having become a High Priest forever according to the order of Melchisedec” (vs 19-20).

If you have a problem that gets you so discouraged and so down—and all of us will have these—remember this: *Go back and read about the account of Stephen when he was being stoned.* You can’t have anything any worse than that. *You’re being stoned!* What did he do? *He looked up in heaven and he saw the Son of man standing at the right hand of God!* When he said that he saw that, all of his enemies, being the Sanhedrin, went out there and just did him in. What did he do? The very same thing Jesus did when Jesus was on the cross dying. He said, ‘Father, forgive them. They know not what they do.’ And Stephen said, ‘Lord, lay not this to their charge.’—and he said that of his enemies. So, he was fulfilling what it says here.

Again, you’re going to see this pattern of writing in the book of Hebrews is this:

- hope/correction *or* correction/hope
- problems/solution *or* solution to view problems

all the way through the book of Hebrews. After some correction and needing to keep the Sabbath and so forth:

Hebrews 4:12: “For the Word of God *is* living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of both soul and spirit, *and* of both *the* joints and *the* marrow, and *is* able to discern *the* thoughts and intents of *the* heart.” That’s what the key is with the Bible:

- no other book has that
- no other book can convict of sin
- no other book can tell you what your mind really is

in short, simple, easy to understand terms, like the Bible. As we have covered:

- there is a way that seems right to a man, the ends thereof are death
- the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked

It is the only book in the world that exposes the sins of those that could be called in literature as heroes: such as David, such as Solomon, and so forth. That’s what makes the Bible, among other things, and the Word of God, among other things, the Truth. Because if men were writing it and admiring men, you don’t admit their mistakes and write them down and have them published in perpetuity.

If you don’t believe this, all you have to do is watch any political campaign. Watch any political convention. Those who write the history to uphold the Democratic Party will never say anything wrong about their Presidents. Those who write the history about the Republican Presidents are never going to expose anything that was wrong unless you’re going to be honest.

What you’re dealing with in the world is the victor writes the history, and so what they want you to know, that’s what they tell you. You get their version of it. The Bible isn’t that way. It goes right to the heart and core of everything. That’s what it’s saying right here. It tells you, ‘You shall not...’ and *God expects you to obey*. It tells you, ‘You shall...’ and *God expects you to obey*. No other book does that.

Notice how powerful it is, because it brings you into the presence of God, especially with the New Covenant:

Verse 13: “And there is not a created thing that is not manifest in His sight; but all things *are* naked and laid bare before the eyes of Him to Whom we must give account. Having, therefore, a great High Priest...” (vs 13-14). In other words, what this does is it takes away all pretense and all hypocrisies and all pretending. You can’t fool God any time.

But to help you out, to give you hope, v 14: “Having therefore a great High Priest, *Who* has passed into the heavens... [and that’s what we’re talking about in Heb. 10] ...Jesus the Son of God, we should hold fast the confession *of our faith*. For we do not have a high priest who cannot empathize with our weaknesses...” (vs 14-15).

Not just sympathize, but empathize because He went through it because He took on weak human nature!

“...but *One Who* was tempted in all things

according to *the* likeness of *our own temptations*; yet, *He was* without sin. Therefore... [this gives us the solution] ...we should come with boldness to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need” (vs 15-16).

Another aspect of the book of Hebrews is:

- coming to God vs coming to a man
- coming to the Holy of Holies in heaven above vs having a priest go into the Holy of Holies once a year on your behalf

Tremendous thing!

We are coming to God, that’s what it’s all about. Know and understand this: The Gospel is preached, but God does not send hound dogs to sniff you out. You have to come to God. God won’t come to you until you come to Him first.

Hebrews 7:25: “Therefore, He has the power throughout all time to save those who come to God through Him *because* He is ever living to intercede for them.”

That’s how we’re coming to God and all of this is important to understand: why there is the *unpardonable sin* and the very dogmatic and profound way that the book of Hebrews talks about the *unpardonable sin*. We’ll see this is another part of the theme of the book of Hebrews: *Coming to God*.

Hebrews 11:6: “Now, without faith *it is* impossible to please *God*. For it is mandatory *for* the one who comes to God to believe that He exists, and *that* He is a rewarder of those who **diligently seek Him**”—vs later on becoming lazy as we saw back there in Heb. 6, but I want you to get the point of *coming to God! Coming into the Holy of Holies in heaven above!* If, in our prayers, we really keep this in mind and we *believe* the Word of God, and we *believe* God, this is going to help us in having our prayers answered and having a profound relationship with God the Father and Jesus Christ.

(go to the next track)

Hebrews 12:18: “For you have not come to *the* mount that could be touched... [here it is speaking of Mt. Sinai in that particular case] ...and that burned with fire, nor to gloominess, and fearful darkness, and *the* whirlwind; and to *the* sound of *the* trumpet, and to *the* voice of *the* words, which those who heard, *begged* that *the* word not be spoken *directly* to them. (For they could not endure what was being commanded: ‘And if even an animal touches the mountain, it shall be stoned, or shot through with an arrow’; and so terrifying was the sight *that* Moses said, ‘I am greatly afraid and trembling’). But... [compare that] ...you have come

to Mount Sion, and to *the* city of *the* living God, heavenly Jerusalem; and to an innumerable company of angels” (vs 18-22).

Then he gives this, I think, for those who are alone, v 23: “*To the* joyous festival gathering; and to *the* Church of the Firstborn, registered *in the Book of Life* in heaven...” The Greek says, ‘registered in heaven.’ Other places tell us it’s the book of life, so it’s perfectly all right to add the italicized words there to clarify it.

“...and to God, *the* Judge of all; and to *the* spirits of the just who have been perfected” (v 23).

Think of the fantastic opportunity that God has given us. This is why He wants us:

- to *be diligent*
- to *be on fire* for God
- to *have a passion* for the Word of God
- to have a love of the Truth

—that’s why! It is with God’s Spirit *there is an absolute direct connection between you and God!* So that’s the whole theme as to why this is so profound and important.

Hebrews 10:21: “And *having* a great High Priest over the house of God.” See how that ties in with Heb. 4, 6, and 9—all of these things connect. The whole book of Hebrews was written to those who knew and understood the Truth for a long, *long, long*, time. What happens is that when people have been in the Truth for a long, long time unless they remain diligent, unless they remain zealous, they are going to become complacent, and complacency leads to laziness, and laziness leads to sin and continuous sin can lead, unfortunately, to the acceptance of sin, and living in sin, and hence, the *unpardonable sin*.

That’s why he is going through and expressing this, because we have lived through a cycle in the Church where we have seen that happen. I’m afraid there are probably a lot of people that we may have known in the Church of God, who attended in the past, who—if they were converted—may be on the verge of committing the *unpardonable sin*. Just remember this one caveat: ***As long as there is life, there is hope!*** As long as there is some degree of conscience, there is hope; but when that is lost, they have given up their hope.

Verse 22 tells us how to approach God. I want you to understand how Paul leads into the thing concerning the unpardonable sin, and how then he gives comfort and encouragement after he defines it.

Verse 22: “Let us approach *God*... [as we just covered: *come to God*] ...with a true heart... [the Holy Spirit and the Word of God know

everything] ...with full conviction of faith, our hearts having been purified from a wicked conscience...”

That is a progressive thing that takes place. It takes time to cleanse the mind, to purify the mind, to expunge out of that mind—which God can do with His Spirit—a regurgitation of things in the past regardless of what they may have been or how bad they may have been.

The human mind is able to go back and kind of relive those things, but with the Spirit of God those things can gradually be cleansed, purified. That’s done with the Spirit of God, the Word of God, and living God’s way. That’s how it’s done.

So therefore, he says, “...our hearts having been purified from a wicked conscience, and our bodies having been washed with pure water” (v 22). That’s obviously talking about baptism. Baptism is a conjoining into the death of Jesus Christ.

Verse 23: “Let us hold fast without wavering *to the hope that we profess*, for He Who promised *is faithful*.” Therefore, it is ***you be faithful as He is faithful***. That’s what it’s talking about here.

Verse 24: “And let us be concerned about one another... [that’s what we need to do] ...and *be stirring up one another*, unto love and good works.”

That’s how we need to do. Unfortunately, too many people are after everybody else’s throats. After you get tired of that and it says there in Gal. 5 that if you backbite each other, surely you are going to devour each other.

The epitome of the opposite of this we can see in the so-called Holy Land today, which is very unholy. The only way the Palestinians and Jews are ever going to decide to have peace is when they are so tired of killing and being killed that they want to stop it. God does not want that with His people. He wants us to learn to love each other and He has given us some obstacles to do that, but the obstacles are *each other*. But we can! We can learn to love each other. That’s what he is talking about here. Listen, the day is going to come when you will be very happy to see someone that maybe you had difficulty getting along with some time ago. That’s what he is saying here, this is what we need to do.

Verse 25: “But rather be encouraging *one another* and all *the more* as you see the day drawing near.... [we are living in that time when it is drawing near] (notice how he comes into this; very profound): ...For if we willingly go on sinning after receiving the knowledge of the Truth, there is no longer any sacrifice for sins” (vs 25-26). That’s something!

What does this verse mean? Willfully, means *to be deliberate, with desire, with forethought, premeditation, continuing to go on sinning or practicing sin*, as it says in other ways. Willfully means *intentional with the connotation of defiantly*, much like we see of Cain, who knew better than to bring the sacrifice that he did. And God was kind to him at first and said, ‘Look, if you do well, shall you not be accepted?’ Cain didn’t want to do it. So then he got mad at Abel and killed him. He defiantly went against the commands of God.

That is vs unintentional sins, like we have covered there in Heb. 4 about going and confessing our sins, ‘If we confess our sins He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins’ (1-John 1). So, if you have consciousness of sin then you are not going to commit the unpardonable sin. If you have no consciousness of sin—but you are defiant, you are calculated and you have renunciation of the Truth—it is that kind of deliberate attitude.

I want to finish what he has written here so that we understand it, v 26: “For if we willfully go on sinning after receiving the knowledge of the Truth, there is no longer any sacrifice for sins, but a terrifying expectation of inevitable judgment and of fierce fire, which will devour the adversaries *of God*” (vs 26-27). That’s why there is the Lake of Fire.

Verse 28: “*Consider this*: anyone who rejects *the Law of Moses*...” You can check that out in Heb. 2; that there was swift punishment. You check out the Old Testament in Deut. 16 & 17 about judgment and so forth.

“...dies without mercy under *the testimony* of two or three witnesses” (v 28). This also shows that the temple was standing when it was written.

Verse 29: “How much worse punishment do you think he will deserve who has trampled underfoot the Son of God, and has regarded the blood of the covenant, with which he was sanctified, *as an unholy thing*, and has scorned the Spirit of grace?”

So the *unpardonable sin* is not just something that you go along and you sin, your conscience bothers you and you’re really concerned about it; that is God’s Spirit convicting you of sin so you can repent! That’s what that is! Another fault of too many churches and ministers is that if the brethren don’t agree with the minister, he threatens them with the *unpardonable sin*. That in itself is almost unpardonable. **No!** God is the only One Who

threatens with the *unpardonable sin because that sin is against God!*

The unpardonable sin is a deliberate, willful choice and rejection of God the Father and Jesus Christ, and a repudiation of the forgiveness of sins and the gift of salvation through Jesus' sacrifice and His blood.

That's what the unpardonable sin is.

Matt. 12 is important to understand, where Jesus is also talking about the *unpardonable sin*. Why did Jesus offer forgiveness to those who crucified Him while they were standing out there jeering at Him and telling Him, 'We'll believe you're the Christ if you come down off the cross.' Why did He offer forgiveness to them? *Because as bad as that was, that was not the unpardonable sin*, because He said, 'Father, forgive them for they know not what they do.'

When they preached repentance on the day of Pentecost, they were preaching repentance to those who had, just 54 days ahead of that, crucified Christ! That's what Peter said. He said, 'You of wicked hands have crucified Him.' Those who were standing there saying, 'Yea, Crucify Him! Crucify Him!' They were standing there listening to Peter give that sermon, and they answered Peter by saying, when they were struck in the heart, 'What should we do?' He said, 'Repent and be baptized.'

Matthew 12:30 talks about the unpardonable sin: "The one who is not with Me is against Me, and the one who does not gather with Me scatters. Because of this, I say to you, every sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven to men except the blasphemy against the *Holy Spirit*; *that* shall not be forgiven to men" (vs 30-31). We are reading the blasphemy of the Holy Spirit:

- it is willful
- it is deliberate
- it is premeditated
- it is continuing

Verse 32: "And whoever speaks a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this age nor in the coming age."

So, lo and behold, guess what, what does Jesus say, or Paul say of Jesus and the crucifixion: ***We have all killed Christ!*** Though we weren't there doing it, our sins did it. Have we been forgiven? *Yes, indeed!* Once you have been forgiven and receive the Holy Spirit then here is the warning.

The unpardonable sin is a deliberate and calculated renunciation of God.

I want you to think about what has happened with the leadership in what we knew to be the largest Church of God in the world in our time.

It is not an accidental sin, nor a sin under temptation, nor a sin through weakness. But the unpardonable sin is a knowing, determined, calculated, premeditated, willful decision and choice arrived at by rejecting any pangs of conscience, leading of the Holy Spirit, pleadings of the Word of God, or ministers and brethren. It is a willful, determination to reject the gift of repentance, and hostile contempt for the commandments of God, the Spirit of God, a willful repudiation of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ and His blood for the forgiveness of sins and the salvation of God. Those who have committed the unpardonable sin have no regrets, no sorrow and no conscience that they have turned their backs on God the Father and Jesus Christ, and the Word of God. It is impossible to renew them to repentance—it is impossible for the Holy Spirit to move them to repentance, for others to move them to repentance, or to move themselves to repentance. They have seared their consciences with a hot iron and there is no power—human or Divine—that is able, or has the ability to renew them to repentance. Their choice is final, their judgment is final and God's judgment against them is final.

Now then, next are the characteristics of terms for sin to display contempt for God; compounds of *para* many of which occur nowhere else in the New Testament, just in the book of Hebrews. As we've said before, the book of Hebrews was *written to long-time Christians* who began to trust in the fleshly things again, who began to be lazy, who began to turn their backs on God, step-by-step, who because God didn't do things the way they expected God to do things, began to accuse God.

paradeigmaizein—to expose, to public humiliation (Heb. 6:6)

Those who are beginning to turn their backs might say, 'I don't know about that Passover. We used to take that Passover, but that's really not necessary.'

parapikainein—to rebel (Heb. 3:16)

Such as in the wilderness. They really rebelled. All the times they tempted God! He was willing to take

them into the 'promised land' and the last straw was when they sent the twelve spies in to spy out the land and ten of them brought an evil report and they began to accuse God, and He said, 'That's it! Another 38-1/2 years folks and everybody who is over 20 is going to die in this wilderness because you didn't believe Me.'

parapikrasmos—rebellion (Heb. 3:8, 15)

pararrein—to drift away, fall away (Heb. 2:1)

The unpardonable sin is committed in steps. If you begin to fall away and start getting a little lazy and BINGO! you have a trial. That's a wake up call.
Return to God!

parapherein—to carry away (Heb. 13:9)

pareinenos—being listless (Heb. 12:12)

Those are all words here used in the book of Hebrews.

There is no other repentance than that provided through Jesus Christ. There is no salvation apart from the purification for sins accomplished by the divine Son in the final period of God's redemptive activity (Heb. 1:1-3). The 'adunatou' (the impossibility), which is used, absolutely and without qualification in Heb. 6:4, expresses an impossibility because the apostate [has] repudiated the only basis upon which repentance can be extended.

To repudiate Christ is to embrace the 'impossible. (Lane, *Word Biblical Commentary*, vol. 47A, p. 142).

The *Word Biblical Commentary*, by the way, is the only commentary that I use because it expounds the Hebrew words and Greek words in a very good way.

Next is about human conscience. Today with self-esteem, people are only taught to have consciousness of what they are in themselves, and if you think it's right; it's right. That's basically a summation of how people think today. Therefore, people do not have a conscience. Women cast aside the newborn that they don't want and throw them in garbage dumps. Men kill their wives for no provocation at all. Women poison their husbands because of whatever they want to do. Children rebel against their parents and they're even talking now that crimes are so heinous that 12-year-olds do, that they're even wanting to lower the age of trying as adult from 14 to 12.

They're not taught to have a conscience. Conscience does not come automatically. I suppose it does when you are a child and you know right from wrong and your conscience will smite you the same way if you are an adult. But if you are not

taught it, you have no conscience that automatically works. Here is how it is supposed to. God put the conscience there to be taught, to know right and wrong.

From *Cruden's Concordance*, definition of conscience:

The human conscience is an inner creation of God in all men and women—part of the heart and mind.

That is, until you *sear* it.

When anyone sins there is an automatic sense of guilt.

Remember the first time you stole bubble gum from the store? You got away with it the first time, so you did it again, and, lo and behold, they caught you. What happened? If you had any conscience, they would just threaten you with all kinds of things: 'We'll get the police here and we'll have you taken down to juvenile hall and blah, blah, blah. If I ever see you in this store again, taking anything, I'm going to send you away. You got that!' *Yes, sir!* He just got through to your conscience.

The worse the sin the greater the guilt and hence, dread. 'Conscience is that facility within us which decides (makes us conscious of actions and thoughts) as to the moral quality of our thoughts, words and acts.

If our consciences have been taught right, because it talks about teaching the conscience. We know right from wrong; we know good from evil. When we do something that is not right, what happens? *Our conscience, with God's Spirit, let's us know!*

Let's look at the case of David with Bathsheba, we won't go back there and go through all of it because we know the story. What did David try to do? *He tried to dam up his conscience!* So did Bathsheba! It takes two to tango! He thought he could get away with conveniently having Uriah—her husband the Hittite—killed in battle, 'Therefore, I would be exonerated.' No one would ever know, but, lo and behold, when babies come forth that always tells you a story. I'll tell you this, when women get together and there's a newborn baby and it's not nine months from the marriage date, they're all counting on fingers how many months it really was. They know and they *know* that they know, especially if they've had children. That's what happened with the first baby born of Bathsheba by David, God was merciful in causing the baby to die.

Lots of times we use the term *allow*. ***He caused it!*** Why? Can you imagine that baby growing up in society known as the bastard,

illegitimate child of David from another man's wife? Because he was trying to dam up his conscience, God had to send a conscience reminder to him, in the person of Nathan the prophet. Nathan, as you know, rather than coming in and landing on him with all fours, said, 'David I have a little story to tell you.' *Well, what's that?* 'What do you think of this? I need your judgment. There was a man who had lots of sheep, but his neighbor had only one little ewe lamb and a man with lots of sheep went over and stole the ewe lamb and killed it for himself. What do you think ought to happen to this man?' David said, *Well, thus and such ought to be done to him.*

The conscience spoke. Nathan looked him right in the eye and pointed his finger right at him and said, 'You are the man. After all that God has done for you, and God even said that He would do more for you, but because you despise the commandments of God, God's judgment is upon you.' David said, *I repent.* 'Your sins are forgiven, **but** you're going to have a correction the rest of your life. Your family is going to fall apart, you're going to have war and it's going to be a miserable life to prove to Me [God] that you love Me and you are never going to do this again.' David said, *so be it.*

Sometimes we can jam up our consciences, we haven't seared it yet and then something or someone will come along and unblock that conscience.

"Conscience is that facility within us which decides... [makes us conscious of actions and thoughts] ...as to the moral quality of our thoughts, words and acts."

Let me just say right here, with God's Spirit, which then amplifies your conscience, when an evil thought comes into your mind—which is a temptation, it's not a sin until you act upon it, by the way, but if you continue to dwell on it, it can become an inner sin—that is giving you the opportunity to repent. That is the first stage of correcting yourself and conscience. If you can catch everything at that point, think how you're going to be able to grow in grace and knowledge and understanding because you're able to take that temptation and, with the power of God and your conscience, get rid of it. That's how to handle those things.

It gives consciousness of the good of one's conduct or motives, or causes feelings of remorse at evil-doing, but its action is involuntary.

It'll just spring up.

A good conscience is one which has no feeling of reproach...

In other words, you don't run around with a guilt feeling all the time.

...against oneself, does not accuse oneself of willful wrong.

—because if you had willful wrong-doing, you would.

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*

Scriptural References

- 1) Matthew 24:1-15
- 2) Hebrews 10:16-20
- 3) Hebrews 6:12-20
- 4) Hebrews 4:12-16
- 5) Hebrews 7:25
- 6) Hebrews 11:6
- 7) Hebrews 12:18-23
- 8) Hebrews 10:21-29
- 9) Matthew 12:30-32

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Hebrews 13
- Daniel 12
- Galatians 5
- 1 John 1
- Hebrews 2
- Deuteronomy 16-17
- Hebrews 6:6; 3:16; 13:9; 12:12

Also referenced:

Sermons:

- *The Two Generations*
- *True Lies* #s 1 & 2

Books:

- *Good as New, A Radical Retelling of the Scriptures, Good as New*
- *Word Biblical Commentary* by Lane
- *Cruden's Concordance*

FRC/jea
Transcribed: 02/06/09
Formatted/Corrected: bo—January/2017

Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews XXX Comparison of Hebrews 6 & 10

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Let's review Hebrews 10:26-27 just a bit and then we'll analyze them a little bit more and we'll carry forward with this concerning the *unpardonable sin*.

Those who believe in universal salvation, and those who believe that it doesn't matter what you do, you're going to receive salvation, this is the ultimate end-product of believing that you don't have to keep the laws and commandments of God. If you read Alan Knight's book *Primitive Christianity in Crisis*, you'll see the quotes he has from contemporary preachers who say that once you accept Christ, nothing can take you from Him. Then what they have to do is they have to avoid, or they would have a hard time explaining these Scriptures if they didn't avoid them. Here is one of the greatest evidences in the book of Hebrews that you must keep the commandments of God, and that does not take away from grace. {note sermon series on *Grace of God* and the booklet *Grace of God in the Bible*}

Hebrews 10:23: "Let us hold fast without wavering... [*holding fast* is part of endurance] ...to the hope *that* we profess, for He Who promised is faithful."

I think we are entering into a time that we need to understand that there are going to be so many problems that are going to be unleashed in this world which are going to affect us one way or the other; that you always have to remember that

- God is true
- God is faithful
- God is love
- God is there regardless of the appearance of the circumstances

That's what we need to understand. In that, we need to ask God for understanding, and if it's a difficult proposition around us we need to ask God

- for faith
- for safety
- for help
- for grace and favor

in every one of these things.

I can just tell you right now that with the way the economics are going in the world and in America—not just America alone but in the world—there are going to be some tremendous upheavals that are bound to happen not too far down the road. What do I mean by that? Maybe in a year, a year and a half, two years, maybe three years at the most;

because all this fiat money worldwide is eventually going to catch up with everybody.

The reason that crude oil prices are going up is because of partly the situation in the Middle East, partly because China is using about between 11-15% more oil than it has in the past, so that's pushing it up. OPEC has kept production in balance with the price and now there are disruptions in oil and demands on oil that no politician can control. So, there is a possibility that we could be looking at \$3-4, maybe \$5 a gallon not too far down the road. We need to think about that. Whether it happens immediately or over a shorter protracted period of time we don't know. But in all of these things we're also going to see at the same time—as we've seen with this new Bible *As Good as New*—an assault against the Word of God that is almost unprecedented.

By the way, there's another New Testament that I'm going to get—a new book: *Extreme Faith Youth Bible: Contemporary English Version*, which is as bad as *Good As New*. I think that one: *As Good As New: A Radical Retelling of the Scriptures* has got to be inspired by demons and really is a mocking of the Word of God. It's interesting that all of these are coming out of the United Kingdom. I don't know what's going on over there, but the place where the English Bible was established in England—after the work of William Tyndale and then the *King James Version* and so forth. Now we have all of these horrible, abominable translations coming out. We're living in times when everything is going to come under assault:

- the Word of God
- what we believe
- how we live
- what we eat
- where we go

Everything is going to come under assault, and if it hasn't yet, the stage is being set to do so. Just to give you an example: The FBI is now alerted to investigating Christian groups that are ' sleeper cells ' of Islamic terrorists undercover. So, the door is open now to look at *all* Christian groups. It's going to come! That's why we have to apply v 23 very carefully.

Verse 24: "And let us be concerned about one another, and *be* stirring up *one another* unto love and good works." This is what we need to do, because we're living in a world that attacks and

picks apart and tears down and also has an exalted knowledge, which may be right or wrong. What it does, it's creating a division within the world. Also it's creating where we're told 'because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall grow cold.' It does affect people in the Church—it does affect *us*—and one of the ways it affects us is because so much of this is going on in the world and all of the things that we have experienced in the Church and out of the Church, we become very defensive, very critical, or we become very picky and this leads to difficulties among each other.

When we come together as it says in v 25: "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together..." let's really make that a good and a special time and let's set aside all of the silliness that goes along with the world and all of the defensiveness that we have, and let's really strive to love one another and get along and improve that.

"...even as some *are* accustomed to do; but rather, encouraging *one another*, and all *the* more as you see the day drawing near" (v 25). Of course, we are more than ever before seeing the day drawing near.

Now then, here is the warning v 26: "For if we **willfully** go on sinning after receiving the knowledge of the Truth, there is no longer any sacrifice for sins." We are going to see that v 29 interprets v 26; these verses come together.

Verse 27: "But a terrifying expectation of inevitable judgment and of fierce fire, which will devour the adversaries *of God*. Consider this: anyone who rejects *the* Law of Moses dies without mercy under *the testimony* of two or three witnesses. How much worse punishment do you think he will deserve who has **trampled underfoot the Son of God**, and has regarded the blood of the covenant, with which he was sanctified, *as* an unholy thing, and has scorned... [insulted] ...the Spirit of grace?" (vs 26-29).

I. You "...trample underfoot the Son of God..." (v 29)

It means you just discount Christ as an evil thing. And more and more we are seeing that attitude in the world. You can see how predetermined and premeditated that the unpardonable sin is, as we covered last time. It is absolutely premeditated, especially for those who have received the knowledge of the Truth. We're not talking about whether those in the world can commit the unpardonable sin, but we're talking about those within the Church who *could* commit the unpardonable sin because:

1. they don't have the faith
2. they've gone back on Christ

3. they ridicule Christ
—all these things trampling Christ underfoot

- II.** "...and has regarded the blood of the covenant, with which he was sanctified, *as* an unholy thing..." (v 29). That's pretty powerful!
- III.** "...has scorned [insulted] the Spirit of grace." (v 29).

A Comparison of Hebrew 6 and Hebrews 10

Description of the apostate

I don't know if I have met anyone who fills all of these things, yet—I have heard of some people who are probably getting close to it, I mean, that is those who have been in the Church. I've often wondered about translators of these abominable translations of the New Testament. I wonder what God's judgment is going to be upon them? I think if we read the last part of Revelation we can probably get a pretty good idea.

Heb. 6:6:

- "...fallen away..."
- "...crucifying the Son of God..."
- "...publicly holding *Him* in contempt."

Those are pretty strong words in comparison to:

Heb. 10: 26, 29:

- "...willfully go on sinning..."
- "...trampled underfoot the Son of God..."
- "...has regarded the blood of the covenant, with which He was sanctified, *as* an unholy thing..."
- "...has scorned the Spirit of grace"

Prior Experiences

Heb. 6:4: "...once enlightened..." You have the knowledge of the Truth.

v 4: "...personally obtained the heavenly gift..."

Which then is God personally applying the sacrifice of Christ to you for the forgiveness of sin which is the gift of forgiveness. That's what the Holy gift is. That's different from becoming partakers of the Holy Spirit.

Impossibility of Renewal

Heb. 6:4: "...became partakers of *the* Holy Spirit"

Have received the begettall that comes from God the Father. This also shows that there comes a point if someone having received the Holy Spirit and they reject it, then God will take His Spirit from them.

v 5: "...have tasted *the* good Word of God..."

That means: have understood it, have lived by it, have made it a part of them.

v 5: "and *the* powers of *the* world to come"

Now compared with:

Heb. 10:26: "...after receiving the knowledge of the Truth..."

That is a convicting knowledge of repentance and baptism, living by every Word of God and the different things that we have covered so far—the knowledge of the Truth.

v 29: "...has regarded the blood of the covenant with which he was sanctified..."

This shows the point of no return. Now we are given an example of this in Heb. 12. Are there some people—we don't know how many, and we hope that it is the very, very few—that have gotten themselves in this predicament?

Hebrews 12:16: "Lest *there* be any fornicator..." We can look at this as *spiritual* fornication. This is telling us any fornicator—anyone who goes back into the system of Babylon the Great—because drinking out of the golden cup of mother Babylon is the sin.

"...or godless person, as Esau, who for one meal sold his birthright... [that's a pretty strong statement there] ...because you also know that afterwards, when he wished to inherit the blessing, he was rejected; *and* he found no room for repentance, although he sought it earnestly with tears" (vs 16-17).

These strong warnings in the Bible—in the New Testament particularly—are given to show that the gift of eternal life

- through disobedience
- through sin
- through neglect
- through hardness of heart

can be lost!

When we come to the experience of the Laodicean Church, where they are vomited out because of their sins, let's understand that ***God always gives a warning!*** That's what the whole book of Hebrews is, it is a warning to all of those long-time brethren, especially back then, because they were still expecting the return of Christ within their lifetimes, and it wasn't happening, and especially to the Jews as well as those who were not Jews.

In 61 A.D. when this was written, the problems were already coming up:

- When is He going to return?

- Why are we going through this?
- Why are we suffering this persecution?
- Why are things not going the way that we thought they would go?

Does that sound a little familiar? *Yes!*

- maybe what we believed was not true
- maybe the Scribes and Pharisees were right after all
- maybe this could not be the Son of God

Therefore, since these things didn't happen the way we thought, God must be wrong, or therefore, the promises of God cannot be true.'

That's why he goes through and it says in Heb. 6 that *God cannot lie!* That's why ***we are to look to God, not just to circumstances.*** The circumstances can change. The circumstances, as we view them, may be entirely different than we expect and the timing of them entirely different than we have anticipated.

In reading this I want you to project this out even a little further and let's remember that what Christ told the apostles, when Peter said concerning John, 'Well, what's going to happen to this one, Lord?' And Jesus said, 'What if I desire that he remain or live until I return? What is that to you? You go do what you're supposed to do.'

And you know by our experience. Those of you who have been in the Church a long time—from the 1972-75 syndrome and where it was said that *this apostle* of God would not die before Christ returned. That was just what men said about a certain man. Think what the disciples were believing coming up passed Jerusalem, passed the time it was destroyed, on into the latter part of John's life. I wonder how many brethren were there who were saying, 'Well, John's still alive, it's just around the corner.' That's why John was given the revelation that we have in the book of Revelation and was told to write it; which is a demonstration of a very important fact so that you keep your attitude correct.

1. God's schedule is His
2. God's schedule for you may be different than His schedule for the world

Therefore, we have to do the encouragement that we are told here:

- encouraging one another
- loving one another
- getting along with one another

Why is that so important? *It's important because probably—and I know this is true in many cases—you can't get along with the world!* If we can't get along with each other, what are we doing? *We are bringing in too much of the world!*

Heb. 10:26: "...there is no longer any sacrifice for sins"

What does that mean conscience wise? Something happens to the conscience and the conscience is what God gives to every human being as an inner-working thing that let's you know when you're doing wrong. You couple the conscience with the Holy Spirit of God. This is important to understand, because with the conscience and the Holy Spirit of God you're going to have *many warnings internally and mentally and emotionally and never turn your heart, or your thoughts, or your back on the prompting of your conscience and the Holy Spirit within you.* That's what has to happen for those who commit the unpardonable sin.

Then they come to the point as is described here in 1-Timothy 4:1: "Now, the Spirit tells us explicitly that in the latter times some shall apostatize from the faith, *and* shall follow deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons."

I tell you what, the world is full of doctrines of demons today. It's absolutely no coincidence that the heretical writings of the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Nag Hammadi Library in southern Egypt were discovered within two years of each other, and are now at the forefront of scholarly thinking in the theological circles, which are going to aim to destroy the Word of God once and for all. ***Satan wants to destroy the Word of God*** and to destroy it through corruption! So, there are those deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons that are doing so.

Verse 2: "Speaking lies in hypocrisy... [they know it] ...their consciences having been cauterized *with a hot iron.*" Most everyone has seen this, here is a small example of a cauterization: branding cattle or horses. You get the iron red-hot, you've got them all tied down and you burn them. *That's permanent!*

When the heart is cauterized with a hot iron—the hot iron of sin, the hot iron of doctrines of demons and deceiving spirits, and speaking lies in hypocrisy—then *they are committing the unpardonable sin.* Notice what comes out of that and this has its very roots in the church that is called today, the Roman Catholic Church.

We saw Pope John Paul II going to the shrine at Lourdes! I couldn't help thinking when I saw that: here are all these candles, all these idols and here he's dressed up in his miter and his golden robe and on a golden throne being wheeled up there, because he is so weak he can't walk. They were interviewing people and saying, 'Well, what do you think?' *Oh, he's a 'holy' man.* And one person said, when he does the sign of the cross, 'that's awesome!' I thought to myself, it's coming!

Verse 3: "Forbidding to marry..." Not only false doctrines and arrogating the prerogatives of God to themselves, but this is what's wrong with the priesthood.

"...and commanding to abstain from meats... [vegetarianism] ...which God created to be received with thanksgiving by the faithful, even by those who know the Truth. For every creature of God *designated for human consumption...*" (vs 3-4)—because obviously every creature that God has created, God did not say is good for food!

"...is good, and nothing to be refused, *if* it is received with thanksgiving, because it is sanctified by the Word of God and prayer" (vs 4-5).

That gives us the interpretation for putting that into v 4 because it is sanctified—made Holy by the Word of God and prayer—and this has to be talking about what we call the Old Testament today. It tells you which meats are sanctified; it also tells you that vegetarianism, unless for specific health reasons, is not good. One major church that believes in vegetarianism, most especially the women, have to go to doctors to get B-12 shots because they're not getting the vitamins they need from meat. If a person has a health problem and they cannot eat meat that's another case.

What is one of the first things that we saw as a step to apostasy, which has now been fully completed in one of the largest Churches of God? *The so-called new leader of the Church was seen in the Red Lobster eating lobster and shrimp,* and someone in the church came by and saw him and said, 'You're eating unclean foods.' And he said, 'Well, I'm a Gentile' because he supposedly was Russian. *First step!* A little innocent thing you might say, but if you believe God and His Word, ***you will obey what God has said!***

The whole point in all of this is that ***the first step in committing the unpardonable sin is a gradual, continuous breaking of the laws of God, the commandments of God.*** Then that gets into a *willful, determined* disobedience, like the phrase 'I'm a Gentile.' What does that have to do with anything? *God requires the same of the Jews and the Gentiles!* Isn't it profound that, that concerning clean and unclean meats follows this where it says of those who apostatize? Now granted, all of us at one time or another, I'm sure, have been sabotaged with some sort of unclean meat in the restaurant that we were eating in, and we didn't know that they were doing that. You're not going to die; you've not committed the unpardonable sin, but that will teach you a lesson—be more careful when you are eating out!

Heb. 6:4: "For *it is impossible...* [v 6]: to renew *them* again to repentance"

There are some people who are keeping Sunday and you can't renew them again to repentance, because they have experienced the Truth of keeping the Sabbath. By the way, it becomes very, very important that you separate the problems of men from the Truth of God.

- What do I mean by that?
- What if a minister goes wrong?
- Does that mean God is wrong? *No!*
- What if an individual brother or sister goes wrong? Does that mean God is wrong? *No!*

We found there in 1-Cor. where Paul had to say, 'You are carnal'; which in it he is saying you need to put aside your carnality and grow.

But I tell you what; anybody walking into the Church at Corinth was in for a treat at the zoo! They had one group over here saying, 'We're following Paul' and another group over here saying, 'We're following Peter'—probably the Jews out of the congregation who had been to Jerusalem and had seen Peter and James and so forth. Then you have another group over here saying, 'We're following Apollos, he's more educated; he is out of Alexandria.' Then we have another group over here saying, 'Oh you're all wrong; we're following Christ!' They were probably undoubtedly more correct to the Truth. Then you have another group over here saying, 'Well, we know an idol is nothing, so if we eat foods that have been sacrificed in a pagan temple, and we buy them out of their little local restaurant—which is an anteroom of the temple—we're still fine.'

Then you walk into services and not only do you have these groups, you have this: you have a group over here and they have Psalms; you have another group over here and they're speaking in tongues; you have another group over here that says, 'Oh, we're looking to miracles'; then you have another group over here saying, 'Well, I don't know about what the Apostle Paul is writing. There are some of these other apostles, these traveling apostles that have been visiting us who actually saw Christ. They're telling us a different story.'

If you came into a church like that you would think: How on earth could this be the Church of God? That was not only written for the problems then, but to show us the problems that would come into the Church at any time down through history so we'd know how to handle them.

What about *grieving* the Holy Spirit? That is obviously how God's Spirit works with you and your conscience to keep you from committing the unpardonable sin. Those who commit the unpardonable sin have had to bat that away, bat it

away, bat it away, bat it away, over and over and over and over again to where they have no conscience left.

We'll see a flow and sequence of how things go and what Paul is talking about, Ephesians 4:22: "That concerning your former conduct, you put off the old man..." That's something we're continually to do. Rom. 7:

- we're still to be overcoming
- we're still to be changing
- we're still to be growing
- we're still fighting sin and temptation
- we're still fighting the effects of the law of sin and death in us

That's why we have this inner battle that's going on. People in the world who don't have the Holy Spirit of God don't have that battle, they just go along with whatever is there.

Ephesians 4:22: "...which is corrupt according to deceitful lusts; and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that you put on the new man, which according to God is created in righteousness and Holiness of the Truth" (vs 22-24).

That's why the Truth of God is so important, the Word of God is so important. That's why the Spirit of God is called the Spirit of Truth. The God who is the God of Truth sends the Spirit of Truth and has given His Word of Truth so that you can understand the Truth, so that this creating of the spiritual character within you can be accomplished.

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.... [there's a righteous indignation and there's a sinful indignation] ...Do not let the sun go down on your anger" (vs 25-26).

As we know today, if you go to bed mad all the time, you're going to end up being mentally, physically, spiritually and emotionally a wreck! Chances are you'll lose your health over time; it doesn't happen all at once. You can put in there: any problem that burdens your mind, pray about it and put it before God when you go to bed; don't take it to bed with you. If you do, you're going to toss, you're going to turn, it's going to run through your mind, and you won't get to sleep, all those things! God knew what He was talking about long before what we call psychologists ever came along to even tell us in secular words—don't do the same thing.

Verse 27 is key: "Neither give place to the devil." He is the one who is going to inspire the unpardonable sin, important to understand. Thoughts will come along as a temptation, which are actually inspired of Satan the devil or his agents. What do I mean by his agents?

- the media
- entertainment
- things in the world
 - ✓television
 - ✓radio
 - ✓music
 - ✓other people

Satan's got a lot of willing workers out there today. He doesn't have to be everywhere all the time because he can't be, but he's got so many working for him that he can guide and manipulate the ones at the top of his hierarchy and so the word goes out. 'Don't give place to the devil'—who works with what? What does Satan like to work with?

(go to the next track)

Galatians 5:14: "For the whole law is fulfilled in this *commandment*: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'" That contains everything there, not only do good to your neighbor, but if you love your neighbor as yourself and you are loving God, then you're going to have a Godly character and Godly love toward your neighbor.

Verse 15: "But if you bite and devour one another, watch out *lest* you be consumed by one another. Now *this* I say, walk by *the* Spirit, and you will not fulfill the lust of the flesh" (vs 15-16).

That's how you overcome lust and covetousness, by the Spirit of God and by the Word of God. It's a battle and it's something you have to work on all the time and it's something that is very important to realize as we are growing and overcoming and so forth.

This is something that we really need to exercise today. I was listening to the news and after the first cycle all they do is repeat it. So, you try to change stations and that doesn't work; you put on a tape and that doesn't work; you listen to the music and it's something you've heard a hundred times, and I finally said, 'Phooey!' I'm just going to drive without anything—any sound or music or noise. I got to thinking after I did that: we all need to ask ourselves: What is it that controls our mind? Do you control it with the Holy Spirit? with the Word of God? Remember this: ***Whatever occupies your thoughts is controlling your mind!***

This was brought out very vividly when I saw a young kid, about 12 or 13, had his earphones plugged in and was walking around with his little CD with the rock music blasting into his head and he couldn't concentrate on anything else other than what was going into his head. What was he doing? *Sitting there bobbing his head!* Well, what was happening was that music was occupying and controlling his mind. He couldn't be decent; he

couldn't talk to you; you couldn't reason with him and surely if you tried to tell him, 'Take those out and wrap it up and put it away. And by the way, I'm going to do you favor; I have a hammer in my right hand and I'm going to smash this thing so you can get your brain back together.' Hey, you would get called into court.

So remember this: ***Whatever you let occupy your mind controls your thoughts!***

Proverbs 16:1_[corrected]: "The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, are from the LORD.... [the right one] ...All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes..." (vs 1-2). In other words, everyone is going to think that whatever he is doing is right.

"...but the LORD weighs the spirits.... [the *spirit of man*] (Here is the solution; profound and important): **"Commit your works unto the LORD, and your thoughts shall be established"** (vs 2-3). What does this also tell us? This also tells us that if you don't do this:

- if you don't control your mind
- if you don't control what goes into it

You're never going to have your thoughts established, or they will be established in the wrong way. So, if you have them established, there is a promise.

Let me just say this: If you have a problem and temptation mentally that keeps coming back to you, go to Prov. 16 when you are praying and read these verses; *claim the promise of God!* Ask Him for His Holy Spirit to establish your thoughts. This is what Paul was talking about there in Rom. 7.

Verse 4: "The LORD has made all for His own purpose; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil. Everyone who is proud in heart *is* an abomination to the LORD; *though joined* hand in hand, he shall not be unpunished" (vs 4-5).

This is talking about how we live in the world. We see all of this going on in the world. And lots of times you look at these things and a lot of people do this: How can God allow this? Well, God knows; He raises up the wicked for the day of the wicked.

Always remember this: ***Never say, 'How can God allow this,' but be thankful for what God has done in your life and know that sooner or later God will take care of it.*** It's all a part of faith and all a part of not letting yourself get into a mind or an attitude that begins to pull away from God.

The other part of v 3 is v 6: "By mercy and Truth iniquity is purged..." So, you have

repentance, mercy and forgiveness, and Truth. And put in there, Psa. 51:

- God wants Truth in the inner parts
- Your Word is Truth
- the Holy Spirit is Truth

That's how you get your mind squared around living in the world that we are living in, even in the midst of seeing people going off and committing the unpardonable sin.

"...and by the fear of the LORD, *men* depart from evil" (v 6). There is a proper fear of God.

Galatians 5:16: "Now *this* I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not fulfill the lust of the flesh.... [use the Spirit of God to apply Prov. 16] ...For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these things are opposed to each other, so that you cannot do those things you wish to do" (vs 16-17). Why does God allow that to continue once we've been converted?

- so that you can understand how bad sin is
- so that you can realize you need to overcome
- so that you can realize that it all has to come from God

You can put in there Rom. 7, the fight and the battle that we have, and as long as you are alive in the flesh you're going to have that.

Verse 18: "But if you are led by *the* Spirit... [that is by the Spirit of God] ...you are not under *works of law*." In this case that means under, or subject to, the penalty of the Law.

Verse 19: "Now, the works of the flesh are manifest..." These are the things that Satan always uses. These are perfect receptors for Satan's missiles that he throws as 'prince of the power of the air' to tempt people.

"...which are *these*: adultery, fornication..." (v 19).

I mentioned before about going out through the checkout stand at the store and I was standing there and waiting and here's a grandmother and a daughter. They were looking at all these different magazines and so forth and I said to the grandmother, 'Do you suppose that these magazines are aimed at women?' Being older she said, 'Obviously, they're all there.' *Yes!* What are they filled with? *Adultery, fornication!* You take a good look at them again when you go through the checkout stand.

"...uncleanness, licentiousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, strifes, jealousies, indignations, contentions, divisions, sects, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revelings, and such things as these;

concerning which I am telling you beforehand, even as I have also said in the past, that those who do such things shall not inherit *the* Kingdom of God" (vs 19-21).

Then he gives the fruit of the Spirit, and it's really quite a miracle. I mean, think about this: *the miracle of conversion!* That's why only God can do it. You take something that previously was dedicated to the works of the flesh and you convert that so that the individual is going to become a son or daughter of God. That is an absolute miracle! I mean, think about that!

Let's also understand something that's profound—that's why God has the Last Great Day. He's going to prove and show that in spite of everything men have done and Satan has done, with the exception of those who have committed the unpardonable sin, *God is going to save them!* Now, that's something!

Verse 22: "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faith, meekness, self-control; against such things there is no law" (vs 22-23).

The way that you avoid the unpardonable sin is to put away the works of the flesh, as we just read here, and put in the righteousness of Christ with the fruits of the Spirit. Notice how this is done:

Verse 24: "But those who *are* Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and lusts."

Note Luke 14, you have to carry your cross and forsake father, mother, brother, sister, children, lands, your own life also and take up your cross and follow Christ. That's what it means to take up the cross. What does this do? It shows that being a Christian is an active work on a daily basis—to grow, to change, to overcome!

- you have the greatest goal
- you have the greatest promises
- you have the greatest help in the world

and it all comes from God!

Verse 25: If we live by *the* Spirit, we should also be walking by *the* Spirit. We should not become vainglorious, provoking one another *and* envying one another" (vs 25-26).

With all of these things what I'm trying to do here is to see that there is a lot of encouragement, that there are a lot of steps that we can take to not commit the unpardonable sin. The Word of God gives us the warning not to commit it, and it does need to be preached, but it's not one of those things that should be preached every Sabbath, if you know what I mean. It's not to be used in a political sense

for self-control to inflict fear upon people when it should not be.

Ephesians 4:27: “Neither give place to the devil.” That’s how you don’t give place to the devil. If you are really having a struggle, you do exactly like Christ did, ‘Satan be gone!’ or ‘Satan get you behind me!’ And you do so in the name of Jesus Christ and they *must* obey.

Verse 28: “Let the one who stole, steal no more; rather, let him labor with *his* hands, working at what *is* good, so that he may impart *something* to the one who has need.... [rather than taking from him] ...Do not let any corrupt communication come out of your mouth... [that’s a goal we all need to strive for] ...but that which is good and needful for edification that it may give grace to those who hear. And **do not vex the Holy Spirit....**” (vs 28-30).

What is he saying here? *All of these things that we have covered which are sin and lust, works of the flesh!* What do they do? *They grieve the Holy Spirit!* What happens when you grieve the Holy Spirit? *God’s Spirit and your conscience are going to prick your mind and your heart* so that you’re going to understand that what you’re doing is wrong and sin. You may avoid it for a while, you may put it out of your mind, but it’s going to become more intense as you go along and then something is going to happen which is going to bring it to your attention, because God is working with you, that what you have done or what you have been doing is not right.

Verse 30: “And do not vex the Holy Spirit of God by which you have been sealed for *the* day of redemption.” How many people are boarder liners? What do I mean by that? *They go as far as they can toward sin*, yet not cross over the threshold of actually doing the act. Christ in Matt. 5, 6 and 7 talked about boarder-liners concerning: adultery, murder, hating your brother.

Verse 31 tells us here are other things that come along. Now listen, *He is speaking to Christians!* In the book of Ephesians, outside of Philippians, are perhaps what you might say are the most advanced Christians you’d want to find—those who’ve been in the Church quite a while, those who understand the plan of God and so forth. Now notice what he says, because these are things that can come back and trip you up.

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).

That’s very important. We can go back and go through other verses which show if you don’t forgive, you’re not going to be forgiven, etc. etc. All of those things you can apply here with all of the verses, but this is how we can avoid committing the unpardonable sin.

Heb. 6:4: “For *it is impossible...*”

v 6: “...to renew *them* again unto repentance...”

They come to the point that it is impossible.

Heb. 10:26: “...there is no longer any sacrifice for sins”

Heb. 6: 8: “...being cursed...”

Put in there, Matt. 25, about those who are cursed go into the Lake of Fire.

Heb. 6:8 “...the end of which *is* for burning”

That’s compared with:

Heb. 10:27: “...terrifying expectation of inevitable judgment...”

It may be delayed, as some people may count delay, but it is inevitable in that it’s going to come.

v 27: “...fierce fire...”

And every time I read that, I can’t help but in my own mind’s eye think of a volcano where you’re looking down into it and there’s a boiling cauldron of lava—“...fierce fire...”

v 29: “...much worse punishment...” than sinning against Moses

v 31: “...a fearful thing to fall into *the* hands of *the* living God”

This is what it’s important for us to understand; let’s understand this is going to happen.

Romans 14:8: “For if we live, we should live unto the Lord; and if we die, we should die unto the Lord. So then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord’s.” That’s what we always need to keep in mind.

Verse 9: “*It is* for this very purpose *that* Christ both died and rose and is living again, so that He might be Lord over both *the* dead... [whom He is going to resurrect because He was resurrected] ...and *the* living. Now then, why do you judge your brother? Or why do you despise your brother? For **we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ...** [we are all going to do that] ...because it is written, “‘For *as* I live,” says *the* Lord, “every knee shall bow to Me, and every tongue shall confess to God”” (vs 9-11).

Each one of us shall give an account of himself to God; remember that. In dealing with each other we also need to remember that not only are we

not to be judging each other unto condemnation, but we also need to understand that if you see a problem or a difficulty, also know that God knows, and pray that God will help that person to overcome. This is important to understand, because God can change the mind of that individual through the power of His Spirit and circumstances in their lives and there can be a change.

I know that in dealing with people, that's why it's called one of the fruits of the Holy Spirit is long-suffering, we've suffered long with some people over a long period of time, but the thing is this—if they are trying and growing and hopefully overcoming, there will come a day when a change is going to take place, and God is the One Who has done it.

Let's see that so we can draw a difference between a sin that *is unto death* and a sin that *is not unto death*. Sometimes in our own mind what we do is treat a sin and a problem that a person does—which is not a sin unto death; in other words, it can be repented of—as if it's the unpardonable sin and give them no space; when, in fact, God gives them space.

1-John 5:16: “If anyone sees his brother sinning a sin *that is not unto death*... [that means *the unpardonable sin* which is the second death] ... he shall ask, and He will give him life for those who do not sin unto death. There is a sin unto death; concerning that *sin*, I do not say that he should make *any supplication to God*.”

There is a difference. Most of the sins that we are involved in, in our lives and are involved in, in the lives of brethren—which also impact our lives from time to time—are sins not unto death. Therefore, the command is to **pray for them**. If it's something that is very particular then you need to follow the instructions of Matt, 18, but there again it needs to be done in an attitude of humility and love and understanding.

To make it clear, he says in v 17: “All unrighteousness is sin, and there is a sin not unto death.” But what we're taking about here in Hebrews and the unpardonable sin, is *the sin unto death*.

Comfort

After you have been severely corrected or warned in the Bible, the principle that God always gives is this: correction, next there needs to be repentance, and then *comfort*. Even when you go back and look at the prophets and look and see the tremendous thing that Ezekiel had to do; he had one of the most condemning ministries of all. Yet, when you go through all the blood, guts, gore, death,

famine, plague, pestilence and upheaval, when you come to Ezek. 33, what does God say? *He says, 'I don't have any pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that you would turn.'* In other words, **repent!** ‘Turn you, turn you, for why will you die?’

We have the same thing here in the book of Hebrews: this also shows the mind of God in inspiring the Old Testament and the New Testament in exactly the same pattern. You can also see this through the book of Proverbs and through the book of Psalms. In Proverbs, what do you have? *You have good/evil almost in every verse*, comparing the two. After giving all of the warnings concerning the unpardonable sin, then Paul was inspired to write *encouragement and comfort*.

1) Basis

Heb. 6:9: “...we are persuaded of better things...”

NO! You don't want to commit the unpardonable sin do you? **No! No!**

Heb. 10:32: Appeal to “...remember the earlier days...”

- *think* about what it was like when God was first calling you
- *think* about what it was like when you first began to understand the Truth
- *think* what it was like when you were baptized and received the Holy Spirit
- *think* what a great relief it was to your mind to have all this sin lifted from you

Remember the earlier days.

2) Past Experience as Christians

Heb. 6:10: “...work, and the labor of love...” God is not going to forget that.

v 10: “...have served the saints...” God is not going to forget that. Here is the parallel:

Heb. 10:32: “...endured much conflict in *your* sufferings...”

Think of what the Christians there in Judea went through. Almost from the get go they were suffering persecution up until you come to the martyrdom of Stephen. Stephen gives a good example of really having the Spirit of God and understanding how to handle evil in the face of death. He said, ‘Lord, lay not this to their charge.’

v 33: “...companions of those who were enduring the same things”

v 34: “...showed compassion to me in my bonds... gladly endured the plunder of your possessions...”

What does that mean? They came along arrested them, threw them out of their homes and took everything they had!

Let me tell you an account we just got from Nigeria. We sent the books over there, the book *The Day Jesus the Christ Died*, and these were given to one of the brothers in a village that was quite a ways away. So, he took one box of books to take back to the brethren in his village and he was accosted by thieves and shot and left for dead. They stole the books. This is almost like the story of the priests and so forth where the man was left in the ditch and the only one who came and saved him was a Samaritan.

So, someone finally came and took him to the hospital. They took the bullets out of him and he is going to recover. But here in America and Canada and Australia and England, we're not confronted with those things, *yet!* But the day will come when we will be.

We need to understand that there are people who are going through things; there are people who are killed for the name of Christ, even if they have only the scantest knowledge of it, as we covered between the martyrdom of the saints and the martyrdom of those who profess the name of Christ, there is a difference between the two.

3) Present Responsibility

We have already covered some of this in great detail; how to avoid the unpardonable sin.

Heb. 6:11: "...demonstrating the same diligence..."

v 12: "...*be* imitators of those with faith and steadfast endurance..."

What did Jesus say in Matt. 24? '*The one who endures to the end, the same shall be saved.*' He said that in the midst of all the troubles and things that He enumerates there. We have been over that hundreds of times. Those words *will* be fulfilled; they *will* come to pass and we *will* see them in our lifetime. It's good that we are going through these things so we can be geared up for some of the things that are going to happen, because they are going to happen and that's what He is saying here.

Heb. 10:35: "do not cast away your confidence [boldness]..."

v 36: "...need to have endurance..."

There we have endurance in both. Steadfast endurance; need to have endurance.

4) Incentive

Heb. 6:11: "...the full assurance of the hope until *the* end"

Because we know God cannot lie and God has given those things.

v 12: "...inherit the promises"

Now compared with:

Heb. 10:35: "...great reward.

v 36: "...may receive the promise"

Note book: *From a Speck of Dust to a Son of God: Why Were You Born?*

We have our existence from conception to birth in the womb; that's the first level of human existence and in there you were prepared for birth; you grow to a certain size and weight; that you practice all the things you are going to do when you are born, such as: sucking the thumb in the womb, reacting to things around you by sounds, by smiling, by yawning, by opening the eyes (though the little child can't see anything) and by moving the limbs in practice for being born.

Being born, you would have to say, is a once-in-a-lifetime experience. *Yes!* You don't remember anything of it. In order to be born your little old head goes *squish* together and is designed to do that way. When you are born and come out, you're all covered with this white grease, which protects you from becoming like a prune within your mother's womb in the amniotic fluid or the water. Then you have to do something you have never done before, *you have to breathe!*

Now then, you are ready for human life as a living, live human being. You have to grow. You start out with the mother's milk and all of this sort of thing and you grow and you're taught and you live your life and you finally come to conversion and changing, growing and overcoming, and you endure to death and you're put in the grave and await the resurrection—that's the second phase of life.

The third phase is going to be very like the first phase; that's why it's called *born again*. In the resurrection you're going to be *born again*, and you are going to do things that you have never ever done! Your first experience from the resurrection is going to be carried up by the angels to the Sea of Glass!

This is why when we are looking to the great reward and receiving the promise, that whenever you get 'down in the dumps' and way down, you've got to get your mind on the promises of the Word of God, of what it's going to be like to be a son or daughter of God. That's looking to *the hope that is set before us!*

That's why you have to put all of these sins and difficulties and problems and stress and trauma and everything we go through today, you've got to

put that behind you day-by-day. You've got to have in the forefront of your mind:

- the hope of God
- the promises of God
- the eternal life that comes from God

—and that will see you through anything! If you do that, *you don't have to worry about committing the unpardonable sin*, you're not going to! You can have, as it says here:

- the full assurance of eternal life
- the full assurance of being in the Family of God!

That's why God inspires it to be: warning, encouragement, and comfort, so that we can have hope!

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*

Scriptural References

- 1) Hebrews 10:23-29
- 2) Hebrews 6:6
- 3) Hebrews 10:26, 29
- 4) Hebrews 6:4
- 5) Hebrews 10:26, 29
- 6) Hebrews 6:4-5
- 7) Hebrews 10:26, 29
- 8) Hebrews 12:16-17
- 9) Hebrews 10:26
- 10) 1 Timothy 4:1-5
- 11) Hebrews 6:4, 6
- 12) Ephesians 4:22-27
- 13) Galatians 5:14-16
- 14) Proverbs 16:1-6
- 15) Galatians 5:16-26
- 16) Ephesians 4:27-32
- 17) Hebrews 6:4, 6
- 18) Hebrews 10:26
- 19) Hebrews 6:8
- 20) Hebrew 10:27, 29, 31
- 21) Romans 14:8-11
- 22) 1 John 5:16-17
- 23) Hebrews 6:9
- 24) Hebrews 10:32
- 25) Hebrews 6:10
- 26) Hebrews 10:32-34
- 27) Hebrews 6:11-12
- 28) Hebrews 10:35-36
- 29) Hebrews 6:11-12
- 30) Hebrews 10:35-36

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- Psalm 51

- Luke 14
- Matthew 5-7; 25; 18
- Ezekiel 33
- Matthew 24

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- *Primitive Christianity in Crisis* by Alan Knight
- *As Good as New: A Radical Retelling of the Scriptures* (a new Bible version)
- *Extreme Faith Youth Bible: Contemporary English Version*
- *The Day Jesus The Christ Died* by Fred R. Coulter
- *From a Speck of Dust to a Son of God: Why Were You Born?* by Fred R. Coulter

Sermon Series: *Grace of God*

Booklet: *Grace of God in the Bible*

FRC/jea

Transcribed: 02/22/09

Formatted/Corrected: bo—January/2017

Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews XXXI

Review of Hebrews 1-10

How to Live by Faith (Chapter 11)

Fred R. Coulter

Let's go back and we'll just do a little survey of the first four chapters of Hebrews, because this sets the theme for everything. This shows:

- the office and power of Christ and Who He is
- what He is compared to angels; compared to human beings
- our calling and what we have to do
- things we have to be aware of
- it ends up in Heb. 4 that Christ is our High Priest

This is a written sermon that, I think, Paul perfected and Luke wrote it down so that by the time that the final product came out in 61 A.D. it was really well refined and one of the best-written books of the New Testament as far as the Greek is concerned. It does one of the greatest and most powerful things, which is this: *It shows that every human being upon repentance and baptism and belief in Jesus Christ as personal Savior is granted the privilege and blessing of not only having their sins forgiven through the grace of God, but to have direct access to God the Father in heaven above through Jesus Christ our High Priest!*

- with that blessing
- with that privilege
- with that connection to God the Father and Jesus Christ

we find in Heb. 6 & 10 the strong language about the unpardonable sin, because of what God has done to help us, to rescue us, to save us, and what God is doing to grant us eternal life. We need to keep that in mind.

Let's also understand this: **God's way**, as we have gone over how many times, **is not a 'religion.'** When you sit down and you analyze all the religions of the world, what are they? They are a substitute for *the Way and the Truth* of God.

People take just enough of God in their *religion* that they feel comfortable, and they keep just enough of the world so they can be accepted by them. That will be in varying degrees when you get into some of these pagan religions; they're off into demonism and Satan worship and witchcraft and all of that sort of thing. Yet, there is a certain lure and a certain wisdom that comes from the knowledge of

the Tree of Good and Evil—which is Satan's way—that people believe they have something good.

The book of Hebrews shows that all those kinds of things are just thrown to the wayside and we have direct access to God the Father and Jesus Christ:

- that's the center of our lives
- that's the reason for our being
- that's the meaning to everything that we do
- the purpose of every thought we think
- gives us the strength and the faith to really overcome

It really shows very clearly that Christianity—true Christianity of God—is **a created relationship with God the Father and Jesus Christ and it is not something to be taken lightly!** He wants us to know the very basis of our faith and our belief and our calling and everything that we do, because all the doctrine in the world—and you need good doctrine and you need right doctrine and you need right teaching—isn't going to do you any good unless you understand the reason for your calling and the relationship that you have with God.

Hebrews 1:1: "God... [isn't that interesting the way it starts out] ...Who spoke to the fathers at different times in the past and in many ways by the prophets... [we've got Moses and all the Prophets, the Psalms and so forth] ...has spoke to us in these last days by *His Son*.... [greater than all of them, because the Son was the One Who talked to them] ...Whom He has appointed heir of all things, by Whom also He made the ages" (vs 1-2).

This tells us Who we're dealing with; this tells Who is dealing with *us*. This is to give us *faith and strength and hope* regardless of all the situations that we may be confronted with in our lives. We're going to see when we get back into Heb. 10 that they were confronted with a lot of things. And then when we get into the faith chapter (Heb. 11), we're going to see that's the very kind of faith that we need to have today. Not a good time Sunday-keeper or a good time Sabbath-keeper that as long as I have my friends and I go to church and I feel good.

- What are you going to do when you don't have any friends?

- What are you going to do when you don't have any church to go to?
- What are you going to do when you are in the pit, in the bottom of a trial and a difficulty that you have to go through, and your only help is with God?

That's what this tells us about, so he wants us to know—and remember this was written in 61 A.D.; sent to all the churches in Judea, especially to Jerusalem; and was a warning that the temple was going to be destroyed and eliminated. Everyone thought the way it was with the Jews—because they could read in the Old Testament that you come to Jerusalem as a place to worship and if you go to Jerusalem—there's a great blessing in doing so. God is saying, *no*; there is a greater blessing if you go directly to God the Father and Jesus Christ. Do not trust in physical things, be it a temple that even God instructed on how to build and the way to run the services. Quite an amazing thing! To show:

- His office
- His power
- His character
- Who we're dealing with

Verse 3: "Who, being *the* brightness of *His* glory and *the exact image* of His person..." The Greek there is 'hypostasis'—which we will see can also mean *substance* and will have a great deal to do with faith (Heb. 11:1).

Verse 3: "...and upholding all things by the word of His own power..." (v 3). In other words, we cannot come to any higher authority than God the Father and Jesus Christ. By His word the heavens and earth exist. By His word they are sustained and if He were not righteous and true and Holy and perfect, they would not be sustained.

"...when He had by Himself..." (v 3). He had to do that by Himself—the whole crucifixion—as we've gone through with *The Day Jesus the Christ Died*. It had to be, because He was the One Who created Adam and Eve and hence created all mankind through the means of procreation; He alone was responsible. He alone was the only One Who could take away our sins, and that's the whole purpose of it when you get into the other chapters which talk about animal sacrifices and so forth. So, he is setting the stage with it.

"...sat down at *the* right hand of the Majesty on high... [then he compares Him with angels]: ...having been made so much greater than *any* of the angels, inasmuch as He has inherited a name exceedingly superior to them. For to which of the angels did He ever say, 'You are My Son; this day I

have begotten You'? And again, 'I will be a Father to Him, and He will be a Son to Me'? And again, when He brought the Firstborn into the world, He said, 'Let all *the* angels of God worship Him'" (vs 3-6).

Then he shows again that the Son *is* God, v 8: "But on the other hand, of the Son *He says*, 'Your throne, O God, *is* into the ages of eternity; a scepter of righteousness *is* the scepter of Your kingdom. You loved righteousness and hated lawlessness..." (vs 8-9).

That shows the love, the power, the perfection and everything of Christ. It shows how He is going to deliver the whole kingdom to Him. Then he gets down to us. How are we to react to God in the light of Heb. 1, because this is pretty powerful?

Hebrews 2:1: "For this reason, it is imperative..." People tend to get in ruts. Let me tell you how human nature is; you can see it as it relates to exercise. I know because I have to exercise a lot and if I don't, I won't be in good health. But I tell you what, every time I start exercising, my old body and brain say, 'You don't really have to do as much,' even though when I start I'm in the determination of doing it! And that's just the way human nature is with everything! If you get busy you'll pray later, *God understands*. You haven't studied. *Well, I've memorized Scripture. Oh well, I don't have to read it; I don't have to do it; I don't have to do this.*

That's why it says, v 1: "...it is imperative that we give much greater attention to the things *which* we have heard, lest at any time **we** should slip away." Then he gives his very first warning. I want you to think on this since we're dealing with God.

Verse 2: "For if the word spoken by angels was *enforced* without fail, and every transgression and disobedience received just recompense, how shall we escape..." (vs 2-3). Paul doesn't tell you here, but he shows later in Heb. 10 *the fires of eternal judgment*.

"...if we have neglected so great a salvation; which was first received when it was spoken by the Lord, *and* was confirmed to us by those who heard Him" (v 3).

This is showing it is Paul who wrote it. Then he shows that, yes, Christ came having been made lower than the angels:

Verse 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**..." Only *His* death—the death and *no other* death—can

pay for the sins of mankind, and that's why it was written that way in the Greek.

"...in order that by *the* grace of God He Himself might taste death for everyone" (v 9). Just tie v 9 to Heb. 1:3—*He purged our sins by Himself*. That's how He did it! Then going one step further he says, 'Now look, God also took upon the same kind of flesh and blood and nature that human beings have so He can be a *faithful High Priest*' (v 17).

After he has laid this out, then Heb. 3 again shows that Christ is of a higher authority than Moses, by saying Moses was a steward.

Hebrews 3:1: "Because of this, Holy brethren, partakers of *the* heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of *the faith* we profess—Jesus Christ, Who was faithful to Him Who appointed Him, even as Moses *was* in all His house. For He has been counted worthy of greater glory than Moses, even as He Who built the house has so much more honor than the house *itself*. For every house is built by someone, but He Who built all things *is* God" (vs 1-4).

Verse 6: "But on the other hand, Christ *was faithful* as *the* Son over His own house; **Whose house we are**, if we are truly holding fast the confidence and rejoicing of the hope firm to *the* end." We are going to talk about *faith, hope* and *love* and see how that all works together.

Verse 7: "For this reason, even as the Holy Spirit says, 'Today, if you will hear His voice.'" (vs Isn't that interesting? {note sermon: *The Simplicity of Christ—Obey My Voice*. That's the whole thing with all of us.

Then he shows what happened to the Israelites who really didn't believe God—all of those who rebelled, didn't want to go into the land when God promised. The reason the penalty was so difficult and harsh upon them was because they tempted Him ten times leading up to that in many different ways. When God promises something, which is also part of what the book of Hebrews shows, *we can be guaranteed of those promises*. And the ultimate promise that He has given, which cannot fail, is *the resurrection from the dead*! We know that that cannot fail because Jesus Christ rose from the dead!

Then he shows what they did—you cannot sin and walk with God. You cannot rebel and expect God's blessing. Then he gave a warning here:

Verse 12: "Beware, brethren, lest perhaps there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in apostatizing from *the* living God." He really lays it on the line.

I think today, the world that we are living in, we really need to think about this because we have seen that happen over and over again that they count the calling of God with such lightness, and then with such contempt. Then know, sure enough, Satan is going to throw something in the mix, which is going to cause you if you do not recover yourself, to fall away by your own choice. Like some people in the world say, 'I'll believe God if He would prevent this, or do that, or do the other.' *No!*

- You believe God because ***He is!***
- You believe God because ***He says so!***
- You believe God because ***His Word is true!***

Verse 13: "Rather, be encouraging one another..." This is another thing that you find throughout the whole Bible: correction/encouragement.

"...each day, while it is called 'today'..." (v 13). That's what's important—never destroy today with the sins and problems of yesterday, last week, last month, last year, five years ago, ten years ago, fifteen years ago. Today, take each day. Don't put fear in yourself by being concerned about what's going to happen tomorrow. What did Jesus say? '*Sufficient for the day thereof is its own evil.*' You have enough to handle today. If you go through today putting God first, then fine, that's great; do it tomorrow; do it everyday; take each day as today. That's what he is saying here.

The reason is, "...so that none of you become hardened by *the* deceitfulness of sin" (v 13). Let's just stop and think about it for a minute because he's leading up to today, and then he is going to focus in on a specific day, which has everything to do with our salvation.

Let's see what that day is, Hebrews 4:3: "For we who have believed, we ourselves are entering into the rest..." We have rest from sin, as we overcome; we have peace with God because everything in the past is forgiven, but we need to enter into the *rest of God*, which is the Sabbath. That is a type of the Millennium and the *ultimate rest* is to be in the first resurrection and enter into the Kingdom of God; that is true, but Jesus Christ did not keep the Sabbath for us. The Sabbath and today becomes all important.

"...entering into the rest, as He has said, 'So I swore in My wrath, "If they shall enter into My rest—"...' [and that's the way it is in the Greek: '*if* you love Me and keep My commandments, *if* you obey My voice, you shall enter into My rest.' So, it's conditional to enter into the ultimate reward of God.] ...although the works were finished from *the*

foundation of *the* world” (v 3). God’s plan was all ready to go from the foundation of the world.

Verse 4: “For He spoke in a certain place about the seventh *day* in this manner: And God rested on the seventh day from all His works.”

What is Paul doing? *He is showing that the Sabbath does not rest upon a claim of Judaism*, but it rests upon the creation of God and the resting of God on the seventh day. So, the true meaning of resting on the Sabbath means that ***you are resting in peace with God on the Sabbath Day***; that’s what it’s talking about.

Verse 5: “And again concerning this: ‘If they shall enter into My rest—’” Go back and read in the Old Testament how many times God had to send the children of Israel off into captivity because of sin and idolatry, and Sabbath and Holy Day breaking. Over and over again! Today, those who call themselves Protestants, are deluded into thinking that their Sunday-keeping has God’s approval because there *appears* to be certain blessings to come with it, but the blessings that they have, are not the blessings that come from Sunday-keeping; they are reaping the blessings *that God promised to Abraham* to give to Isaac and Jacob and to give specifically to the children of Ephraim and Manasseh in the last days. That’s the blessing that they are looking at, ***not*** the blessing that comes from their substituting Sunday for the Sabbath! What Paul is showing here is that ***Sabbath-keeping is absolutely essential to salvation!***

Verse 6: “Consequently, since it remains *for* some to enter into it, and those who had previously heard the Gospel did not enter in because of disobedience.” What does that mean? *They didn’t keep the first commandment!* They rejected God even in the wilderness, while Moses was up on the mountain. They made the golden calf, so they had idolatry. They said ‘let’s have a feast unto God,’ so they took God’s name in vain, and they broke the Sabbath right there before the Old Covenant could even get off the ground! So, they didn’t enter into the ‘promised land’ because of disobedience.

This also tells us that no one is going to enter into the Kingdom of God unless they are obedient to God, which includes the Sabbath, and the Sabbath is the key fulcrum commandment of the whole thing. As we have seen that comes from all the Holy Days! Very important to understand! That’s why he backs up and talks about Joshua.

Verse 8: “For if Joshua had given them rest...” That is the *true rest of God*, the fulfillment of the Kingdom of God as spoken by the latter prophets.

“...He would not have spoken *long* afterwards of another day. There remains, therefore, Sabbath-keeping for the people of God” (vs 8-9). That’s the literal translation of it.

People in the world don’t like that kind of translation because it shows that their way of interpreting it is not correct. It is convicting because they’re not keeping the Sabbath, and they don’t like it! I tell you what, all these Sunday-keepers, their day of reckoning is coming. I guarantee you their day of reckoning is coming!

Verse 9: “There remains, therefore, Sabbath keeping for the people of God. For the one who has entered into His rest... [on the Sabbath Day, that’s God’s rest] ...he also has ceased from his works... [you don’t do your own work and labor on the Sabbath] ...just as God *did* from His own *works*” (vs 9-10).

It’s showing that the keeping of the Sabbath the way that God wants it kept, goes clear back to creation. That’s what it’s talking about. Here is how Paul links salvation and Sabbath-keeping:

Verse 11: “We should be diligent, therefore, to enter into that rest... [be diligent to keep the Sabbath] ...lest anyone fall after the same example of disobedience.”

What happens when people start neglecting the Sabbath? *You start losing contact with God*, because God puts His presence in the Sabbath. Whether you are alone, or whether two or three are gathered, or whether you have a small fellowship group, or a large fellowship group, God has set aside the Sabbath Day as a day of fellowshiping that He gives His Spirit, He gives His inspiration. We all need to prepare for the Sabbath, not only physically, but we need to prepare spiritually.

- How can any minister teach unless he prepares?
- How can he expect to feed the flock of God unless he knows the Word of God?
- How can he expect them to grow in grace and knowledge if he himself is not growing in grace and knowledge?
- How can he expect God to inspire him, or inspire the brethren, if he is not doing the work and perspiration so the inspiration will come?

You know what they say, ‘Inspiration is 90% perspiration.’ In other words, you’ve got to have all the work up to it and then—BING!—the inspiration comes! So, there’s got to be

- the work of prayer
- the work of study

- the work of living God's way everyday of the week

Then when the Sabbath comes and we prepare, then God will make that:

- a blessed Sabbath
- a profitable Sabbath
- a good Sabbath
- an encouraging Sabbath

and draw us closer to Him. Then we can take all of the problems of the world that we are confronted with, and we can cast those aside for this seventh day, to come and worship and honor God and study His Word. Then we have strength spiritually and we have the ability, spiritually and mentally, to continue going living in a world filled with sin.

Verse 12 is the summation of everything up to this point and it specifically lays out how important the Sabbath Day is. There is no getting around it; all the vain reasoning and false interpretations of men are not going to change the Word of God.

Verse 12: "For the Word of God *is* living..." No one is going to get away from it; more powerful than the law of gravity.

"...and shaper than any two-edged sword..." (v 12). Who's going to fight against God? It also shows that if God is going to fight against you, *you're going to pay!* That's what he is warning about here:

"...piercing even to the dividing asunder of both soul and spirit... [that that shows they are different] ...and of both *the* joints and *the* marrow, and *is* able to discern *the* thoughts and intents of *the* heart" (v 12).

No other book in the world is able to do that. What he is showing here is this: Christ is there at the right hand of God actively always enforcing the Word of God, and it is automatic; it is set in motion.

Furthermore, v 13: "And there is not a created thing that is not manifest in His sight; but all things *are* naked and laid bare before the eyes of Him to Whom we must give account."

It says that everyone is going to stand before the judgment seat of Jesus Christ and give an account of himself! You can go through the parables, and you can understand how that accounting is going to be. Again, we have warning/encouragement, so we had the warning, vs 12 & 13. Now we have the encouragement because of this:

Verse 14: "Having, therefore, a great High Priest, *Who* has passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, we should hold fast the confession of

our faith. For we do not have a High Priest Who cannot empathize with our weaknesses, but *One Who* was tempted in all things according to *the* likeness of *our own temptations*; yet, *He* was without sin. Therefore, we should come with boldness to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need" (vs 14-16).

What he is saying here is, as I have said many times, *as long as there is life, there is hope!* If you have sinned and you have gone back and if you have slipped; *you can repent!* King Manasseh did, and even Ahab did. *So, as long as there is life, there is hope, and as long as there is true repentance, there is mercy and forgiveness always!* There may be some discipline that will come along with it, so that you don't fall into the habit of doing it again, but nevertheless, that is mercy and grace in time of need.

Then in Heb. 5 he talks about how the High Priest of Jesus Christ works, that:

- He was perfected
- He suffered
- He went through death

Heb. 6 tells about the unpardonable sin; Hebrews 6:11: "But we earnestly desire that every one of you be demonstrating the same diligence, unto the full assurance of the hope until *the* end." Then we'll see what kind of faith and what kind of hope when we get into Heb. 11.

Verse 12: "**So that you do not become lazy...**" I tell you what, if you sit around and do nothing long enough, it's going to be hard to get anything done. Like the old story, 'I've got to fix the roof, but it isn't raining so I don't have to do it now.' Then the rain comes so I said, 'Well, I should have fixed the roof, but I can't do it because it's raining.' A lot of people tend their lives just that way.

Trust me, we're all going to have enough trials and difficulties to overcome, that come just in the natural course of living and existing and growing in grace and knowledge, that we don't need to bring upon ourselves the trials and corrections that come with being lazy spiritually. Then he gives a solution, again: correction/solution.

Verse 12: "...but *that you be* imitators of those who, **through faith and steadfast endurance**, inherit the promises." The rest of the book is about *faith and steadfast endurance*. So, not only is this filled with fantastic teachings, our direct connection with God, what we need to do, but it is also a continuous admonition for long-time Christians, for faith and steadfast endurance to inherit the promises.

Verse 13: “For God, after promising Abraham, swore by Himself...” How much greater assurance of anything can we have but what God has sworn by Himself? Let’s think about that for a minute:

- Is God true? *Yes!*
- God always gives us the Truth? *Yes!*
- Does God love us? *Yes!*
- Does God desire us? *Yes!*
- Has God personally called us? *Yes!*

When God swears by Himself—He swore to Abraham and that’s important because ‘if you *are* Christ’s then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to *the* promise.’ We’ve seen how that ties in with the Passover and Days of Unleavened Bread and so forth, and goes all the way back to Abraham, and Abraham *believed* God! That’s the kind of belief, we’re going to see that we need to have, but He’s not basing that belief on an empty notion or a hollow promise; it is *based upon the very existence* of God.

God doesn’t need to swear, but when He says, v 13: “...swore by Himself, since He could swear by none greater, saying, ‘Surely in blessing I will bless you, and in multiplying I will multiply you.’ Now, after he had patiently endured...” (vs 13-15).

Just go through and do a survey of the book of Hebrews and see how much there is with *endurance*—there’s an awful lot, and remember what Jesus said, ‘The one who endures to the end, the same shall be saved.’

Verse 15: “Now, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise. For indeed, men swear by the greater, and confirmation by an oath *puts* an end to all disputes between them. In this *way* God, desiring more abundantly **to show the heirs of the promise the unchangeable nature of His own purpose, confirmed it by an oath**” (v 15-17).

Let’s ‘put to bed’ something that a lot of people ask: Why did God call me? *Because He wants you*, that’s why. That He has His purpose, and it says here:

“...to show the heirs...”—which we are. Are we not the heirs—joint heirs with Christ? Didn’t Christ inherit all things as we read there in the first chapter? *Yes!* Are we not co-heirs with Jesus Christ? *Yes!*

“...of the promise...” It’s by faith, we haven’t attained it, yet.

“...the unchangeable nature of His own purpose...” God isn’t going to change His purpose,

He has a plan. Isn’t that interesting? I wonder what Protestants do with that? They have changed everything and say it is God’s purpose. God says that, ‘I have an unchangeable nature of My purpose.’

“...confirmed *it* by an oath; so that by two immutable things, in which *it was* impossible for God to lie...” (vs 17-18).

The very first thing Satan did with Adam and Eve was say that God lied! He didn’t come out and say directly God lied, but he said, ‘God hasn’t told you everything. I can tell you more things; I can give you the benefit now.’ That’s the way Satan always does, he comes and he shows you the pleasure of sin for a season, **and he’s got you!** Witness any holiday of this world, it’s all for the children. It’s all for good: ‘Oh, we know we’re lying, but it’s for good.’ God doesn’t work that way.

(go to the next track)

“...*it was* impossible for God to lie, we who have fled for refuge... [to God] ...might have strong encouragement...” (v 18). God wants us to be encouraged because there is no variableness or wavering of His purpose and He wants you to understand that that is so.

“...to lay hold on the hope *that has been* set before *us*; which *hope* we have as an anchor of the soul, both secure and steadfast...” (vs 18-19). It doesn’t matter what the circumstances are around, that is secure and steadfast. That’s the kind of faith:

“...and which enters into the *sanctuary* within the veil... [remember how that ties in with Heb. 10] ...where Jesus has entered for us *as* a forerunner, having become a High Priest forever according to the order of Melchisedec” (vs 19-20).

I want you to see how similar that it is to what we covered the last part of Heb. 4 & 6. We finished up through the unpardonable sin, down through:

Hebrews 10:30: “For we know Him Who has said, “‘Vengeance *belongs* to Me. I will recompense!’” says *the* Lord.’ And again, ‘*The* Lord will judge His people.’ *It is* a fearful thing to fall into the hands of *the* living God” (vs 30-31).

That is for judgment and execution against you of the unpardonable sin. What we have to understand and what Paul was writing about here is that God has His plan and when He has called us, we are responsible to Him and *He means business* and *there is no recourse or turning back!* Remember what Jesus said, ‘He who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is not fit for the Kingdom of God.’

Now then, after this terrible warning that he gave here in Heb. 10, about the unpardonable sin,

then he does exactly what God inspires all the writers of the Bible to do, that is bring encouragement!

Verse 32: “But remember the earlier days when, after you were enlightened, you endured much conflict in *your* sufferings.” You go back and read in the book of Acts what happened to all the brethren there, and how Saul was hunting them down and how the leaders of Judaism were coming after them, and how that the miracles that all the apostles did to where even the passing of Peter’s shadow healed people who were laying alongside the street! They were persecuted for it!

Verse 33: “On the one part, you were made a public spectacle by both insults and severe trials...” Stop and think! What he is saying is this: *Stop and think about what you have already gone through!* Did you go through it in vain? Are you going to throw away God’s promise and gift and inheritance?

“...and on the other part, you became companions of those who were enduring the same things” (v 33). So, by forced circumstances, you were brought together.

Verse 34: “For you not only showed compassion to me in my bonds...” That was obviously in the time that he was in prison down there in Caesarea before he went to Rome.

“...but also gladly endured the plunder of your possessions....” (v 34). In other words, what were they doing to these Christians? *Taking their possessions, running them out of their homes, taking everything that they had!*

Now, don’t anybody tell me that you’re having a difficult time today. No one has beaten in your door. No one has come in and hauled you off. No one has taken your possessions. No one has done those things to you, but guaranteed, the day is going to come. That’s why when the day comes, you don’t all of a sudden have faith to endure it; you better have enduring faith up to that point so when it comes, then you’re not going to have your heart set on the physical goods. When the difficulties and tough times come down, then you will have peace of mind and security because you belong to Christ.

You “...endured the plunder of your possessions, knowing within yourselves that you have a greater and more enduring possession in *the heavens*” (v 34)—which then Christ is going to bring when He returns. He is going to:

- resurrect you
- give you eternal life
- give you an inheritance
- you’re going to live in New Jerusalem

and it can’t get any better than that!

Verse 35: “For this *very* reason... [here comes a warning—notice, warning/encouragement]: ...do not cast away your confidence, which is bringing a great reward. For you need to have endurance...” (vs 35-36).

Notice how that ties in with Heb. 6; and, boy, is it not true that we need endurance today! People give up at the drop of a hat, too many times. What you can do is tie in the parable of the sower (Matt. 13); parable of the 10 virgins and the pounds in (Matt. 25); the parable of the talents (Luke 19).

Verse 36: “For you need to have endurance, so that, after you have done the will of God...” Please understand this: ***No one is going to receive anything from God unless they are doing the will of God.*** Jesus said that ‘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.’ You have to do the will of God always.

- Is it the will of God that you keep His commandments? *Yes!*
- Is it the will of God that you overcome your human nature? *Yes!*
- Is it the will of God that you love Him with all your heart, mind, soul and being? *Yes!*
- Is it the will of God that you learn of His Word? *Yes!*
- Is it the will of God that you endure and die in the faith to be resurrected? *Yes!*

Then you will receive the promise!

As I pointed out in the commentary in the New Testament, that they were expecting Christ to return in their lifetime and here is a Scripture that shows that, which then actually turns out to be a prophecy for our day today.

Verse 37: “For *it is* but a short time *until* He Who is coming will come, and will not delay.” He is going to come! But I see where God is going to let this world have its way under Satan the devil that is going to be so awesome and so breathtaking that only those who really know the Truth and have the Spirit of God and are converted are going to be able to know right from wrong and Truth from error. It is going to be something!

Here is the theme of Heb. 11; he introduces it this way, v 38: “*Now it is written, ‘The just shall live by faith’...*” That’s how we are to live. This is also quoted in Rom. 1 and Hab. 2.

“...but if anyone draws back, My soul does not delight in him” (v 38). We’re going to find out and understand the faith that he is talking about is the faith that comes from God, not just the carnal faith and belief that certain people have and then something happens immediately. No, this is talking about you believing in spite of all the circumstances around you, to the contrary. You still believe in God; you still trust in God; that’s what it’s talking about here and that’s how you live by faith.

Again a little warning and encouragement, v 39: “But we are not of *those* who draw back unto destruction; rather, we are of faith unto *the* saving of the soul.”

Hebrews 11:

All of Heb. 11 goes into what faith is. Let’s understand, it gives us many, many examples and when we go through them, I am not going to take the time and go back to the Old Testament and read all the Scriptures of it. I will leave that up to you. Let’s read the conclusion of the matter first, then we’ll go back through it because this is the goal where it is coming.

Hebrews 12:1: “Therefore, *since* we are surrounded by such a great throng of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin that so easily entraps us; *and* let us run the race set before us with endurance.” Just go through and study *endurance* here in the book of Hebrews, and that’s quite profound, and ask yourself: Do you have endurance?

Here’s how to have endurance, v 2: “Having *our minds* fixed on Jesus, the Beginner and Finisher of *our* faith; Who for the joy that lay ahead of Him endured *the* cross, *although* He despised *the* shame, and has sat down at *the* right hand of the throne of God. Now meditate deeply on Him Who endured such great hostility of sinners against Himself so that you do not become weary and faint in your minds. You have not yet resisted to the point of *losing* blood in your struggle against sin” (vs 2-4). That shows how far the endurance has to go.

Hebrews 11 builds up to that conclusion. We’ll do some study on what it means to *live by faith; the just shall live by faith*.

Hebrews 11:1: “Now, faith is *the* substance of *things* hoped for...” The Greek word here is ‘hypostasis’—which means *substance*. The faith that we have is the *spiritual substance* from God. In other words, it’s something that cannot come of yourself; it must come from God.

This “...faith is *the* substance of *things* hoped for... [because we’re going to see *faith and*

hope are all tied together] ...*and the* conviction of things not seen” (v 1). That’s what is really lacking in the world today. You would have to say a Laodicean is *lacking in conviction*, and conviction is a pretty powerful thing. We’ll talk about that a little later.

Verse 2: “For by this *kind of faith* the elders obtained a good report. By faith we understand that the worlds were created by *the* Word of God, so that the things that are seen were made from *things* that are invisible” (vs 2-3)—which is an absolutely true scientific statement that endures through all time.

Verse 6: “Now, without faith... [or apart from faith] ...*it is* impossible to please *God*. For it is mandatory *for* the one who comes to God to believe that He exists, and *that* He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.”

That’s the whole basis of our belief. Unless you know, understand and prove and believe that God exists, then you have no basis for anything at all, and God expects you to diligently seek Him, because as human beings, we’re the ones who are the question mark. If you tie this, all of it, in together and take what we have covered: today, day-by-day, diligently seeking God.

Remember this: *God promises! Every Word of God is a promise of God!* We can claim those promises and we need to claim those promises. Jesus said, ‘Seek and you shall find; knock and it shall be opened to you; ask and it shall be given to you.’ You have to understand that *that will happen in God’s way, and in God’s time*, and the ultimate of that is the resurrection.

Let’s look at what it means to *live by faith*. You’ve heard me say so you can write these down and we will look at each one of them: ***Walk by faith or walk in faith, believe in hope and live in love!***

Walk By Faith

Walk by faith or walk in faith is right here, it’s Scriptural; we’ll see some other Scriptures that go with it. 2-Corinthians 5:7: “For ***we walk by faith, not by sight.***”

Here Paul explains a little bit more about what kind of example of faith that we are to walk in. It’s talking about Abraham:

Romans 4:12: “And *that he* might become *the* father of *the* circumcision—not to those who are of the circumcision only, but also to ***those who walk in the footsteps of the faith*** of our father Abraham, which he had during *his* uncircumcision.”

We know what that means because ‘Abraham obeyed My voice, kept My charge, My

commandments, My statutes, and My laws' (Gen. 26:5). **Walk by faith!** Let's understand this concerning faith, it takes no faith whatsoever to break the commandments of God. It takes faith to keep the commandments of God because you believe God. We also need to understand concerning faith that it's a pretty powerful thing. Let's see that, as we explained, it is the gift of God as well as salvation. He is talking about how we are rescued from the prince of the power of the air:

Ephesians 2:8: "For by grace you have been saved through faith..." God is not going to forgive your sins if you say, 'O God, forgive me' and you don't change your way. 'O God, I love your grace. Any thought that comes to me is good because I'm under your grace.' *No!*

"...by grace you have been saved through faith..." (v 8). That means:

- you *believe* that God exists
- you *know* that He exists
- you *know* that His Word is true

and you're going to live by every Word of God.

"...and this *especially* is not of your own selves; *it is* the gift of God" (v 8). When it talks about that *faith is the substance*, that is a gift from God that is imparted to you in the spirit of your mind by God's Spirit; it is a Spirit substance that God gives you, which then comes from the begetting of God.

Let's draw an analogy here: Psalms 139 talks about how great and fantastic David brought out about the creation of human beings. He talks about the very beginning of his life when in his mother's womb He [God] knew David's substance, meaning the very pinprick of life of what he would be, yet, unformed and that's quite a miracle. You think about that! If you want to humble yourself do this: you take a pen or pencil and you just put the point down on a piece of paper and you look at that little speck that is there and that's you, *that's you!* Isn't it stupid that people get all carried away with vanity and how great and important they are? That's what Christ had to become in order to save us. That's amazing!

We are saved through faith, not of ourselves; it's the gift of God. I cannot help but always think of the Scripture which says, '**You have nothing you didn't receive.**' That's really something, too. *Nothing!* If you didn't use everything that God gave you:

- if you don't breathe the air that God created, *you're going to die*
- if you don't eat the food God created, *you're going to die*

- if you don't drink the water that God has created, *you're going to die*

—and on and on. ***If you don't live by God's way, the ultimate thing is going to be death because the wages of sin is death.***

I am struck by the great and profound plan that God has. Remember what it says, 'Dust you are and unto dust you will return.' All of you women have dusted your house. That reminds me; a little girl was checking under her bed and she saw all these little rolls of dust under there and she came running to her mommy and said, 'Come and look, come and look!' They got down there and looked at the dust and the mother said, 'Oh, I've got to clean it up!' And the little girl said, 'I wonder if that is a person coming or going' There we are, a little speck of dust!

Verse 9: "Not of works, so that no one may boast." That is of our own works because we have the works of God.

Verse 10: "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus..." That's why faith is so profound, so that God will work and do what He is going to do.

"...unto *the* good works that God ordained beforehand in order that we might walk in them" (v 10). If we walk by faith or in faith and live by faith, ***we are walking in the way of God*** and those good works are what God requires us to do!

Let's see just a little summary of that; 1-John 3:21: "Beloved, if our hearts do not condemn us, *then* we have confidence toward God. And whatever we may ask we receive from Him because we keep His commandments and practice those things that are pleasing in His sight" (vs 21-22).

Let's compare that with James 2, and let's see what James says about *faith*. Isn't it amazing how all of them speak about faith and works; and faith and love; and faith and hope—all together. He is also making a point concerning *faith and works*, so if the 'just shall live by faith,' this tells us how we are going to live—believing God, keeping His commandments, and practicing those things that are pleasing in His sight.

James 2:8: "If you are truly keeping *the* Royal Law according to the Scripture, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself,' you are doing well. But if you have respect of persons, you are practicing sin, being convicted by the Law as transgressors" (vs 8-9).

Isn't that interesting—respect of persons? What does it say of Jesus? He respected no man. Human beings always respect people. This is how con-artists work, they appear handsome or beautiful,

are well-spoken, are well dressed and you believe them!

If a rag-tag prophet of God, like John the Baptist who hadn't cut his hair and hadn't cut his beard, appeared on the scene at 30-years-old, and he had this rough clothing on, made out of camel hair and he probably looked like a wild man, if you had that much hair and never cut it. I view him as a bright, burning redhead; that's how I view John the Baptist. 'Well, who is this guy?' Or as he is talking about here, some low, poor man comes in not dressed very well and you discriminate against him. So *respect of persons* is quite profound. Notice that's not one of the Ten Commandments. But it's derived from the Ten Commandments of the basis of the last six of the Ten Commandments: *love your neighbor as yourself*.

Verse 9: "...you are practicing sin, being convicted by the law as transgressors; for if anyone keeps the whole Law, but sins in one *aspect*, he becomes guilty of all" (vs 9-10). Hello! Sunday-keepers, wake up! holiday-keepers, wake up! Don't believe for one single instant that God will give His approval to anything pagan just because you like it and enjoy it! Yes, pork eaters, unclean meat eaters, etc.

Verse 11: "For He Who said, 'You shall not commit adultery'..." All adulterers, pay attention! Why do half the women today look like whores? *Because they are!* A lot of them don't think they are because they are very choosy who they sleep with, but you're still a whore.

Verse 11: "...also said, 'You shall not commit adultery,' also said, 'You shall not commit murder.' Now, if you do not commit adultery, but you commit murder, you have become a transgressor of the Law. In this manner speak and in this manner behave: as those who are about to be judged by the law of freedom" (vs 11-12).

The law of freedom is this: ***If you keep the laws of God, you are free from sin!*** That's what it's talking about. What does it also tell us? *God is going to judge us!* How? *By His Law! By our works!* Everyone is going to come before the judgment seat of Jesus Christ and give an account of himself.

Verse 13: "For the one who has dealt without mercy *will be* judged without mercy. But mercy triumphs over judgment. My brethren..." (vs 13-14).

Then he brings out a point and ties this all together with faith. People do what they do because they believe in what they do, *or* justify what they do, as it says in the Prov., 'Every way of a man is just in his own eyes.'

You can talk to any criminal and he can give you every good reason why he committed the crime that he did. You can talk to anyone who commits adultery and fornication and they can tell you why they do. It may take a while to draw it out but sooner or later... You talk to anyone who smokes marijuana and they will justify why they do it, 'Well, that's not as bad as being an alcoholic.' No, it's worse! You shrink your brain faster. Everyone who does whatever they do has justified it.

He wants to make it clear; this is all tied in with faith, v 14: "My brethren, what good *does* it do, if anyone says *that he* has faith, and does not have works? Is faith able to save him?" ***No!*** And Martin Luther called the Epistle of James an 'epistle of straw' because it absolutely destroyed his Protestant theology that 'you are saved by faith, and faith alone.' ***That is not what the Scriptures teach!***

- if you believe God, then you believe what He says
- if you believe what He says, you will act upon what He commands *and that is faith*

He gives this example:

Verse 15: "Now then, if there be a brother or a sister who is naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you says to them, 'Go in peace; be warmed and be filled,' and does not give to them the things necessary for the body, what good is it?... [You haven't accomplished anything.] ...In the same way also, faith, ***if it does not have works, is dead, by itself***" (vs 15-17).

Didn't the one man who received the one talent believe in God? What was his work? He just wrapped it up in a napkin and hid it; he didn't do anything with it. We're going to see a similar example here in just a second.

How do you prove your faith? This is the correct translation here. *King James* gives an alternate reading, but here is the correct translation:

Verse 18: "But someone is going to say, 'You have faith, and I have works.' *My answer is:* You prove your faith to me through your works... [show me how you have acted upon your faith] ...and ***I will prove my faith to you through my works.***"

In other words, you compare what you have accomplished with your faith, by the works that you have done. So, if you say, 'I have faith' but you don't believe or obey God, you don't have faith. ***You prove your faith by your works!***

- What does it produce?
- What have you done?
- What are you doing with it?

That is active faith and that kind of faith comes as a gift of God which is a substance from God begotten into your very mind and being. That kind of faith leads to *hope and conviction!*

Verse 19: “Do you believe that God is one? You do well to *believe this*. Even the demons believe—and tremble *in fear*.” Why do they tremble in fear? *Because they have rebelled against God*, and they know their final judgment and torment, which will be torment forever and ever.

Verse 20: “But are you willing to understand, O foolish man, that **faith without works is dead?**” Now we’re talking about *living faith*, to *walk in faith*, to *walk by faith* and if you don’t have the works, *it is dead!*

Verse 21: “Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered up Isaac, his own son, upon the altar?” If you don’t have the series in Romans where I go through and explain the difference between this and Rom. 4, be sure and write in for it and we’ll send it to you.

There are some things that you are to believe and your belief becomes the work in itself. When God told Abraham to count the stars, which is an impossible task, he believed God that his seed would be as the ‘sand of the seashore’ and the ‘stars of heaven’—***he believed God!*** Then when it came time to perform *a work* which God said, ‘Take your son, your only beloved Son and go to one of the mountains of Moriah that I will show you, and offer him there for a sacrifice,’ Abraham did, he went, his works justified him. That’s what he is talking about here.

Verse 21: “Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered up Isaac, his own son, upon the altar? Do you not see that **faith was working together with his works and by works his faith was perfected?**” (vs 21-22). Isn’t that interesting? That’s why you:

- grow in grace and knowledge
- you grow in faith
- you grow in love
- you grow in hope

because all of those things are being perfected. What is God’s goal? ***That we are perfected in faith and hope and love and character***, because those things will be carried through in the resurrection in the Kingdom of God.

- 2) Hebrews 2:1-3, 9
- 3) Hebrews 3:1-4, 6-7, 12-13
- 4) Hebrews 4:3-6, 8-16
- 5) Hebrews 6:11-20
- 6) Hebrews 10:30-39
- 7) Hebrews 12:1-4
- 8) Hebrews 11:1-3, 6
- 9) 2 Corinthians 5:7
- 10) Romans 4:12
- 11) Ephesians 2:8-10
- 12) 1 John 3:21-22
- 13) James 2:8-22

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Hebrews 3:17; 5
- Matthew 13; 25
- Luke 19
- Romans 1
- Habakkuk 2
- Genesis 26:5
- Psalm 139

Also Referenced:

- Book: *The Day Jesus the Christ Died* by Fred R. Coulter
- Sermon: *The Simplicity of Christ—Obey My Voice* (FOT sermon, 2004, Day 3)
- Sermon Series: *Epistle of Paul to the Romans*

FRC/jea
Transcribed: 03/02/09
Formatted/Corrected: bo—January/2017

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*

Scriptural References:

- 1) Hebrews 1:1-6, 8-9

Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews XXXII

Faith, Hope & Love

(Chapter 11)
Fred R. Coulter

As we're going to see, Hebrews 11 is really also a key for our times because the book of Hebrews was written to prepare people for the tough times ahead. It was written in 61 A.D. and sent to Jerusalem and all the churches in the area of Judea and all the churches wherever the Churches of God were; it got to all of them. We know that it was written at that time because there is no mention of the death of James, the brother of Jesus, which if he had died, would have been mentioned here someplace in Heb. 11 with all of those who were the ones who died by faith in overcoming.

The just shall live by faith; Hebrews 11:1: "Now, faith is *the* substance of *things* hoped for..." This has to come from the Spirit of God because it is one of the fruits of God. In another place it says, 'have the faith *from* God.' We will see there is a faith that people have because God made us to believe. Just like Jesus said to those He healed, 'Be it according to your faith.' They didn't have the Holy Spirit at that time so it was the faith that they had. God made us to believe, and the thing that is true is that we all act upon our beliefs.

Verse 1: "Now, faith is *the* substance of *things* hoped for, *and the* conviction of things not seen." This is so important, but let's take a look at *believe*, because before you can have faith, you must believe. Belief is something that you have as a choice, which then leads to having faith, which then leads to having the faith from Christ, and it's not something that is just instantaneously transfused into your mind or your being.

BELIEF

Let's see something very important concerning *belief*. Lots of times when we go over these Scriptures, and we read them over and over again—and I find this absolutely amazing because it happens all the time—whenever you read the Scriptures and you read them again and study them, the more you study them and go back to them, the more you understand those verses. By the time you get back to studying them with other studies that you have had between the first time you read and studied it and the time you come back, you have learned more.

So, you bring more of God's Word back to where you're going to study it again. That's why when you study them over and over again, you learn

more and more because it says it's 'line upon line, and precept upon precept' and so forth. Likewise, when we read these Scriptures here, we're going to see how important this is.

John 5:37: "And the Father Himself, Who sent Me, has borne witness of Me. You have neither heard His voice nor seen His form at any time."

This is absolute proof that the One Who was the Lord God of the Old Testament was the One Who became Jesus Christ. Did not Adam see God? Noah? Abraham? Moses? *Yes!* So, if the Lord God of the Old Testament was only the Father, then this Scripture could not be true. It says of the Father, 'You have neither heard His voice nor seen His form at any time.' What did the children of Israel hear from the top of Mount Sinai when the commandments were given? *They heard the voice of God!* That was the One Who became Jesus; therefore, this is another proof that there are two in the God family—the One Who became the Son and the One Who became the Father, both called Elohim in the Old Testament.

Verse 38: "And you do not have His Word dwelling in you, for you do not believe Him Whom He has sent." This tells us another thing: *In order to really believe in Jesus, you have to know about the Word of God!*

Let's go one-step further, v 39: "You search the Scriptures, 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. do not receive glory from men; but I have known you, that you do not have the love of God in yourselves" (vs 39-42). Pretty profound!

What is the love of God? *This is the love of God, that we keep His commandments!* And He said in another place, 'You have the Law of Moses, but none of you keep the Law of Moses.' Most people think that, yes, the Jews back in that time kept the Law of Moses. Well, the religious leaders didn't, they had their form of Judaism which rejected God and that's what Jesus said. There is a lot contained in all these verses.

Verse 43: "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..." (vs 43-44).

Sit down and turn on a religious channel, if there is one around your way. Out here in California we don't have too many, but when I go back to the Midwest and down South, boy, they've got religious channels everywhere. I kind of go through and check out and see what these guys are doing. If you go on the Trinity Broadcasting Network, you have ministers sitting down there glorying in one another, stroking one another, saying what good things that they do, and then they sprinkle a little bit in there, 'Well, we give God the glory.' If you don't have His Word dwelling in you, how can you do that? *It's not possible!*

"...and do not seek the glory that *comes* from God only? Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father. There is *one who* accuses you..." (vs 44-45). That's very interesting because in the Greek it is present tense, *accuses*. Why would it be written that way?

"...even Moses, in whom you have hope" (v 45). What does this tell us about what Moses wrote? *It's as if he is still speaking it personally, he accuses you!* That's referring to his writings.

Verse 46: "But if you believed Moses, you would have believed Me; for he wrote about Me. And if you do not believe his writings..." (vs 46-47). There it is: *The writings are the living Word of God*, which is still accusing the sinner.

A lot of people think that faith is *faith without doubting*, but faith has to come from the Word of God first and it's *no doubt in what God has said*. Not that you do not have some doubts that need to be resolved. Just like to the man who, when Jesus was healing his son who was possessed of a demon, Jesus said, 'All things are possible if you believe.' The man said, 'Lord, I believe but help my unbelief.' It shows that he had some doubt.

Verse 47: "And if you do not believe his writings, how shall you believe My words?" What does this tell us? *Jesus endorsed everything Moses wrote!* Therefore, only Jesus can make any changes to the Law of Moses, which He did in the sacrifices and the offerings, washings, oblations, etc. That's why I've got here Appendix H: How Did Jesus Fulfill the Law and the Prophets? *Very profound!*

Why is it that the supposed professing religions of this world do not understand the New Testament they claim? *and* Do not understand the plan of God? *They haven't begun with the basics!* They didn't begin with *believing* Moses, so therefore they really don't *believe* Jesus.

You try that, if you have a religious channel, just sit down and do a little Sunday-surfing one time and see how much they really believe in God. It is

going to astound you. Some will be closer than others. I saw Charles Stanley when I was over in Goshen and he was really giving a good sermon, going right down the line: Scripture, Scripture, Scripture; then he said, 'That's how we're going to get to heaven. All you have to do is believe in your heart and Christ will enter in right now.' Yet, he is a Baptist and he doesn't believe in baptizing. Amazing! Right here! It is right here! *If you don't believe in Moses, you won't believe in Christ!* Quite a terrific key.

Let's learn something about *belief*. Everyone wants to do something for God and here, after Jesus had fed the 5,000, then they're all coming after Him, because they found Him. If you got a free meal and you saw all this food miraculously being produced; I mean, can you imagine what General Mills would do with something like this? General Mills: true manna from heaven! 'We don't even have to grow more crops; we have a special loaf back here in a secret safe that every time we break it off, we get more and more and more.' Well, that's how people are.

After they found Him they said, 'How'd you get here?' John 6:26: "Jesus answered them and said, 'Truly, truly I say to you, you do not seek Me because you saw *the* miracles, but because you ate the bread and were satisfied.'"

Let's think on this for a minute. How many people are really converted because they saw miracles? *Very, very few!* People like to see miracles because it's more like magic to them and they want the benefit of that. Christ healed many, but how many really believed? *Very, very few!* That's why when they came to Jesus and said, 'Master, we want a sign. You've got to convince us with a sign.' He said, 'You are a wicked and an adulterous generation, you aren't going to get any sign. The only sign I'm going to give you is the sign of Jonah. Because Jonah was in the belly of the whale for three days and three nights, so shall the Son of man be in the heart of the earth, three days and three nights,' and they turned around and walked off.

We have the same thing here, so He doesn't answer their question, but He gives them the truth of what they should do in order to come to the answer—and Jesus does that many, many times.

Verse 27: "Do not labor *for* the food that perishes, but *for* the food that endures unto eternal life, which the Son of man shall give to you; for Him has God the Father sealed.'" Then He talks about the meaning of His flesh and blood, which ties into Passover.

Verse 28: "Therefore, they said to Him, 'What shall we do, in order that we ourselves may

do the works of God?'.... [everyone wants to do something for God] ...Jesus answered and said to them, 'This is the work of God: that you believe in Him Whom He has sent'" (vs 28-29).

So, the truth is: You can't do anything for God unless you first believe in Jesus Christ and when you believe in Him, that means you believe everything—not pick and chose as so many do today.

Belief comes before faith! The verb *to believe* actually means *to faithize*. In other words, believing is *faith in action*, but you have to believe first, then you can have faith in action. This is why He told the disciples:

John 14:1: "Let not your heart be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in Me." What does this also tell you? *Jesus was God in the flesh!*

Otherwise what would He be doing—He would be causing people to commit idolatry, because He would be telling them to believe in something that was equal to God, and if He were not equal to God then He couldn't tell them to believe in Him. Quite an amazing thing! That's why when we go through and study the Bible and study the Word of God, that's how we grow in grace, grow in knowledge and grow in understanding.

Verse 6: "Jesus said to him, 'I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life; and no one comes to the Father except through Me.'" So, regardless of what the world says, regardless of what people may teach; there is only one way and *that's through Christ*.

TRUST

Let's look at a synonym of belief, which is called *trust*, and trust becomes very, very important. Trust is ***putting into action what you believe***. Trust is also something that God gives us in the way of choice. Trust is what God gives to those who are His teachers in the way of stewardship. We're also told in the Bible, '*Trust no man*.'

Now remember what was happening when there was 'perestroika' in the Soviet Union and Mikhail Gorbachev. Some people said, 'You see that mark on his forehead? He's *the beast*.' What did Ronald Reagan say over and over again? '*Trust but verify*.' So, it's the same thing when it says, 'Trust no man,' especially in relationship to the Word of God, you verify it by proving from the Word of God that what He says is true or not.

Let's look at some trust here. What is the most devastating thing that happens in people's lives? *You believe what people tell you!* Let's look at it from a husband and wife point of view; you can look at it from a business point of view; you can

look at it from many, many things. What is the heart and core of a marriage relationship? *Trust bound by love!* What happens when the trust and the love is violated? Say, by adultery? *Devastating!* Why? *Because people are not only to be believing, but they are to be trusting!* In this world with other human beings, you *trust but verify*. If you enter into a contract with somebody, you read the contract, you understand it before you sign it, because the contract verifies the trust and belief of the agreement that you entered into, and read the fine print.

This shows where our trust is to be, Psalm 25:1: "To You, O LORD, do I lift up my soul. O my God, **I trust in You**..." [that's where our trust has to be, in God.] ...do not let me be ashamed, let not my enemies triumph over me" (vs 1-2).

If you are trusting in God, they won't. Jesus said in another place, 'Don't fear those who are able to kill the body, but they can't kill the life,' We're going to see that the *hope of the resurrection* is greater than anything that there is in this life.

Verse 3: "Yea, let none who wait on You be ashamed; let them be ashamed who deal treacherously without cause."

Here is what happens when you trust God. A lot of people say, 'Well, I'll believe in God when I can understand why He does not prevent war.' *or* 'How can He let little children die?' Have they ever opened the Bible? *No!* First of all, you have to ***believe*** in God and ***trust*** in Him and He will give the answers, but He is not going to show anyone His ways, or teach them His laws unless they trust in Him. They can read them, but *to believe* what they mean, that's a whole different game.

Verse 4: "Show me Your ways, O LORD; teach me Your paths. Lead me in Your Truth..." (vs 4-5). Notice how the whole emphasis here—this is what it always needs to be—is *your relationship with God*. ***Trust is belief and faith in action!*** That's why it says 'The just shall live by faith' (Heb. 10).

Verse 5: "Lead me in Your Truth and teach me, for You are the God of my salvation; on You do I wait all the day long. Remember, O LORD, Your tender mercies and Your loving kindness, for they have been of old. Do not remember the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions; according to Your loving kindness remember me for Your goodness sake, O LORD" (vs 5-7).

What does this also tell us? *If you're trusting in God, He'll forgive your sins!* Sometimes we end up 'in a pickle jar' with a lot of the things that we do, but God rescues us out of that.

If you want another study, just get out your handy-dandy concordance and look up *trust* or

trustworthy. Upon true repentance and baptism, God gives you His Spirit, because now you are going to be worthy of His trust—*God trusts you!* Think of that!

Psalm 118:8: “It is better to **trust in the LORD** than to put confidence in man.” You’re always going to be disappointed. Someone was saying to me, ‘People are losing trust in you.’ And I said, ‘I don’t want them to trust me, so we’re not going down that road.’ ***We are going to trust God***, because God holds me responsible that if I’m not trustworthy enough to teach the Word of God, then He is going to take care of me; it is just that simple. You’ll see that all through life. You don’t have to stand up and beat people over the head with it; God is perfectly able.

Verse 9: “It is better to **trust in the LORD** than to trust in princes.”

Here is a promise. Psalm 125:1: “Those who **trust in the LORD** shall be like Mount Zion which cannot be removed, but remains forever.”

Very few people really understand what the temple mount was originally like when David drew the plans and gave them to Solomon to build the temple. There is the Valley of Kidron, which comes down on the east. On the east of the Valley of Kidron is the Mount of Olives which looks right down in to where the temple area was, which is called Mount Zion. The slopes of Mount Zion were nearly perpendicular, an almost impregnable fortress. When it talks about Mount Zion that cannot be removed, that’s what it is talking about.

If you picture yourself on Mount Zion—that’s where the temple was—it’s going to be very hard to get you. That’s why when you read *Josephus* about the first and second destruction of the temple, only God could have opened the door and the way for them to come in and conquer it and take that area. That’s why even Titus said when he got up and looked on the wall looking south into the temple area from Fort Antonia after he had conquered it, ‘Only God could have helped us.’ So, he knew the truth of it.

Now let’s transfer that to a spiritual reality because, Mount Sion, with a ‘S’ is in heaven above; that is absolutely impregnable because Christ is there directing our lives and guiding us and nothing can get us if we are right and faithful to God. That doesn’t mean that we go around and we are arrogant and tempt God. Satan would love us to do that because then we would fall into the same trap that he tried to get Jesus to do: jump off the tower here and the angels will bear you up, and He said, ‘No, You’re not going to tempt the Lord your God.’ We

don’t need to get arrogant; we don’t need to get lifted up; God is just there and that is just a fact and we can claim the promise.

Let’s see a little bit more about *trust*. Trust is a tremendous thing. As you go through and study it and you think about it and when you understand how profound trust is and how devastating it is when that trust has been broken—it ruins lives, marriages, children, adults, political parties, businesses, etc., etc., etc. Because all true relationships with human beings and relationship with God is based on *trust*. Then with God it’s based on *belief and faith*, which adds to that trust.

Notice how Paul wrote of it, after he shows what they went through and suffered and that God comforted them:

2-Corinthians 1:8: “For we do not want you to be ignorant of our tribulations, brethren, *even the trials* that befell us in Asia; we were exceedingly burdened beyond *our own* strength, so much so that we even despaired of living”—which shows you the things that Paul went through, and some of the things that we may even go through.

Verse 9: “For we had the sentence of death within ourselves, so that we would not trust in ourselves but in God, Who raises the dead... [it also tells us the purpose of trials] ...Who delivered us from so great a death, and continues to deliver; in Whom we have hope that He will even yet deliver; while you also are laboring together for us by supplication *to God*, that the gift to us from many persons might be *the* cause of thanksgiving by many for us. For our boasting is this: the testimony of our conscience, that in *the* simplicity and sincerity of God (not in carnal wisdom, but in *the* grace of God), we had our conduct in the world, but more abundantly toward you” (vs 9-12). That pretty well summarizes everything about how the *trust* is.

Jeremiah 7:8^[transcriber’s correction]: “Behold, you trust in lying words...”—that’s the way it is in the world. Who is the one who is deceiving the whole world? *Satan the devil!* And what is he? *He is the father of lies!* God doesn’t want us to believe in lies. Just stop and think! Just look at the world, look at things, look at life! How many lies do people believe? How many people live by those lies? *Yet, they think good can come of those lies*—don’t they? It’s an amazing thing!

WALK BY FAITH

You have heard me say over and over again, so we’re going to emphasize this: in order to live by faith—which is a general parameter—we are to ***walk by faith, believe in hope and live in love!*** That’s

how we are to do it, while we're *believing and trusting* in Christ.

2-Corinthians 5:7: "For we **walk by faith**, not by sight." Just take that one Scripture and think on that and apply it and what you will do in life is you will experience that; you will see it happen.

We have a living example right here. The doctor's looked at Richard and said, 'He's not going to live.' I came up and anointed him and prayed for him and asked God to heal him and raise him up, and *God did!* But to look at him you would have to agree, when he was there in that hospital the first night when I came up to see him, it could be very easy to conclude that, yes, he was not going to make it, as the doctors said. The doctors don't live by faith; they live by sight. *We live by faith and we prayed for him and here he is!*

Let's see how all of this ties into hope, because as it said, 'faith is the **conviction** of things not seen...' the **hope** which God gives us. We'll talk a little bit about conviction a little later, but let's look at *hope*.

HOPE

1-Timothy 1:1: "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ according to *the* commandment of God our Savior, and of *the* Lord Jesus Christ, **Who is our hope**." We're going to see once we get through Heb. 11 and get into chapter 12, it really emphasizes that *Christ is our hope*—

- no man
- no scheme
- no plan
- no secret formula

—**Christ!** That ties right in with what we read there in John 14:6: "I am the Way the Truth and the Life..." **He is our hope!**

Titus 2:13: "Looking for the blessed hope... [that refers to the *hope of the resurrection*] ...and the appearing of the glory of our Savior and great God, Jesus Christ... [What does this do? *This tells us Jesus is God!*] ...Who gave Himself for us, so that He might redeem us from all lawlessness, and might purify for Himself a unique people, zealous of good works. Speak these things, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Do not let anyone despise you" (vs 13-15).

Let's look at Abraham's example concerning *hope*. This is just a little expounding on **walk in faith, believe in hope and live in love**. Rom. 4 talks about Abraham. There are a lot of practical things concerning *believing in hope* when it applies to Abraham, because you know that Isaac was not born until Abraham was 99-years-old—actually in

his 100th year, and his wife Sarah was 90. God was going to show that what was impossible for men to do, He could do. That's why Isaac is called the son of promise. And remember, he was promised beginning when he was 75-years-old, so it took him 25 years before it came to fruition.

Romans 4:16: "For this reason *it is* of faith, in order that *it might be* by grace, to the end that the promise might be certain to all the seed..." Remember, everything depended on that promise from God: one man, the promise; one child, Isaac.

"...*might be* by grace, to the end that the promise might be certain to all the seed—not to the one who is of the law only, but also to the one who is of *the* faith of Abraham, who is *the* father of us all" (v 16).

What I want us to know and to understand is this: *faith and hope* are connected together just like *hope and love* are connected together. Many times when you read about *faith*, immediately follows *hope* just like it did there in Heb. 11: 1.

Verse 17: "(Exactly as it is written: 'I have made you a father of many nations.') before God in Whom he believed, Who gives life to the dead... [and that's what He did to Abraham in order to have Isaac] ...and calls the things that are not as though they are."

Hebrews 11:1, because we see this in action: "Now, faith is *the* substance of *things* hoped for... [we have faith and hope connected together] ...and *the conviction of things not seen*." That's what Abraham had. If he walked by sight and not by faith—which the incident of Hagar was, by sight—trying to help God fulfill His prophecies, God does not need any help in fulfilling His prophecies, thank you, He is perfectly able of taking care of His own promises. Here in Rom. 4 we see Heb. 11:1 in action.

(go to the next track)

Romans 4:18: "And who against hope believed in hope... [that's where I have it: **walk in faith, believe in hope**] ...in order that he might become a father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, 'So shall your seed be.'" That's how we are to *believe in hope*.

Let's look and see some more concerning *hope*, what this *hope* is to do, and how it all works together. The reason that the Psalms and the New Testament are so connected is because a lot of the things concerning the New Testament were first written down by David, who was in that special covenant with God. Plus David was also, as it was said in another place, a prophet and he prophesied

many of the exact words and thoughts that later would be experienced by Christ when He was in the flesh. Here we are also going to see something very important, too: *faith and trust and hope* all connected together:

Psalm 71:1: “In You, O LORD, have I taken refuge; let me never be put to shame. Deliver me in Your righteousness and cause me to escape; incline Your ear unto me, and save me. Be my strong Rock of refuge to which I may always go; You have commanded to save me; for You are my Rock and my Fortress” (vs 1-3). That sounds like Mount Zion that I talked about earlier.

Verse 4: “Deliver me, O my God, out of the hand of the wicked, out of the hand of the unrighteous and ruthless man, for You are my hope, O Lord GOD, **my trust** from my youth” (vs 4-5). We have *faith and hope and trust* all combined together.

Always remember this: *When things look the darkest, that's when to:*

- **hope in God**
- **believe in God**
- **have faith in God**
- **trust Him**

for His deliverance!

Psalm 31:23: “O love the LORD, all you His saints! The LORD preserves the faithful, and fully repays the proud doer. Be strong, and let your heart take courage, all you who hope in the LORD” (vs 23-24). There it is! Really quite a thing!

God gives all of this to inspire us, to help us, to encourage us. The most important thing that we need to realize and understand is that *God has given us the free-moral agency and the choice, and He trusts us with His Word and Truth and Spirit and He then is our Hope*—regardless of what the circumstances may appear to be! This is why Paul was writing the Epistle to the Hebrews because he was preparing them for the worst circumstances that they were going to face in their whole lives, and we may very well be facing the same thing somewhere down the road in the not too far distant future, too.

Our hope has to be in God! We have to believe in *the hope that God has given*, and that's what it all about: Those that *hope* in the LORD.

When something happens, don't get all down. *God will use every circumstance to work out His will!* Even though circumstances when you are down and depressed and despaired, and normally *if you didn't have hope in God, you would have no hope!* That's why Paul said there, concerning the ones who have died who are in the world, ‘Don't

despair like those in the world who have no hope.’ *Always look to God!*

Psalm 146:1: “O praise the LORD. Praise the LORD, O my soul. While I live I will praise the LORD; I will sing praises unto my God while I have any being” (vs 1-2). You talk about loving God, dedicated to God, there you go right there.

Verse 3: “Do not put your trust in princes...” We see how *trust, hope and faith* and so forth all work together.

“...nor in the son of man in whom there is no salvation.... [because their day comes]: ...His breath goes forth; he returns to the earth; in that very day his thoughts perish. Happy is he who has the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the LORD his God” (vs 3-5). That's why we are to believe in hope constantly.

Let's see this in action. We'll see how this works in a spiritual sense for those of us who have God's Spirit.

Romans 5:1: “Therefore, having been justified by faith... [we *believe*, we *trust* God] ...we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” Isn't that something? The carnal mind is always fighting against God.

Verse 2: “Through Whom we also have access by faith **into this grace** in which we stand... [this puts us in a special relationship with God] ...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).

Isn't that something? That's why we are to *believe in hope* and we have the greatest things to believe in. Let's see how this works. As I said, *regardless of the circumstances*, remember, you can claim this promise and this is something that God expects. It is a promise and we can claim it.

Think of it this way, as William Tyndale said, which is true, ‘*Every word of God is a covenant.*’ I think that is pretty profound! In other words, every word of God can be *trusted*—that's why you can believe it and live by it. We've seen it happen down through the years.

Romans 8:28, here's what we have to come to: “And we **know**... [that's a matter of *conviction* and *understanding*] ...that **all** things...” I want you to think about that!

- It doesn't say *some* things
- It doesn't say *most* things
- It doesn't say the *important* things

It says: "...**all things** work together for good to those who love God... [now then, we're coming **from** hope in action **to** the love of God] ...to those who are called according to *His* purpose."

That's pretty profound! *Everything works for good, even those things that appear to be utter disasters!* We can see that over and over again when any of us get in trouble, or have difficulties, or need healing, we look to God for that; we pray for each other, God intervenes. **All things!** If you have difficulties between husband and wife, between one and another, all those things will work together for good if you love God, because all of those things can be worked out, and all of those things can be made to work for good.

That's why He doesn't want us to be down or discouraged or drug into the pit; even if you find yourself in a situation that feels like it. Remember the Psalm that says, 'I was in the mire, yet, God delivered me.' So, always remember this: ***If you walk by faith and believe in hope, the physical circumstances around you God can always change!***

I've also seen that I've had many people oppose what I teach and preach, because I teach and preach the Bible and I teach and preach against their hierarchy and teach and preach against their merchandising and things like this. I've had enemies come after me, and I just put them in God's hands and God takes care of them. He takes care of them in *His own way*.

Since God is a heart-knowing God, which He is; since God is greater and more powerful than anything we are, which He is; He can do things greater and above and beyond what we do, which He does, the ultimate reality in dealing with enemies who are against us is what? *That they may repent!* That's why it says, 'Pray for your enemies.'

The greatest good you can pray for your enemies is this: *Put them in God's hands and ask God to do with them according to His will, and if it's possible, to lead them to repentance!* That's to the greater glory of God. You don't have to go around with hatred and bitterness. What does hatred and bitterness do?

- If you ***believe in hope*** you're *always looking to the future!*
- If you ***walk in faith***, you're *always trusting in God!*

- If you're ***living in the love*** of God, *that is the cement which holds all of this together!*

The long and short of it is, of all things working together for good, that if it works to repentance and change and salvation, that's terrific! That's what God would want it to be. Who was one of the worst enemies of Jesus Christ? *Saul, the one who became the Apostle Paul!* So, even though he was responsible for martyring the saints—look, they'll be resurrected; God will take care of them—God was able to convert him and use him and was responsible for a little over 50% of the New Testament. Quite a testimony to 'all things work together for good.'

LIVE IN HOPE

Let's look at *live in hope*. Let's see how this all ties together and how it's put together with love. Love is the concrete or the cement that puts it all together; that makes it work.

After He is asked which is the great commandment, Matthew 22:37: "And Jesus said to him, 'You shall love *the* Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.'"

If you do that, that's how God wants it to be: ***all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind!*** In other words, God wants your full attention—doesn't He? He wants your whole life. Most people like to give God a little bit and continue doing what they want to do. They're really not loving God this way. This is something you grow into. You don't all of a sudden—when you discover about God—wake up one morning and say, 'Boy, I love you with all my heart and mind and soul and being,' And God says, 'Okay, that's fine.' As you live your life—*walking in Christ, walking in faith, believing in hope and living in love*—then you learn how to love.

I have often said that when people pray—and I've experienced it so I know what it's like—'O God, I'm really lacking in love; please grant me more of Your love through Your Holy Spirit.' And immediately you get up and you are confronted with a trial, and you think, 'O God, I asked for love! And I ended up fighting!' If He would answer you He would probably say, 'Well you asked for love so I gave you a trial to see how you are going to do.' Likewise in whatever we do, we are going to have these things come along because in order to receive eternal life God is going to prove us and test us. Just like we prove and test God. He is going to do it for us.

Jesus said, v 38: "This is *the* first and greatest commandment." That's toward God. what about everybody else on earth? You can go look up

the parable where the lawyer said, 'Well, who is my neighbor?' Anyone you are in contact with is your neighbor.

Verse 39: "And *the second one* is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'" There it is! How do you get along with people? *That's how you do it; you love them as yourself.* God expects you to love yourself enough to take care of yourself, to do for yourself the things that you know you need to do. As I mentioned before with exercise that that tells you how 'self' wants to destruct; it really doesn't want to do it.

Verse 40: "On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets." Everything that God has done for man, toward man and man toward God is based on the love of God; yet, people consider God hostile and mean and all this sort of thing, because they don't know God.

Let's see what he says concerning how we need to implement that. I've already covered some of it but let's go ahead and read it here.

Matthew 5:43: "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.'.... [sounds like a campaign speech] ...But I say to you... [if you're going to follow Christ, if you're going to do what is right] ...love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you and pray for those who despitefully use you and persecute you" (vs 43-44).

When you first hear this and you first read it, that's a tough bill of goods to swallow, because we've all been taught love those who are yours, that's good. Hate your enemies, yes. So then, as I was explaining, how do you love your enemies? *You put them in God's hands!* Sometimes you do something that is really nice and then your neighbor is surprised that you've done it. Maybe you've got an old dilapidated fence and he won't tell you you've got an old dilapidated fence and he really doesn't like it and he really thinks it's kind of two inches on his property. So, he huffs and puffs and fumes and steams and gives you dirty looks and so forth. If you build a nice fence where that dilapidated one is, lo and behold, he looks out there and he comes over and makes friends with you. Is that not loving your neighbor as yourself? *Sure it is!* Each of you are surprised that you're really kind of nice. That's the way it works. Why? *Because that is emulating a character of God,* a characteristic that comes from God! It says, 'God so loved the world...' that's everybody in it.

Here is the reason, v 45: "So that you yourselves may be *the* children of your Father Who *is* in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on *the* evil and on *the* good..."

How pretentious would it be to get up in the morning and go pray and you see the sun coming up and you think you are so righteous and you say, 'O God, I'm so glad that you gave us sunshine today because I am so good.' Look out Job, it's on its way. The one who is evil gets up and says, 'Oh, I'm glad it's not raining today.' God gave the sunshine to both. God is able to handle the evil and handle the good, too, so don't worry about it.

Verse 45: "...and sends rain on *the* just and on *the* unjust. For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not the tax collectors practice the same *thing*?" (vs 45-46).

Those were the most hated, and that's true wherever you go down in every society, the tax collector is the evil man. Even in the story of Robin Hood, and I like the cartoon version best, the Sheriff of Nottingham coming in and taking the very last penny.

Verse 47: "And if you salute your brethren only, what have you done *that is* extraordinary?..." Think about this with all of these: the social clubs that they have like the Elks, the Moose or the Masons, they are all good to their own.

"...Do not the tax collectors practice the same *thing*?.... [here is the reason why God wants us to do everything this way]: ...Therefore, you shall be perfect..." (vs 47-48). That's the ultimate goal, that's the whole reason for ***faith and hope and love***:

- to be perfected
- be perfected with the mind of Christ
- be perfected with the character of God

After all: what is there in life if you don't do that? God gives you all the tools to do it.

Verse 48: "Therefore, you shall be perfect, even as your Father Who *is* in heaven is perfect." Quite a thing! I tell you, that's something!

John 15—the *King James Version* does not have it translated the way that I do, but I translated it this way because this is the closest to the Greek. The Greek verb 'meno' means *to abide, to live, or to dwell*. So, in John 15 He is saying 'He is the vine, you are the branches.' You have to dwell in Him.

John 15:6: "If anyone does not dwell in Me, he is cast out as a branch, and is dried up; and men gather them and cast *them* into a fire, and they are burned. If you dwell in Me, and My words dwell in you..." (vs 6-7). Doesn't that come full circle right back where we started? *The words of God dwelling in us* that He told the Pharisees?

“...you shall ask whatever you desire, and it shall come to pass for you. In this is My Father glorified, that you bear much fruit; so shall you be My disciples. As the Father has loved Me, I also have loved you; live in My love” (vs 7-9). Not just abide or dwell, but *live*, so that’s why I have *walk in faith, believe in hope and live in love*.

“...live in My love.... [then He shows how to do it]: ...**If you keep My commandments, you shall live in My love**; just... [showing how we are to walk] ...as I have kept My Father’s commandments and live in His love.... [What is the reason for all of this?] ...These things I have spoken to you, in order that My joy may dwell in you, and that your joy may be full” (vs 9-11). That joy comes and is fulfilled when we *walk in faith, believe in hope and live in love!*

Let’s see how all of this works together. 1-Cor. 13 is the love chapter, and I think it’s very interesting as you go through and you analyze all of the problems that they had at the Church of Corinth. He had to name all of the problems and then what was it that he gave as the final solution?

1-Cor. 13 is very important from this point of view: it touches on everything that is important to human beings—their intellect, their vanity, their willing sacrifice and all of these things—when compared to the love of God.

1-Corinthians 13:1: “If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a sounding brass or a clanging cymbal.” Not *as*; you *become* one.

Have you ever heard anyone speaking and it sounds hollow, and vain, and empty and meaningless? They mouth the words, but they don’t mean it. Or they say the words and they have never experienced what they are saying. I remember hearing a man give a sermon on Psalms 51 and it was given in such a bland way that after he was done, I thought to myself: I don’t think you’ve really experienced repentance like Psalm 51, because you can tell there was not the conviction in what he was saying. So, he was just like this, a sounding brass or a clanging cymbal.

Verse 2: “If I have *the gift of prophecy*, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, **I am nothing**.” That’s profound!

That’s why God has called the weak of the world. If you have the love of God, you have more than all the world has. You don’t have to be smart, you don’t have to be intelligent, you don’t have to be wise; *you have the Spirit of God and He’ll give you the smarts, and He’ll give you the intelligence and*

He’ll give you the wisdom which comes from Him. This is more important than anything else.

Verse 3: “And if I give away all my goods...” Let me just say something here about the *King James* to clarify something. ‘If I give all that I have to *the poor*...’ That isn’t what it is; *the poor* is not there. A lot of rich people give a lot of things that they have and they don’t give it to the poor, they give it to many different causes. You can give it to any cause it’s not just giving to the poor. Although every Thanksgiving and Christmas we see it come up and the ‘trumpet is blown’ and the television cameras are sounded and drums roll and here’s ‘Mama So-and-So’ giving turkey to all of these that need it—whatever.

Verse 3: “...and if I deliver up my body that I may be burned, but do not have love, **I have gained nothing**.”

I never will forget, this has always been one of these things that every once in a while you see something that just sticks in your mind. I remember seeing one of these Buddhist priests in Viet Nam when they were protesting the war, and it showed the whole thing. He sat down in the lotus position and doused himself with gasoline, and lit a match and burned himself. To me that was the epitome of giving your body to be burned that accomplished nothing—*gained nothing!*

The other thing concerning the *King James* is this: They translate the Greek word: ‘agape’—which means *love*—as ‘charity.’ Why did they do that? On the different committees with the *King James Version* translation, they had secret Romanists and Latinists. They liked Latin, and the committee that had 1-Cor. had a Latinist on there because the Latin word for *love* is ‘charity,’ whereas charity today means some sort of thing to give money or food or things to the poor. That’s how that came about.

Here is what we are to grow into, v 4: “Love is patient...” If you don’t have patience, you have to grow in to it. You say, ‘Oh God, give me patience.’ Then you’ll have a trial come along where you need to exercise patience and you lose your temper, and you wonder why’d you lose your temper. Well, you had a trial to learn patience. Just go repent and ask God to help you, that’s all.

“...and is kind; love envies not...” (v 4). Notice this is all how we are converted; these are all points and steps of conversion.

“...does not brag about itself, is not puffed up” (v 4). Channel-surf the ‘religious’ channel, check them out by what is said here.

Verse 5: “*Love* does not behave disgracefully, does not seek its own things, is not easily provoked, thinks no evil, does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the Truth” (vs 5-6). There is the goal we are to reach for. This is how we *live in love*.

Verse 7: “*Love* bears all things, believes all things... [obviously that are right; pertaining to God] ...hopes all things... [so here we have *faith, hope and love*; and this chapter ties it all together] ...endures all things. Love never fails.... [a perfect, absolute guarantee] ...But whether *there be* prophecies, they shall cease...” (vs 7-8).

That’s referring to prophecies of men. The reason it has to refer to prophecies of men is because Jesus said, ‘Heaven and earth shall pass away but My words shall not pass away.’ Therefore, any of His prophecies cannot fail. *This is the prophecies of men* that he was correcting them for there a little later in 1-Cor. 14.

“...whether *there be* languages, they shall cease; whether *there be* knowledge, it shall vanish away” (v 8). That’s human knowledge. We’ll gain greater knowledge when we become the sons of God at the resurrection.

Verse 9: “For we know in part, and we prophesy in part; but when that which is perfect has come, then that which is in part shall be set aside. When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I reasoned as a child; but when I became a man, I set aside the things of a child” (vs 9-11). He is projecting forward now to the resurrection.

Verse 12: “For now we see through a glass darkly...” That’s how we view everything today. We don’t have perfect vision of what’s going to happen. Let’s go back and look at all the prophecies even heard in the Church of God? Did they set the date when Christ is going to return? *Every one of them has failed! Why? Because they are prophecies of men!* God has His time schedule. We don’t quite understand everything; He’ll reveal it in His time.

Verse 12: “...but then... [at the resurrection] ...we shall see face-to-face; now I know in part, but then I shall know exactly as I have been known.”

What we are experiencing in this life is very much like what a baby experiences before it’s born. Very little, but give him the tools so when he’s born he can survive. Now we are given the tools so we can survive, we can live forever so how much more important that this is.

Now then when all else fails, v 13: “And now, these three remain: ***faith, hope and love***...”

[*walk in faith, believe in hope and live in love!*] ...but the greatest of these *is* love.”

I wanted to go through and cover this before we started going through Chapter 11 so we won’t have to stop and dwell every time it says, *by faith*. It brings up faith in that chapter 18 times, and gives us examples so that we can look at those and know and learn so when we’re confronted with things in our lives and our existence, that we can also have the same faith and have the same endurance.

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*

Scriptural References:

- 1) Hebrews 11:1
- 2) John 5:37-47
- 3) John 6:26-29
- 4) John 14: 1, 6
- 5) Psalm 25:1-7
- 6) Psalm 118:8-9
- 7) Psalm 125:1-2
- 8) 2 Corinthians 1:8-12
- 9) Jeremiah 7:8
- 10) 2 Corinthians 5:7
- 11) 1 Timothy 1:1
- 12) John 14:6
- 13) Titus 2:13-15
- 14) Romans 4:16-17
- 15) Hebrews 11:1
- 16) Romans 4:18
- 17) Psalm 71:1-5
- 18) Psalm 31:23-24
- 19) Psalm 146:1-5
- 20) Romans 5:1-5
- 21) Romans 8:28
- 22) Matthew 22:37-40
- 23) Matthew 5:43-48
- 24) John 15:6-11
- 25) 1 Corinthians 13: 1-13

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Hebrews 10
- Psalm 51
- 1 Corinthians 14

Also referenced:

- Appendix H—*How Did Jesus Fulfill the Law and the Prophets?* (from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order* by Fred R. Coulter)
- Book: *Josephus*

FRC:bo
Transcribed: 5/25/11
Formatted/Corrected: January/2017

Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews XXXIII Faith & Hope Work Together

(Chapter 11)
Fred R. Coulter

Hebrews 11 is the *faith* chapter. What we have been doing is examining what kind of faith is it that we are to have that it is talked about here in Hebrews 11. How does that come about? I want to just reiterate a couple of more things concerning it.

Hebrews 11:1: “Now **faith is the substance of things hoped for...**”

- We’re *hoping* for the resurrection!
- We’re *hoping* for eternal life!
- We’re *hoping* for the return of Christ when that will be!

God is the **God of hope** as we have covered. *Faith, hope and love* all work together. Then we’re going to look at another element of *hope* which is *trust*, and see how all of this works together.

Romans 15:4: “For all the things that were written before were written for our instruction, so that through patient endurance...”

We’ve all had to learn that There are a lot of people who don’t have patience and endurance. Patience is the *state of mind*; endurance is *living through it*.

“...and encouragement of the Scriptures, we might have hope” (v 4). This ties together all the things we’ve heard for years—prayer and study and all of these things come together with this. Also, it shows us that God wants us to be inspired to be in the Kingdom of God, because He’s not going to beat us in there; He’s not going to drive us in there. He wants us to love Him so that we can be there.

Verse 5: “Now may the **God of patience** and encouragement and encouragement grant you to be like-minded toward one another according to Christ Jesus. So that with one accord and one mouth you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.” This is something!

How do we become like-minded? ***You have to have the mind of Christ in you, then you’ll be like-minded!*** When we talk about the *mark of the beast*, Satan wants everyone to be like-minded according to him by the enforcement of his will. God’s way is entirely different! “...be like-minded...” and “...with one accord...”

- because we love God
- because we know the Scriptures
- because we live by them

Verse 13: “May the God of hope fill you now with all joy and peace in believing that you may abound in hope *and* in the power of the Holy Spirit.” That’s what God wants it to be.

Hebrews 11:1: “...of the *things* hoped for...” Let’s understand about this faith and this substance that comes from God. That is the faith that comes from God and the substance is the Holy Spirit.

“...and the conviction of things not seen” (v 1). This is something that is very difficult to find nowadays—people with true conviction: conviction is the ***strength of belief that you know*** what has been promised *will* happen; conviction also has to do with the conviction that ***the way that you believe the Word of God***. If you do not have conviction, then you will be like a wave that’s ‘tossed to and fro,’ and that’s what James is talking about (James 1). When you have faith without conviction, then you’re tossed like a wave.

CONVICTION

Let’s talk about *conviction* for just a minute—*conviction* is greater than blind loyalty. Blind loyalty is something that people do without thinking. God does not want that.

- He wants us to think
- He wants us to know
- He wants us to understand
- He wants us to have knowledge and wisdom

So, the conviction and faith that we have then is that it comes from God and it is something that grows and develops in your Christian life. Let’s see how all of these things come together here:

James 1:1: “James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes, which *are* in the dispersion...” This tells us that James knew where they were. You wouldn’t write a letter and put it in the mailbox and say, ‘To So-and-So, good luck, I hope it gets there. I don’t know where you are. Dear Postman, work hard.’ *No!*

To all twelve tribes “...Greetings! Consider *it* all joy, my brethren, when you are beset by various trials” (vs 1-2). I think we are all growing toward that point. I have yet to say ‘I joy in this trial.’ Afterwards, when I have some understanding about it, I feel better.

Verse 3: “Knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance.” See how we have **hope, endurance, patience, conviction, faith** all together in one package.

Verse 4: “But let endurance have *its* perfect work... [in other words, don’t give up half way through] ...so that you may be perfect and complete, not lacking in anything. However, if anyone lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, Who gives to everyone freely and does not reproach *the one who asks*; and it shall be given to him. But let him ask in faith, not doubting... [that’s the hardest thing to do] ...not doubting at all because the **one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven by the wind and tossed to and fro**” (vs 4-6).

When anyone prays and he or she gets up and says, ‘Well, I wonder if God is going to answer that prayer?’ **You’ve just lost it!** You have just said, ‘I don’t believe.’ What you need to do is get up and say to yourself, ‘I wonder how God is going to answer that prayer.’ Entirely different! And sometimes He’ll answer the prayer in a way that you do not know or do not expect. Have you ever had that happen? *Yes, indeed, many times!*

“...let him ask in faith, not doubting at all, because the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven by the wind and tossed to and fro.”

Water is essential, but the wind can really do things to it. When hurricane Ivan came straight in there right at the place where we were staying for the Feast of Tabernacles, 30-foot wave surges came right through that building, and that was all driven by the wind. It also tells us this: that in the same way when you have wind that drives, like with a hurricane, the water causes the destruction. In the same way the *lack of faith or the disbelief in God* can cause as much destruction and disaster as a hurricane blowing the water in.

Verse 7: “Do not let that man expect that he will receive anything from the Lord. *He is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways*” (vs 7-8). That’s when it is easy for Satan to come in and pick someone off. Double-minded! You have to be:

- like-minded
- Christ-minded
- single-minded
- educated

God wants you to be educated with His Word.

Let’s see a little bit more concerning this. Let’s add to this *conviction*. It’s the **conviction of the things not seen!** It really struck me: I heard a man in Tulsa give a speech and it was about Psalms 51.

As I was sitting there, and he was giving the right information and so forth, I was struck because when it was all done the question that came in my mind was this: Have you ever experienced repentance like Psalms 51? Because there was such a *lack of conviction*, and conviction becomes a very profound and important thing.

1-Thessalonians 1:2: “We give thanks to God always concerning all of you, making mention of you in our prayers. Without fail, we remember your work of faith, and *your* labor of love, and *your* endurance in *the* hope of our Lord Jesus Christ.... [See how Paul always ties these things together? Quite amazing!] ...before our God and Father; knowing your election, brethren, *as you are* beloved by God. For our Gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power and in *the* Holy Spirit, and **with great conviction....**” (vs 2-5). That’s what we need today.

You’ve heard the old story: **‘If you don’t stand for the Truth, you’ll fall for anything.’** We’ve seen that in operation, too. Part of the problem with this is that people get a *position*—it can be religious, it can be political, it can be educational, whatever—and this is more demonstrated in politics than anywhere else. The Republicans have a position, Democrats have a position, Libertarians have a position, and they defend the position regardless of the truth.

- you can’t do that with the Word of God
- you can’t do that in your Christian life

You have to *stand for the Truth* and you have to have *conviction* with it.

How does conviction come? Let’s see how conviction comes. This is why it is so important and profound that we understand in believing and understanding the Word of God. You look back and you see those who have fallen by the wayside—they may have been loyal; they may have been enthusiastic—but were they really grounded in the Word of God and in the Truth by the Spirit of God? That’s an entirely different question.

This becomes very important when we look out and see this happening in the world today and we see the events that are taking place and it’s almost like watching a huge, giant rolling machine—you’ve seen how these big rolling machines roll out the asphalt—that’s what it reminds me of, just a huge, giant juggernaut of a roller coming down the pike and it’s going to come and nothing is going to turn it back. *Unless we have the faith, hope and conviction and the love of God, we’re going to be in difficult straits!*

Here is how *conviction* comes, 2-Timothy 3:15: “And that from a child you have known the Holy Writings, which are able to make you wise unto salvation through faith, which *is* in Christ Jesus. All Scripture *is* God-breathed... [that’s the literal translation of it] ...and *is* profitable for doctrine, **for conviction...**” (vs 15-16). That you have *absolute conviction*:

- not only that God exists
- not only that God is Truth
- not only that His Word is true

but you have **conviction in the things that you hope for and you know that they will come to pass because God said so, whether you see it come to pass or not!**

“...for correction, for instruction in righteousness; so that the man of God may be complete, fully equipped for every good work” (vs 16-17). Then he talks a little later here in 1-Thess. 4 about those who want to hear myths; they want to hear stories. They don’t want the Truth of God; they want a ‘religion.’

Most people like a ‘religion’ that is comfortable enough for them so they can get along in the world and, hopefully close enough to God so that they can run to God when they have trouble, and that’s the way too many people in the world do it.

I don’t know how many are interested in baseball or so forth, but I like baseball and I was watching baseball. That’s about the only thing I watch on television is sports; basketball is a bore; football is too brutal—There is a lot more skill in baseball because it’s harder to do; you actually have to think; you actually have to have some skills. Watch some of these players—they get out there and they do their little Catholic, whatever it is, before they get up to bat. I often wonder, how do they justify doing that when they strike out? I mean, if the ‘religion’ is supposed to be so good and it’s going to make you do something really good and God surely is on your side because you did this—because He saw you do this little sign—why don’t you hit a homerun every time? When people have ‘religion’ and they want to hear myths, **and they don’t prove it by the Bible**, then they get themselves in trouble. We’ve all seen the process take place.

Hebrews 10:22: “Let us approach *God* with a true heart, with **full conviction of faith...**” That tells you about how to approach God. In Heb. 11:6 it says you have to believe that God exists—that means you believe everything that He is.

“...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). This is the kind of faith that is going to be necessary for us to survive these end-times.

TRUST

Let’s look at the aspect of trust. Trust is very important even in human relationships. Why do you have good friends and people that you like to do business with? *Because you trust them!* You build up a trust over a period of time. What happens when someone becomes untrustworthy? What happens when you give trust to someone? *and* You give them not only trust... The way I work is this: From the Bible the example is this: you give a mission statement. Here is your job; here is what you are to do, go do it. I trust you to do it; whatever needs to be done, you do.

Isn’t that what Christ does with us? *Yes, He does!* He says, ‘Here is My Word. I’ve given you My Spirit. I’ve given you talents and pounds; go produce!’ What happens when that trust is violated? *We’ve all experienced that!* We’ve all suffered from the one Proverb, which says, ‘Trust no man.’

Let’s see how we are to trust and, in this case, *trust and faith and love* all come together. This tells us not only *who* to trust, but *how* to trust”

Proverbs 3:5: “**Trust in the LORD** with all your heart.... [that’s very akin to, ‘love God with all your heart, mind, soul and being] ...and lean not to your own understanding.”

I can tell you that when I lean to my own understanding, I get myself in trouble. Did that ever happen to you? *Yes, indeed!* What do we learn from that? *Don’t trust in yourself or your own understanding!*

Verse 5: “**Trust in the LORD with all your heart** and lean not to your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths” (vs 5-6). That’s the kind of trust that we need to grow into and develop. This means that:

- we love God
- we trust God
- we have hope in God
- we receive encouragement from God
- we believe God
- we know that what He says is going to happen

—because whatever God has said is going to happen.

Anytime you begin to doubt a little bit just go out and go some place and look at the beautiful creation that God has made. You can see it! You don't need faith or hope to see it. What does that tell us? *That tells us that God's Word is true*, because Jesus said, 'Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away.' That should encourage anyone who has any doubt. By the way, when you are standing there looking at the beautiful creation, do some praying, too, and maybe do a little repenting for not believing God the way that you ought to.

When you tie it all together—*faith, hope, love, trust and conviction*—this is what God wants us to have. We've heard a lot about the Laodiceans—I'm not going to beat up on them; they've been beat up enough—but all they need to do is repent. It's that simple. This is what is missing. People in the world do not have that kind of conviction. Oh, there are some few here and there, but that's why they are easy to be manipulated and you can see that.

This is the kind of trust that we are to do. *If you trust in God, He will bring it to pass*, and remember that *it is God's purpose to have you in His Kingdom*. That's why He has called us!

This is why David's going to be there, Psalm 18:1: "I will love you O LORD, my strength. The LORD is my Rock..." (vs 1-2). You can put a lot of Scriptures behind that. Remember what Jesus said? 'The man who hears My words is likened unto one who builds his house on a Rock,' and He is the Rock!

"...and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my Rock, in Whom I take refuge..." (v 2)—*trust*. This is the kind of trust that God wants us to have.

Verse 30: "As for God, His way is perfect..." That's what we need to understand. Our understanding of God's way may be deficient, but that doesn't mean that God's way is deficient.

"...the Word of the LORD is tried... [that's why you can believe it] ...He is a shield to all of those that take refuge in him... [He will help us and strengthen us] ...for who is God besides the LORD? Or, Who is a Rock except our God? The God Who girds me with strength and makes my way perfect. Who makes my feet like hinds' feet... [that is in the battle] ...and sets me upon my high places. He trains my hands for battle...." (vs 30-34). You can think about that in relationship to spiritual warfare, not only just the warfare that David had.

"...so that my arms can bend a bow of bronze. You have also given me the shield of Your salvation, and Your right hand has held me up, and

your gentleness has made me great" (vs 34-35). All has to do with *faith*; all has to do with what God wants us to do; how He wants us to do it.

Let's look at another example of what Jesus said. Many of us are like Peter. This is when Jesus came walking on the water in the middle of a storm, and Peter looked out there:

Matthew 14:26: "And when the disciples saw Him walking on the sea, they were troubled and said 'It is an apparition!' And they cried out in fear. But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, 'Be of good courage; *it is I*. Do not be afraid.' Then Peter answered Him *and* said, 'Lord, if it is You, bid me to come to You upon the waters.' And He said, 'Come.' And after climbing down from the ship, Peter walked upon the waters to go to Jesus. But when he saw *how* strong the wind *was*, he became afraid; and *as he* was beginning to sink, he cried out, saying, 'Lord, save me!' And immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and took hold of him, and said to him, 'O *you* of little faith, why did you doubt?'" (vs 26-31).

Peter hadn't had time to build up *faith and trust* the way that he needed to. So likewise, we can get a great lesson out of this for all of us—*not to doubt*. God *will* work it out; He *will* make it happen and it will happen His way. Why? *Because He said so!* There is something else to learn out of this. When Peter saw he was in trouble, what did he do? *He called out to God!* What did Christ do? *He rescued him!* So, it puts us in the same category:

- when we have doubts, then *we go to God to help us*
- when we have things that aren't working out right, we pray and *ask God to open the door and give us understanding*
- when we have a very difficult problem to solve, *we ask God to help us*.

Just exactly like the man who brought his son to have the disciples cast the demon out of him and they couldn't do it. When Jesus came, the father said, 'Well, if you can, cast him out.' Jesus said, 'If you believe.' He said, '*Lord, I believe, but help my unbelief.*'

When you get into situations like this, if you have doubts, *go to God*; don't run away. If you need to be strengthened in faith, *go to God*; He will help you. Do like the father of the boy, go to God and say, 'God I believe, but help my unbelief.' I've had to do that many times, especially when you are in a deep, deep trial. As I've said before, all of us have our own little 'valley of death' that we have to walk through.

Trust also involves something else. Remember during the days of Ronald Reagan and Mikhail Gorbachev when ‘perestroika’ was happening—what were the famous words? ‘*Trust, but verify.*’ In dealing with the Word of God, that’s exactly what God wants us to do, just like the Bereans. What happened there? *He came into Berea and Paul stood up in the synagogue and he told them about Jesus Christ* and told them about salvation and the Gospel and everything that he was preaching. So, what did the Bereans do? *They trusted, but verified;* they ‘searched the Scriptures whether these things were so.’ Whenever anyone is a teacher or speaking, that’s what you have to do.

I’ll give you an example: When I was in Goshen, Indiana at the Feast—now where we live, we don’t have a ‘religious channel’—and in the Midwest you’ve got all kinds of religious channels, Midwest and South, and Michael Moore said: ‘What we ought to do is reconfigure Canada and America and we’ll have the United States of Canada and take all the East and West Coast and join that to the United States of Canada and we’ll take the rest of it and call it *Jesus Land.*’ He was serious; he put it on his website.

When I was back there, I happened to pick up on one of these religious channels. I was surfing through and I picked up on Charles Stanley. Now, Charles Stanley does pretty good. He goes down the line with this Scripture and down the line with this Scripture and I’m sitting there saying, ‘Yeah, that’s right. Yes, that’s right.’ Then when he gets to the end, a sudden left turn—‘all you have to do is believe in your heart and Jesus enters your heart and you’re saved.’ *NO!* The Bible says you have to ‘repent and be baptized.’ That’s how you *trust and verify.* That’s what we need to do in the things that we do, so we can have trust.

Paul always reiterated this: he didn’t come in his name, he didn’t baptize in his name, he didn’t preach in his name. ***He always preached in the name of Jesus Christ,*** and every epistle that Paul wrote, he always opens it up that he is an apostle of Christ by the commandment of God and the Lord Jesus Christ and so forth.

1-Timothy 1:11: “According to the Gospel... [which sums up what he said here in the beginning] ...of the glory of the blessed God, with which I was entrusted.”

This means that anyone who is a minister or a teacher has to be *trustworthy* with the Word of God. Too many preachers and teachers take the Word of God and they preach so much of it; they go down the line, and then all of a sudden they have

their own solution. What that does, that violates the trust that God has given, and God even said of the false prophets, even though He didn’t send them. He said, ‘If you would have preached My Word to My people, I would have stood by it.’ That’s how great God’s Word is. Paul said he was *entrusted* with it.

Verse 12: “And I thank Jesus Christ our Lord, Who has empowered me, that He counted me faithful, putting *me* into the ministry, who was previously a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent person; but I obtained mercy because I did *it* ignorantly in unbelief” (vs 12-13).

Just stop and think about the mindset that Paul had after he was converted. He could never ever, ever forget what he did to the brethren before he was converted. That was part of the suffering that he had all of his life, but he also knew that they will be in the Kingdom of God. He also knew that in the end, God would work it out right. But because of that, I think he was more scrupulous about handling the Word of God and teaching the Truth of God. I can’t say than any of the other apostles, but in his own life and the conviction that he writes with, I just get the feeling that he was more scrupulous with the Word of God, to be trustworthy in it, because of what he was before and is reflected by what is written here.

Verse 14: “But the grace of our Lord abounded exceedingly with *the* faith and love that is in Christ Jesus. *This is* a faithful saying, and worthy of full acceptance: that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief” (vs 14-15). That’s how he viewed it. All of these things impact upon *faith*; all of these things have to do with what Heb. 11 is talking about when it says *by faith*.

We will look at some of these examples that are given in Heb. 11. In every case they could not see the end of what was going to happen.

Hebrews 11:4: “By faith...” This is the kind of faith we are talking about: ***loving, trusting, believing.*** When God says something, it’s going to happen! Why? *God cannot lie!* If He speaks it, it is as though it already is! So, when God says you’re going to be in the Kingdom of God, He is viewing it from the point of view *that you will be there;* provided that:

- you trust Him
- believe Him
- live your life His way

Let’s see how this is exercised, Hebrews 11:4: “By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain... [we’re going to learn quite a lesson out of this] ...by which he obtained witness

that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and through it, though he died, *he* is yet speaking.”

Let’s understand something: ***The Bible is called the living Word of God, because every bit of it is true, there is no lie in it!*** The difficulty is our understanding. As one man was talking to me this morning, he knows a person who knows about the Truth and so forth and he said, ‘Well, God just hasn’t opened up their minds.’ That’s sure true.

There is a lot here with Cain and Abel that tells us quite a bit, Genesis 4:3 “It came to pass, that Cain brought to the LORD an offering of the fruit of the ground.”

Does God require that first fruits be given? *Yes, indeed!* Does He require that if, in this case, the crop comes through that there is a tithe? *Of course, He does!* It wouldn’t be wrong to bring something of the fruit of the ground provided that it was *according to God’s instructions.*

Now let’s look at Abel, v 4: “And Abel also brought of the firstlings of his flock *and* of the fat of it. And the LORD had regard unto Abel and his offering.”

(go to the next track)

Heb. 11 is *belief and action based upon that belief.* Let’s look at the offering that Abel brought—the firstlings. Did God command that firstlings be brought? *Yes He did!* And if anyone has any doubt about the things concerning the laws that God gave to Israel, would these not be the same thing? *Sure they would!* If you want to know a little more about that, you can read what God gave to Israel.

Verse 4: “And Abel also brought of the firstlings of his flock *and* of the fat of it. And the LORD had regard unto Abel and his offering.” We’re going to see why. A lot of people look at it this way and ask, ‘Why would God do that? Did God have a favorite?’

Let’s see what Cain did here, v 5: “But He did not have regard unto Cain and his offering. And Cain was extremely angry and his countenance fell. And the LORD said to Cain, ‘Why are you so angry? And why has your countenance fallen? If you do well, shall you not be accepted? But if you do not do well, sin lies at the door. Its desire *is* for you, but you must rule over it!’” (vs 5-7).

If you do what is right—according to the commands that God gave you—won’t you be accepted? That’s what He is saying.

Verse 7: “...But if you do not well... [he didn’t do what was supposed to be done] ...sin lies at the door...” You can go through and think of many examples like this. What do we have here with

Cain? *Cain decided to give God what he decided to give Him rather than what God commanded to give Him!* This is why later on it talks about *the way of Cain* as being a ‘religion.’ What is a ‘religion’ but *a way that man has devised* as a substitute for doing what God has said! You can apply that to any religion: Protestantism, Catholicism, Islam, Orthodox, Buddhism, all of those are *man’s ways* of coming to God! And God didn’t accept it.

What does this show when you do something contrary to what God says to do and you think God ought to accept it? It shows several things. You didn’t believe God, otherwise you would have done what He said. You could apply that to Sunday-keeping. Almost everybody who keeps Sunday knows that the seventh day is the Sabbath, but they keep Sunday. You can apply that to anything else whatever it is.

To give you an example: there was a man who wrote me and he said, ‘I’m writing something up on the history of the Church for some people in the Ukraine; could you please help me out?’ Well, I’ll be glad to help you out. I got his phone number and called him and talked to him and we were talking along and so forth, and so I asked him, ‘Which day do you keep?’ After I let him know that we keep the Sabbath. I said, ‘We keep the Sabbath. What day do you keep?’ *Oh, we keep Sunday.* I said, ‘Well, if you’re going to write a history about the Church and you write about Sunday-keepers, you’re going to miss the real history of the **true** Church of God; you’re going to miss it entirely. Since you’re supposed to be teaching them God’s way, you better be careful that you *really* teach them God’s way.’

That’s just another example of what was done here by Cain. He approached God *his* way! How are we to approach God? **God’s way!** We are to approach God with a repentant heart and a humble attitude.

Let’s look at something else here, v 7: “...But if you do not do well, sin lies at the door...” What is He talking about: *at the door*? Well, I believe He is talking about the entrance into the Garden of Eden; that’s where the altar was, and so Cain is bringing sin to the altar of God by doing *his* way. There is quite a lesson here. It shows that Abel had faith and did what God said, and believed God, and acted upon what God had said. That belief *must be acted upon* and when you do, understanding will come later.

ENOCH

Hebrews 11:5: “By faith... [the faith we’re talking about is the *living, believing, acting* faith]

...Enoch was transported..." A lot of people say that he didn't die, and in every commentary it says he didn't die.

But over here in v 13 Paul wrote, "All these died..." so that means that Enoch died. And we'll look at another Scripture confirming that he did not go to heaven.

Verse 5: "...Enoch was transported so that he would not look upon death, and **was not found** because God had transported him... [What does it mean, *he was not found*?] ...for before his departure it was testified of him that **he pleased** God."

That says an awful lot. How many people in the Bible does it say that they **pleased** God? *The most important one is Christ!* 'This is My beloved Son in Whom I am well pleased' or *well delighted* or *in Whom I have delight*.

Genesis 5:21: "And Enoch lived sixty-five years and begat Methuselah. And **Enoch walked with God...**" (vs 21-22). How can people walk with God unless they agree?

Let's understand something that's very profound and very important to realize: Most people in the world view those who believe God and follow God *as weak*, because they're depending on God. But the exact opposite is true. When you rely on God, and walk with God, and do the things that please Him, *that is a sign of strength*. That is a profound thing from this point of view: you are fulfilling your purpose in life as never before, because God made us in His image so that we would *become like He is!* When we walk with God:

- we agree with God
- we trust God
- we love God
- we have *faith* in God

This is what it's talking about. Of all in the Old Testament it doesn't even say this of David, though it says that 'He was a man after My own heart.'

Verse 22: "And Enoch walked with God three hundred years after he begat Methuselah.... [so he continued all the way] ...And he begat sons and daughters. And all the days of Enoch were three hundred and sixty-five years. And Enoch walked with God, and then he *was not*..." (vs 22-24).

Now you have a problem. If Enoch still lives, then he has more days. Even here is an indication that he died.

"...and he *was not*; for God took him" (v 24). Couldn't find him! Apparently what happened was: the sinners were so violent against Enoch that God had to intervene and rescue him, transport him

to another place so they couldn't kill him.

Why don't you do this, if you want an additional study about walking:

- walking in God's way
- walking in the Truth
- walking in love
- walking in faith

—all of that shows how we are to live.

Let's see how we tie this together with *faith*, 1-John 3:18 "My little children, we should not love in word, nor with *our* tongues; rather, *we should love* in deed and in Truth." That applies not only to our neighbors, but that also applies to God.

Verse 19: "And in this way we know that we are of the Truth, and shall assure our hearts before Him... [this is also what we might describe as a way of also building conviction] ...that if our hearts condemn us, God is greater than our hearts..." (vs 19-20).

What is he talking about here? *When you sin or you do something wrong and your heart condemns you!* What was the matter with Cain's offering? *When he found out he didn't do right, his heart didn't condemn him! He didn't repent!* He got jealous of his brother Abel and went out and murdered him! Again, taking things *into his own hands*.

So, if we sin—John talks about there is 'a sin not unto death—and sins not unto death are those things that we experience. If you come along and you sin and you feel bad and your heart condemns you, what is that? *That is your conscience and God's Spirit leading you so you can repent!* That's what God wants us to do. That's all a part of our living and being as a human being and being Christians.

"...God is greater than our hearts, and knows all things" (v 20). If you've sinned, God already knows it. Lots of times I've done it, you've done it, you sin and you think, 'Oh well, I'll go pray and repent when I get right.' Well, the only way to get right is to repent!

Verse 21: "Beloved, if our hearts do not condemn us, *then* we have **confidence** toward God.... [which is another aspect of faith] ...And whatever we may ask we receive from Him because we keep His commandments and practice those things that are pleasing in His sight" (vs 21-22). God wants us to do the things that are pleasing to Him, and the example of Enoch tells us.

All of us sin because of the human nature that we have and part of the operation of God's Spirit through the Holy Spirit and the washing of the

water by the Word cleans our minds up. We sin because we give into a temptation, and sometimes we really willingly give into a temptation though it's not willful rebellion. Let's put it this way: *willful, deliberate, premeditated rebellion can be more like the unpardonable sin*. All the other sins are able to be forgiven upon repentance. The example of David and what he did and the examples of others show us that. When David did his thing with Bathsheba, he knew what he was doing, but he was thinking he could work it out. It got him into trouble, deep, *deep*, *deep* trouble, but he did repent.

It's not a matter of all people sin, therefore, no use trying to overcome sin, but it's a matter that all people sin because they have human nature and have the *law of sin and death* in them so God has provided a way out of that sin. That's what we're talking about here, the process of coming out of that sin. {note sermon in this series: Hebrews #29 and that covers the *unpardonable sin*.} It is a very profound and deliberate action. Notice we keep His commandments. If you believe God, you will keep His commandments won't you? *Yes!*

Verse 22: "...and practice those things that are pleasing in His sight. 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, and He in him... [that ties right back in to John 15] ...and by this we know that He is dwelling in us: by the Spirit which He has given to us" (vs 22-24).

That ties it all together. When we do the things that please God—in our attitude; and that encompasses everything that we do—that puts us in a relationship with God that is very *deep and unsinkable, or unmovable!*

Even when you look at the seven churches in Rev. 2 & 3, they all had their troubles and difficulties. Don't view it from the point of view that you are only acceptable with God when you're perfect, because that will never be. You can be perfect in faith and love and hope and that makes you perfect before God in Spirit and in attitude, but as long as we're in the flesh, we can never be perfect.

Enoch: How do we know that he wasn't taken to heaven? How do we know that he is not there? Here is a parenthetical statement that John wrote in the Gospel of John when he finished canonizing the New Testament.

John 3:13: "And no one has ascended into heaven, except He Who came down from heaven, *even* the Son of man, Who is in heaven"—showing that that's where He was when it was written. That

statement is true—no one has ascended into heaven, Enoch hasn't ascended into heaven! Elijah hasn't ascended into heaven! The virgin Mary was not bodily assumed into heaven! None of the saints are there; they're still in their graves, and their statues are idols around St. Peter's Basilica. ***No one has ascended!*** That's why—this is another verification—that when Paul wrote, 'All these died in faith not having received the promises...' it verifies the fact that Enoch died!

Why do the religions in the world teach that he went to heaven? *Because they don't believe in the resurrection!* They believe in going to heaven. If they can say that Enoch went to heaven—though they can't prove it—then that means we'll go to heaven. That's the logic that follows along with it. Enoch did not go there.

NOAH

Let's look at Noah. Isn't it interesting that of those before the Flood, Paul only wrote about Abel and Enoch and Noah.

Hebrews 11:6: "Now, without faith *it is impossible to please God...*" That tells you *how* you can please God. If you are doing the things that please God, what are you doing? *You're doing them by faith!* You're:

- *walking* by faith
- *believing* in hope
- *living* in love

Verse 6: "...For it is mandatory..." That's what it is in the Greek, it's absolutely *required, necessary*.

"...for the one who comes to God to believe that He exists..." (v 6). Not only that He is a being Who exists, but that He is everything that His existence shows that He is:

- He is all-powerful
- He is all-knowing
- God is love
- God is merciful
- God is kind
- God is forgiving

—but to the enemies and the wicked, He brings His wrath and His vengeance and His sword. You have to believe everything that God is.

Verse 6: "...and *that* He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him." Note: '*seek and you shall find; knock and it shall be opened*' ***if*** you *diligently seek Him*.

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**.” That was quite an act that Noah did.

They know scientifically as they have examined the genes, if you watch the History Channel or Discovery Channel, they were explaining about mitochondria genes. Mitochondria genes are those that every human being receives from his or her mother. They have been able to demonstrate that there came a time in history when the mitochondria genes were restricted down to a very narrow inheritance. Then after that they came out again.

I looked at that and I thought: doesn't that tell us about the Flood? Doesn't that tell us here God created Adam and Eve and then we had all the human beings before the Flood? Then all of a sudden the whole inheritance of mankind comes down to Shem, Ham, and Japheth and their wives. The mitochondria genes were restricted down. Quite something! Noah lived in a time when it was hard to have faith. Noah was the only one who believed God! You think you are alone! Think how rare that is.

Genesis 6:5: “And the LORD saw that the wickedness of man *was* great on the earth, and every imagination of the thoughts of his heart *was* only **evil continually**.... [that's how it is today] ...And the LORD repented that He had made man on the earth, and He *was* grieved in His heart” (vs 5-6)—because of all the evil and hatred and killing and violence that was going on.

Verse 7: “And the LORD said, ‘I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth, both man and beast, and the crawling thing, and the fowl of the air; for I repent that I have made them.’ **But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD**.... [we are going to find something about Noah that's important] ...These *are* the generations of Noah. Noah was a righteous man and **perfect in his generations, for Noah walked with God**” (vs 7-9).

“...perfect in his generations...” undoubtedly means his *genealogy*, because a lot was going on, we don't know exactly everything, but I'll tell you this: just stay tuned to what's going on in the world today because that is what was going on then. It says, ‘As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be in the days of the coming of the Son of Man’ so, we know that that's exactly what it was like, exactly what we have today here.

He walked with God! That was also said of Enoch. **He walked with God!** What did he have to do? *He had to build an ark!* With that ark God condemned the world. Since they didn't have rain

like we have it today, they didn't believe. Can you imagine all the ridicule that Noah went through in building the ark? Well, it did take place; there was a flood; it did cover the earth, and the Word of God is proved true.

Remember the first blow-up of Mt. St. Helens? They went in and did a lot of scientific discovery. What did they discover? *A lot of things*, and in particularly concerning geological strata and so forth. They discovered that the strata was laid down one on top of another almost instantly. The scientists would come along and they would believe in their evolution and geology and they would see a petrified tree standing straight up with many different strata that it's buried in and they say, ‘Oh, that took thousands of years.’

Well, that was undone up here in Mt. St. Helens because all of the ice and the glacier melted when the thing blew up and here came all the water and all the mud and all the muck and it built the strata, and there were trees standing up going through many of the strata that was there, and they found out that that kind of thing happens instantly! So, there is a whole lot more that they are learning concerning the true facts which go against all of the things that are taught in the schools about geology and paleontology and all of this sort of thing. By the way, they still have not found the ‘missing link’—because there isn't any.

Noah had to build the ark and he didn't know when the Flood was going to be. One day when it was done, God put them in there and He broke open the deeps and the fountains of heaven gave forth, covered the earth with a flood, and it covered the tops of the mountains. It did happen, and he moved with action! I have seen all four things of Ron Wyatt:

1. Noah's Ark—(I think he did fine)

The remains of the ark, which are right there on a saddle of a valley in the mountains of Ararat. Not on top, because if you have something floating along, it's not going to settle down on something that is not flat it's going to settle down in an area where it can rest down more in a flat area. The metal that was used in that, they still don't know what kind of metal it is. The government of Turkey now has a place where you can go view it.

2. Sodom and Gomorrah (and I think he has that one right)

It shows the actual city of Sodom and Gomorrah is nothing but dust and ashes of rock. Down in the valley they have little globules of pure sulfur. It showed on the video how they took this sulfur—and it's very intense heat that comes from it—and they put it on a spoon and lit it and it burned its way right

through the spoon! So I believe those two things are right. The other two things:

3. Crossing of the Red Sea *is not right*.
4. Ark of the Covenant *is not right*.

FAITH & HOPE

Let's talk about *faith and hope* working together, Romans 8:24: "For by hope we were saved; but hope that is seen is not hope; for why would anyone still be hoping for what he sees?"

That's why faith is so important because *it's faith that gives us the assurance of the things that are hoped for and the conviction of things not yet seen!* When Noah built the ark, he was basing it upon what God told him to do. When the Flood came, there was no longer any waiting for the Flood. What he was hoping for was for the end of it to come. When it came and the ark rested down and they were able to eventually get out of the ark, they didn't hope they would get through the Flood any longer. *They were already there!*

So likewise in our salvation and the things that we are looking to, we are *hoping and trusting* in God, *in faith*, and acting upon that in such a way that it will come to pass. When it comes to pass, then we have the real thing. When the resurrection takes place, there is no more hope of the resurrection for us; we will have made it. Today, we have *the hope of the resurrection*. Today, we have *the hope of God's intervention*. That's why we must have *faith and action* the way that it is listed out here in Heb. 11.

Verse 25: "But if we hope for what we do not see, we ourselves wait for it with patience. Now, in the same way also, the Spirit is conjointly helping our weaknesses because we do not fully understand what we should pray for, according as it is necessary, but the Spirit itself makes intercession for us with groanings that cannot be expressed *by us*." (vs 25-26).

God knows that. God is searching our hearts and our minds and with His Spirit is leading us. God's Spirit communicates to God the real truth of our heart and the intense desire of our feelings that we have toward God, and filters out all the rest.

Someone asked me one time, 'Well I was praying and I all of a sudden remembered that I left the water running in the sink. So, I had to get up and go turn off the water. Does God bother about things like this?' I said, 'Well, maybe God was the One Who revealed to you that you left the water on while you were praying.' Who knows, but I can tell you this: It filters out everything of our carnality that doesn't need to go to God; that's why it expresses it in this way.

Verse 27: "And the One Who searches the hearts comprehends what the strivings of the Spirit *are* because it makes intercession for *the* saints according to *the will of God*."

Here is the ultimate of faith, v 28: "And we know that all things work together for good..." *All things*, it doesn't say some of the things, part of the things, the important things.

"...**all things** work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to *His* purpose" (v 28).

I think with that, we can look at all the trials and all the difficulties that we go through and know it's all going to work for good as long as we:

- love God
- trust God
- have faith in God
- act upon that faith
- believe in God
- walk in His way

That's the kind of faith we are dealing with all the way through Heb. 11.

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*

Scriptural References:

- 1) Hebrews 1:1
- 2) Romans 15:4-5, 13
- 3) Hebrews 11:1
- 4) James 1:1-8
- 5) 1 Thessalonians 1:2-5
- 6) 2 Timothy 3:15-17
- 7) Hebrews 10:22-23
- 8) Proverbs 3:5-6
- 9) Psalm 18:1-2, 30-35
- 10) Matthew 14:26-31
- 11) 1 Timothy 1:11-15
- 12) Hebrews 11:4
- 13) Genesis 4:3-7
- 14) Hebrews 11:5, 13, 5
- 15) Genesis 5:21-24
- 16) 1 John 3:18-24
- 17) John 3:13
- 18) Hebrews 11:6-7
- 19) Genesis 6:5-9
- 20) Romans 8:24-28

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Psalm 51
- 1 Thessalonians 4
- John 15
- Revelation 2; 3

Also referenced: Sermon:

Unpardonable Sin (Hebrews Series #29)

FRC/jea
Transcribed: 08/17/09 Formatted/Corrected: bo—January/2017

Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews XXXIV “By Faith...”

(Chapter 11)

Fred R. Coulter

In chapter eleven of Hebrews it says “**By faith...**” 18 times. This faith is *faith in action*, or an *active obedience* to the spoken Word of God. Of course, all the Word of God has been spoken and then later recorded. We covered where Jesus talked about ‘Moses accuses you,’ showing that it is living Scripture, that it is the recorded voice of God and if God were here on earth in the form of Jesus Christ, what would He tell you? *The same thing we have recorded here in the Bible!*

This kind of faith also expects the fulfillment of the promises with absolute confidence. No doubt! No doubt whatsoever! This kind of faith expects the fulfillment of God’s promises with absolute confidence. Let’s see how important faith is.

Rev. 14:12 tells us about faith. It tells us about the active kind of faith that God wants us to have:

Revelation 14:12: “Here is *the patience* of the saints...” That could also be translated *endurance*, because it says in Matt. 24, ‘the one who endures to the end, that one shall be saved.’

“...here *are* the ones who keep the commandments of God and **the faith of Jesus**” (v 12). Faith is not an emotional, empty thing that you just believe in your mind as some sort of metaphysical thing that makes you feel better. This kind of faith is belief and trust in God, and it leads to obeying God from the heart.

There are two kinds of obedience. There’s the obedience, which is not the kind of obedience that God really wants, but He will accept it instead of disobedience, which is this: ‘Well, if God says so, I’ll do it.’ So, it’s kind of *grudgingly*! ‘God says so. I don’t understand it, but I’ll do it.’

The kind of faith and obedience that we find in the New Testament is based upon loving God *with a willing heart and a desire to please* God. That comes from God’s Spirit. That’s why it says “**...the faith of Jesus.**” In the Greek this is in the genitive case, which means: *Jesus’ faith* or it could also be *faith from Jesus*. The faith of God—which we’re talking about here—is a gift of the Holy Spirit.

We’re to grow in faith and there are times when we have more faith, and there are times when

we have more belief—all of those things. Being subject to the difficulties of human nature, those things sometimes come and go. But always remember that if you have some doubt or unbelief never say, ‘Oh, I shouldn’t have any doubt’ and just kind of scoot it out of your mind. *NO!* Admit to God:

- God, I have doubts
- God, help my unbelief
- God, help me to believe
- God, add Your Spirit to me that I can believe

Then as you practice this kind of faith and obedience, *God will give you the conviction of it!* This is what he’s really talking about.

In Heb. 11 Paul is preparing them for the coming destruction of the temple and Jerusalem. He’s preparing them for difficult days that lie ahead. Let me give a little historical background on the book of Hebrews. It was written by Paul when he was in prison in Rome. We know that James, the brother of Jesus, was martyred during Unleavened Bread in 62 A.D. This had to have been written at the beginning of 61 A.D. and sent out to the churches in Judea and then later copies sent out to all churches, because it doesn’t mention the death of James.

If it were written decades later, after the destruction of Jerusalem and so forth—and this is what many scholars cannot figure out—why does it talk about these things in the present tense instead of the past tense? Why does it speak about these things that are coming, rather than having been fulfilled? That’s the only time that this could have been written to prepare them for the worst days to come. We also need to understand that we have some pretty tough days coming ahead of us—*they’re coming!*

Remember when I gave the sermon on *The Mark of the Beast is Here?* I got letters and then everybody sort of calmed down. But in the meantime, what are they doing? *Building!* Now they are going to pass a law that is going to identify all food items with an RFID—from the point of manufacturer to the trash. Of course, to protect us from terrorism! Yes, they’re going to protect us from terrorism and make a terror out of our lives. This has been in the works for a long time.

Let me just say this: There are secret black budgets within the government that very few people know about, which are used to fund research for this kind of thing. You need to understand that. You don't have to be a 'conspiracy nut'; you don't have to be a 'conspiracy buff'; you don't have to be way out on the fringe to know that that is so. It's going to come! All the information is out there.

Let's understand something that's important: Here's a principle that God works with. He lets the information be known through many different sources. He expects us, *in faith*, to act upon that so that we can know. We don't have to be carried away and become all 'bug-eyed'; but be alert! Be aware!

I got one of these privacy notifications: If you don't answer back they can use your name and address and everything to send it to whomever they want. I wrote back: Do not use my name on any list, nor sell to anyone. If I order something on the phone and they say: This may be recorded for quality control. I've gotten in the habit of asking them to please not record anything, just take my order.

We're going to see how much that Paul talks about Abraham. Abraham is referred to 49 times in the New Testament, which is 7 times 7. You can go back and listen to the sermons that I've done on *The Covenants of Abraham* and so forth. It jumps from v 7 with Noah to v 8 with Abraham. The setting of Abraham was this: he lived in Ur of Chaldees, which was filled with total idolatry. God called him out of that. In other words, Abraham came out of Babylon. You can tie a lot of these things together with other Scriptures. Where does it say, 'Come out of her, My people' referring to Babylon? *Rev. 18!* Well, Abraham did the same thing.

God calls us and we don't know where—except we'll be in the Kingdom of God—the trail is going to lead between the time we're called and the time that Christ returns or we die and are put in the grave. We *walk in faith*, and that's what this is all about. Go back and read in Gen. 12 that when God called him, God said, 'I want you to leave your father's house and your land and I want you to go into a land that I will tell you of. I will bless you, and *in you* shall all the nations of the earth be blessed. I will bless those that bless you; I will curse those that curse you.' You can see that coming right down the line.

Hebrews 11:8: “**By faith Abraham**, being called *of God*...” A special calling; the same with us, God calls us. Why do you understand certain things that no one else close to you understands? What happened to your heart and mind? *God did something! Yes, He did! He called you*, just like He

did Abraham.

“...to go out into the place which he would later receive for an inheritance, obeyed and went, **not knowing where he was going**.... [likewise with us] ...**By faith he sojourned in the land of promise**... [the very land that he was to inherit he was]: ...like a foreigner...” (vs 8-9)—a sojourner; very much like us today. We're going to inherit the world with Abraham. We're going to rule the world under Christ. *Yes, we are; same thing!* You can see many parallels.

“...dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob...” (v 9). If the chronology that we developed in following down the genealogies, Abraham lived to see Jacob at two-years-old before he (Abraham) died.

“...the joint heirs of the same promise” (v 9). We'll look at some things concerning the things that are here.

2-Sam. 7 is the account where David wanted to build a house for God. Always remember that human beings would like to do great things for God and receive all the credit. Remember Job! This was not out of vanity that David did this. I'm sure it was out of a good and a right heart.

2-Samuel 7:1: “And it came to pass when the king dwelt in his house, and when the LORD had given him rest round about from all his enemies, the king said to Nathan the prophet...” (vs 1-2).

Let's understand the setting here: We have Nathan the prophet and we have Asaph the priest. They tended to the Ark of the Covenant that was in a special tent in a special section of David's house. It was not yet united with the tabernacle or the temple. That came later when Solomon built the temple.

Here David is praying to God right before the Ark of the Covenant that's behind this tent and he “...said to Nathan the prophet, ‘See now, I dwell in a house of cedar, but the Ark of God dwells within curtains.’.... [he could look over there and see it] ...Then Nathan said to the king, ‘Go, do all that *is* in your heart, for the LORD *is* with you.’ And it came to pass that night the Word of the LORD came to Nathan saying, ‘Go and tell My servant David, “Thus says the LORD, ‘Shall you build Me a house for My dwelling? For I have not dwelt in a house since the day that I brought up the children out of Egypt until this day, but have walked in a tent, and in a tabernacle’”’” (vs 2-6).

Note this: Anyone who builds a temple gets in trouble! Why? *Because they put something between themselves and God!* God is not interested

in great things that you can do for Him. What great thing can you do for God? I mean, *He created the universe, and all that there is!*

By the way, one of the leading atheists had to admit that the universe was created by a great intelligence with purpose, ‘but I can’t tell you whether that’s God or not.’ I saw that on the news and I said, ‘Boy, you’ve got to reserve that little part for yourself—don’t you?’ At least it’s a step in the right direction.

Isaiah 66:1 “Thus says the LORD, ‘The heaven *is* My throne, and the earth *is* My footstool. Where, then, *is* the house that you build for Me? And where *is* the place of My rest? For all these things My hand has made, and these things came to be,’ says the LORD....” (vs 1-2). What are you going to build it with? *What God has already created!*

This is the most important thing; here is the greatest building of God and this is why when we’re talking about faith and we’re talking about temporarily dwelling on this earth as sojourners and strangers—which we are. The more converted you become and the more that you understand the Word of God, the more alien the world becomes. The world and God’s Way are now departing from each other at a very frightening speed.

Here’s the greatest thing, v 2: “...‘But to this one I will look, to him who is of a poor and contrite spirit and who trembles at My Word.’” What is greater than a building?

- a converted heart
- a willing attitude
- walking in faith

That’s what’s greater, and that’s what God wants.

You know the rest of the story. God said, ‘All right, David, I’m going to do something for you.’ This must have been before the sin with Bathsheba. ‘I’m going to build a house for you, and I’m going to establish your throne forever.’ What does it say of Jesus? *That He shall sit on His forefather’s throne—David’s throne—forever!* David was humbled at that and so forth.

Here’s another lesson: Was David inspired when he said this? *Yes!* Was he humbled when God gave the answer through Nathan? *Yes!* ‘I’m not going to let you build the house, but I’m going to let your son build the house, because you’re a bloody man, and all the wars that you’ve committed and so forth.’ How long was it before he entrapped himself with Bathsheba and all the things that went wrong there? We’ll also find this is also very similar in our lives. I’ve experienced it and you’ve experienced it.

When you’ve been very close to God and you’ve been very uplifted and God has inspired you, shortly after that something’s going to come on when you just fall right on your face, *spiritually*. That’s just God letting you know that you need God all the time, and that we still have to grow and change and overcome.

Let’s understand something, too, about tabernacling. Let’s come to John, the first chapter. Just as Abraham, Isaac and Jacob dwelled in tents and tabernacles, so likewise God gave up His glory, His power and most of His Divinity to come to this earth as a man to live a perfect life and to be the perfect sacrifice for the forgiveness of sins. In other words, the Creator Who made everything that there is and subjected man to sin, put himself into the same position with the responsibility of never sinning.

John 1:14: “And the Word became flesh and tabernacled among us... [He temporarily dwelt with man; quite a wonderful and awesome thing] ...(and we ourselves beheld His glory, *the* glory as of *the* only begotten with *the* Father), **full of grace and Truth.**”

This means that the way that you always stay faithful is to remain within the grace of God, that we ‘stand in this grace’ (Rom. 5). Everything comes from God to us:

- His love
- His mercy
- His Spirit
- His goodness
- His Word

As Paul wrote later, *we have nothing we didn’t receive!* It all comes from God. ***And Truth:*** Our lives are dedicated to always seeking the Truth. and that is how we discern the right from the wrong, the good from the evil and the various shades of half-truths and things that people give. As a church we are to be *seekers of Truth always!* The ministers and teachers are to always seek the Truth and preach the Truth and to do so in love, so that all the brethren can grow into the fullness of Christ. That’s the whole purpose!

Just like when men build a temple they put something between them and God. Didn’t Solomon do that? Everything went well; it was dedicated; God put His presence in there and then his wives led Him astray. You’ve got the temple over here across the valley over here on this side became the Mount of Abominations where he built temples and incense altars to his thousand concubines and 300 wives and all their gods. He even went after other gods.

Did Jeroboam build a temple? *Yes!* He built one in Dan and one in Bethel and put a golden calf in each one. Which, by the way, the fifteenth day of the eighth month is Halloween. {note book: *Occult Holidays or God's Holy Days—Which?*} Today we are witnessing an attack on Christmas. Though Christmas does not celebrate the actual birthday of Christ, what they are after is the name ‘Christ’ in Christmas. That’s ‘religious’! ‘Let’s have a winter solstice.’ Guess what? *That’s religious, too—pagan religion!* It’s their hatred for Christ. Amazing how these things go.

Why did they live in these tabernacles and tents? Why couldn’t God just have worked with Abraham in Ur of the Chaldees? *and* Abraham would somehow survive in this idolatress place and still be converted all that sort of thing? *Well, God had greater plans!*

I mean, look what happened when Lot went down to Sodom! He went down there because the grass is green and it’s nice and flat and it’s a lovely place to live. There are a lot of good things that you can buy at the bazaars and all this sort of thing, and it’s easy living. What happened? *When the homosexual population increased and increased he could hardly bear living there!* He was frustrated everyday. Finally, it came time for him to leave. There were not even ten righteous people, even in his own family! You have himself, his wife, and two daughters—and the wife wasn’t really convinced.

This is why He called Abraham out of Ur of Chaldees, because He was going to work directly with Abraham through his entire life to prepare the way for three things:

1. for the coming children of Israel
2. the spiritual children of Israel to be born into the Kingdom of God
3. to prepare the way for Christ to come

Hebrews 11:10: “For he was waiting for the city with *the* foundations of which God is *the* Architect and Builder.”

What city on earth could even be compared to New Jerusalem? *Couldn’t be!* (read Rev. 21-22). It wasn’t quite as desert as it is now. It was plush and green and all that sort of thing. What we see now, today, is the result of sin and insanity. Take a look at the big cities that we have in the world today. What are they? *A cesspool of crime and filth and murder!* I’d like to send an e-mail to Fox News and say: ‘Why don’t you add one feature to the beginning of every Monday night broadcast. List every murder and every rape that occurs in the United States every week.

- What city in the world would you like to live in?
- What city in the world has righteousness dwelling in it?

Not one! Not even Jerusalem where God put His name! That’s why they were looking for the city that was coming from God, that God was going to build.

Always remember this, John 14:1: “**Let not your heart be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in Me. In My Father’s house are many dwelling places; if it were otherwise, I would have told you. I am going to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; so that where I am, you may be also**” (vs 1-3).

That’s our promise. That’s a fulfillment of this promise that was given and Abraham was the one who had to start it. Now then, in order to fulfill the promise of God, then God did the impossible. He called Abraham when he was 75-years-old and his wife Sarah was 65. Then after the promises given to him and their futile attempt to help God fulfill His prophecies through Hagar and the Ishmaelites occurred. There’s a lesson there: ***Do not try and help God fulfill His promises!*** He’s perfectly capable of doing them Himself.

Has it been trouble for the world ever since? *No question about it! Without a doubt!* But there had to be the son, so God made sure, absolutely sure, that there was no way that they could have any children unless God performed a miracle to make it happen. So, He waited until Abraham was 99-years-old and Sarah was 89. You go search all the records today of births and you will not find the age of the mother or the father at that age—would you? *No!*

Hebrews 10:11: “**By faith also Sarah** herself received power to conceive seed... [I’m not going back through the whole history of Abraham] ...and gave birth *when she was well* beyond the childbearing age because she esteemed Him faithful Who had personally promised *her a son.*” Even though she did laugh!

Remember what happened? *God came with the two angels and said, ‘At the set time next year, you’re going to bear a son.’* She laughed. God said, ‘Why did you laugh?’ She said, ‘I didn’t laugh.’ He said, ‘Nevertheless, you will have child, but you did laugh.’ God had to do the impossible thing. When it came time for Jesus to be born, He did another impossible thing—a *greater impossible thing!*

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.” Quite an amazing thing! This gives us the understanding of what God wants us to have.

Heb. 6 shows us where the promises are. This shows where the promises were given. Remember that “**by faith**” means *believing with full expectation and complete confidence that what God has said, He will do!* Heb. 11 shows the beginning of the fulfillment of those promises with Isaac being born.

Hebrews 6:11: “But we earnestly desire that every one of you be demonstrating the same diligence, unto the full assurance of the hope until the end; so that you do not become lazy, but *that you be* imitators of those who through faith and steadfast endurance inherit the promises. For God, after promising Abraham, swore by Himself, since He could swear by none greater, saying, ‘Surely in blessing I will bless you, and in multiplying I will multiply you.’ Now, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise” (vs 11-15).

Why is all of this given? This is why men like to say that this is all a bunch of myths, so you can discount the promises of God.

Verse 16: “For indeed, men swear by the greater, and confirmation by an oath *puts* an end to all disputes between them. In this *way* God, desiring more abundantly to show the heirs of the promise the unchangeable nature of His own purpose, confirmed *it* by an oath” (vs 16-17).

Let’s understand something profound with God, as we live our lives and come across difficulties and challenges and problems and perplexities and frustrations, and so forth. Because we’re confronted with these things, does not change the promises of God one iota! Remember that!

So, if you’re just looking at the physical circumstances, remember that *God can change the physical circumstances*. Whatever the trial; whatever the difficulty; whatever comes along remember this:

- God loves you!
- God has called you!
- God is dealing with you!
- Christ is dwelling in you!

His plan and purpose for your life is going to be fulfilled! *The end result will be a glorious resurrection!* Always keep that in mind. When you do, it will help you go through the difficulties and give you wisdom and understanding as you going

through them so you can learn the lesson. *The promises of God will stand firm!*

Verse 18: “So that by two immutable things...” *Unchangeable!* That’s why it’s so damnable that people come along and say, ‘You know, we need to adjust the Word of God to our New Age.’ *NO! You need to adjust your life to the Word of God in this age!* There’s a big flap about this man who has wanted to show about God and the founding fathers and the beginning documents for the United States and all of that. That’s all well and good, but the problem is that they have not gotten to the heart of the question. If they think that they’re coming after God in public acknowledgement in government, they need to be exposing what they have been doing to the Word of God to corrupt it in their translations to lead people astray even worse! Which is a greater sin!

Verse 18: “So by two immutable... [unchanging] ...things, **in which it was impossible for God to lie...**”

The way that we claim the promises of God is this: *God* has promised it and you might go through the Bible and do a Bible study: What are the promises of God? Just go through and read and study any part of the Bible, because they’re all promises of God. They cannot fail! We may be weak in faith—which we are; we may have weakness of human nature—which we do; we claim the promises of God because *God has said He will keep and fulfill His promises for us*.

If we claim the promises, knowing that it’s not because we’re righteous or any good thing that we have, that we lay it all at the doorstep of God and ask Him to fulfill the promises. *He will!* Sometimes instantly, sometimes step-by-step, sometimes later on; sometimes the answer to the prayer has been in the works for years, and then one day DING!—like a light has been turned on—you understand and you can look back with perfect 20/20 hindsight and see God intervening to fulfill His promise. That’s how we need to live our lives with God. Just exactly like they did here. That’s something!

“...in which *it was impossible for God to lie*, we who have fled for refuge might have strong encouragement **to lay hold on the hope** that has been set before us” (v 18).

We’re to believe in *hope*! Remember: *Walk in faith, believe in hope and live in love!* If there’s any one thing that we can get ingrained in our mind, let’s see if we can do that.

(go to the next track)

The main doctrinal books of Paul are all based on Abraham: Romans, Galatians and Hebrews. Let's see where Paul makes it very, very clear. By the way, as he brings this out in the book of Romans it's very important for us to understand that everything we do is based upon what God did with Abraham—*everything!* And that relates directly to Christ. That's why there are so many examples of it given for us.

Romans 4:16: “For this reason *it is* of faith, in order that *it might be* by grace, to the end that the promise might be certain to all the seed...”—because he talked about the difference between when he was uncircumcised and he received the blessing and promise and then afterward he was circumcised.

“...—not to the one who is of the law only, but also to the one who is of *the* faith of Abraham, who is *the* father of us all” (v 16).

Of course, *the faith of Abraham is very profound because it's based upon obeying God's voice, keeping His commandments, laws, statutes and judgments!* It's based upon *obeying the voice of God* when He said, ‘Take your only beloved son Isaac and offer him for a sacrifice on one of the mountains of Moriah that I will show you.’ Isaac had to have a certain amount of faith, too. He talks about that in Heb. 11.

Verse 17: “(Exactly as it is written: ‘I have made you a father of many nations.’)... [That's profound!] ...before God in Whom he believed, Who gives life to the dead, and calls the things that are not as though they are... [that's part of *faith and hope*] ...and who against hope believed in hope, in order that he might become a father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, ‘So shall your seed be’” (vs 17-18).

Today we have a greater glimpse of what it is like that ‘your seed shall be as the stars of heaven.’ We can see some of the fantastic movies that they have showing the glory of God with the galaxies and stars and everything—it's just breathtaking! The earth is special! Man can see the glory of God in the heavens! *The faith of Abraham* does not mean Abraham's faith but *faith like Abraham*.

Verse 19: “And he, not being weak in the faith, considered not his own body, already having become dead, being about one hundred years old, nor *did he consider* the deadness of Sarah's womb; and **he did not doubt the promise of God through unbelief**... [he had to wait a long time for it, but he still didn't doubt] ...rather, he was strengthened in

the faith, giving glory to God; for he was fully persuaded that what He has promised, He is also able to do” (vs 19-21). This is where we need to come to in faith, hope, love and belief! That's the ultimate we need to grow into.

Let's see some more about this promise, not only of Isaac and of Christ, but also:

Verse 13: “For the promise to Abraham, or to his seed, **that he should be heir of the world...**” Go back and examine the promises given to Abraham. It started out: ‘You sojourn in this land which I will show you’—the land of Canaan. It started there. Later it came to Jacob and it was to be the north, to the west, to the east and to the south. Then you have the two sons of Joseph—Ephraim and Manasseh—and it's expanded even more. This tells us that it's the world! “**...heir of the world...**”

Let's expand upon this a little bit more. This is why God wants us to have this kind of faith and belief, because God is going to do something great for each one of us. Not in this life for notoriety! Not in this life so we can gloat to other people and show off! But at the resurrection so we can be raised from the dead to shine as the stars of heaven forever and ever! That's what Jesus said, and that's why it talks about that ‘your seed shall be as the stars of heaven.’

In other words so great and mammoth and fantastic that the human mind just cannot fully grasp it. We can appreciate, by looking out into the heavens and seeing the stars, but all we see is a little twinkle through the smog. We can look at movies and the Hubble photographs and see something fantastic, but that's the best we can understand it.

God has something so great for us. That's why being called to receive the Spirit of God, to receive the promises of God, to grow in grace and knowledge and overcoming are so great. There's some suffering that comes with it.

Romans 8:14: “For as many as are led by *the* Spirit of God, these are *the* sons of God. Now, you have not received a spirit of bondage again unto fear, but you have received *the* Spirit of sonship, whereby we call out, ‘Abba, Father.’ The Spirit itself bears witness conjointly with our own spirit, *testifying* that we are *the* children of God. Now, if *we are* children, *we are* also heirs—truly, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ—if indeed we suffer together with Him, so that we may also be glorified together with Him” (vs 14-17).

No one likes to be told that they're going to suffer, they're going to have trials; but that's what the Bible tells us. While we are not suffering, rejoice! But when suffering does come, trust in God

and rejoice in that trust, though the physical circumstances may be difficult.

Verse 18: “For I reckon that the sufferings of the present time *are* not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us.”

Heb. 1 is where we started this series; this is why Paul started it out this way. Most of the book of Hebrews is a written sermon, which Paul probably gave over and over again. That will account for the reason that it is one of the most elevated writings of the Apostle Paul and probably because he dictated it to Luke, and Luke was the one who—over a period of time with these sermons, because he was with Paul—refined it and put it all together. The whole book of Hebrews is just outstanding!

Notice he doesn’t begin by saying, ‘Paul an apostle.’ Sending something to Jerusalem with Paul’s name on it would likely be burned upon arrival! He starts out:

Hebrews 1:1: “God... [that’s the whole focus of Hebrews] ...[and Jesus Christ] 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.”

You can’t have any greater message or witness given to you than that which comes directly from God in the flesh. That’s a tremendous thing! He wants them to understand that ‘Jesus walked your streets and your roads and He taught you.’ The Son of God! Not a prophet, not Jeremiah, but the Son of God; God manifested in the flesh!

Verse 2: Whom He has appointed heir of all things... [If we’re joint heirs, we’re going to inherit all things; isn’t that what it says? *Yes!*] ...by Whom also He made the ages.”

Then he gives a glimpse of the glory that Jesus has. All of this is done to inspire us. Why? *When you are beginning to face difficulties and problems and challenges you need hope!* You need something greater than your own thoughts. You need something higher than the circumstances that are around you. He knew what was going to happen to Jerusalem. So, in writing this, he wants to lift them up! He wants them to focus on God and Jesus Christ!

Verse 3: “Who, being *the* brightness of *His* glory and *the* exact image of His person...” Just like he told Philip when Philip said, ‘show us the Father.’ Jesus said, ‘Have I been with you so long a time and you have not known Me, Philip? If you’ve seen Me, you’ve seen the Father.’

“...and upholding all things by the word of His own power...” (v 3). That’s amazing! When we come and pray in the name of Jesus Christ, we’re coming to the One Whom God has given the authority to uphold the whole universe by His Word. That helps give us a lot of *faith*, too. Helps give us a lot of *hope*, too.

“...when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at *the* right hand of the Majesty on high; having been made so much greater than *any* of the angels, inasmuch as He has inherited a name exceedingly superior to them” (vs 3-4). We’re called *brethren!* This is what Paul wants us to keep in mind.

He’s building here in Heb. 11 on the foundation of Abraham for what is going to follow. Hebrews 11:16: “...Therefore, God is not ashamed to be called their God because He has prepared a city for them.”

You know that if God is going to make it, it’s going to be something! He’s going to give you:

- a new name
- a new body
- a new mind
- a new place to live

That’s what we need to understand. That’s what God has called us to.

Here’s some of the trials he went through, v 17: “**By faith Abraham**, when he was being tried, offered up Isaac; and he who had received the promises offered up *his* only begotten *son* of whom it was said, ‘In Isaac shall your Seed be called’” (vs 17-18).

He did this in demonstration to show that in spite of the worst possible predicament that you may find yourself in, **God will fulfill His promise!**

Abraham didn’t know how God was going to do it. I’m sure Isaac didn’t know how God was going to do it either, because as they were going up the mountain and Isaac had all the wood stacked on his back, and Abraham was carrying the pot of coals with him. Isaac said, ‘Father, where is the sacrifice.’ Abraham said, ‘My son, God will provide.’

Notice Abraham’s attitude. It’s not recorded in Genesis, but this is the inspired Word of God, v 19: “*Because* he reckoned that God was able to raise him even from among *the* dead, from which he also received him in a figurative way.” He said, ‘Well, if at a hundred I can be a father, if Isaac dies, He [God] can resurrect him.’ He did not expect God to do it the way that He did, at the last instant!

They built the altar, put the wood on it and he said, ‘Isaac, come over here.’ He bound him, picked him up, laid him on the altar, ready for the sacrifice. He reached down to get the knife, then an angel out of heaven said, ‘Abraham!’ I’ll bet he was glad to hear that! ‘Don’t harm the lad.’ Then all of a sudden they turned and saw the ram in the thicket.

It’s amazing how obedient Isaac was—in this instance he was a type of Christ, and in this instance Abraham was a type of God the Father—his only begotten son, whom he loved. This was the ultimate test! After that every word that God had spoken and promised to Abraham was secured by irrevocable swearing of God. And when He said, ‘In your Seed’ (Gen. 22) that’s where Paul shows that Seed is singular referring to Christ. You can take the whole thing that was done in Gen. 22 and show that as a type of what God was going to do with Jesus when He came to the earth. Amazing!

That’s why Abraham went and did what he did. Some of the movies they show when God asks Abraham to take Isaac and—the actor who played him, George C. Scott in this particular movie—got angry and smashed his fist on a rock and said, ‘Oh God, why? And argued with God.’ *We don’t find that! That’s not true!* That’s why we love God, we obey Him, we keep His commandments. He’ll bless us! He’ll be with us! We’ll have our faults and mistakes, but we’ll grow and overcome.

Verse 20: “**By faith Isaac** blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things that were to come.” I don’t know if you could count the blessing to Esau as a blessing, but nevertheless he sits on the greatest oil reserves known to the world. How that’s going to turn out—in the Middle East—we’ll have to wait and see.

Verse 21: “**By faith Jacob**...” [This is a very interesting one here. Think about this!] ...when he was dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph...”

Not talking about the other eleven sons that were blessed afterward. Remember that? There was a special, particular blessing to Ephraim and Manasseh (Gen. 48). Then we have a blessing and prophecy for each one of the sons (Gen. 49; Deut. 33). But when you come to the one on Joseph, that’s a long one. I mean, those blessings are something!

Here it’s brought out that each of the sons of Joseph: “...and worshiped *God*, *leaning* on the top of his staff” (v 21). Go back and read the various things in the book of Genesis so you can get all the background concerning this and it will help fill in some of the blanks.

Verse 22: “**By faith Joseph**, when he was dying, spoke of the *coming* exodus of the children of Israel, and gave a command concerning his bones.” This ends a section. It starts out with Abraham and ends with Joseph. Then v 23-29 has to do with the Exodus and the wandering in the wilderness:

Verse 23: “**By faith Moses**, after he was born, was hidden three months by his parents because they saw *that* he was a beautiful little child; and they did not fear the king’s decree. **By faith Moses**, after becoming a great *leader*, refused to be called *the* son of Pharaoh’s daughter” (vs 23-24).

I think perhaps one of the most accurate movies that has been portrayed—as far as a religious movie coming out of Hollywood—was the one on the Ten Commandments, showing Moses, Egypt and all the things that went on there.

Verse 25: “**Choosing to suffer affliction with the people of God, rather than to enjoy the temporary pleasure of sin.**” That’s a profound verse. People are not willing to give up their comfort and the pleasure of sin to suffer for God. Moses had to do that, because God had a great project, which he didn’t know anything about. Moses ran off over to Midian and was finally revived when the daughters of Jethro came down to water the sheep or the goats and found him there. Jethro had seven daughters and they saw one man and they said, ‘Whoopee!’

Then Moses, to humble him, spent 40 years tending sheep. You’re going to learn a lot doing that, and it’s going to take a lot of ego out of you. The great successor to Pharaoh, who was god in the flesh as far as the Egyptians were concerned, with all the wealth and all the riches and all the things that were there in Egypt, God sent him out across the desert to live in a near wilderness and take care of sheep and goats for 40 years. Then one day, when God was ready, Moses saw the bush burning on a mountain. He went up there to see what it was. The first thing he heard was, ‘Take your shoes off! For you are standing on Holy ground! I AM the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and I have called you to bring the children of Israel out of Egypt!’ You can read the whole account about that.

Moses had his faults and everything like that, just like everybody else. Which tells that God always includes the faults of those that serve Him, so that we can all have hope that our faults do not take us away from God. God knows all of our faults—every one of them—more than we do, but:

- He still love us!
- He still uses us!
- He still works with us!

- ✓ We are growing!
- ✓ We are overcoming!

You cannot understand why you must suffer affliction unless you know the goal; unless you know the hope.

Verse 26: "For he esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt because he was looking intently to the reward. **By faith he left Egypt**, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he persevered, as *if he were* seeing the *One Who is invisible*.... [that's quite a faith] ...**By faith he kept the Passover** and the sprinkling of the blood so that the destroyer of the firstborn would not slay them" (vs 26-28). All of these things are by faith.

Verse 29: "**By faith they passed through the Red Sea** as through a dry *land* in which the Egyptians, while making *the* attempt, were swallowed up *by the waters*. **By faith the walls of Jericho fell** after being circled for seven days" (vs 29-30).

The 40-years wandering in the wilderness were called *the faithless generation!* Beginning three days after they crossed the Red Sea they started complaining: 'Who's going to give us water to drink?' Started fighting, coming to Moses, 'give us water to drink. 'Who's going to give us food to eat?' (Exo. 16). God gave them manna and He sent the quail.

You can go through the other ones and come up to Exo. 19 when they're prepared to hear the voice of God and receive the commandments of God from Mt. Sinai. As soon as they heard the voice of God, they said, 'Oh no, we don't want to hear the voice of God; we'll listen to you, Moses.' **No faith!** Then Moses went up on the mountain and their faith was absolutely nothing. What did they do? They came to Aaron—now, Aaron was weak-kneed—and they said, 'Aaron, make us gods, we don't where this Moses is.' Even after they saw all the miracles; even after walking through the Red Sea; they didn't have enough faith to say that 'God did all these miraculous things, He's able to take care of us.'

While he was up there 40 days receiving the commandments, laws and statutes of God, Aaron built a calf. You know the excuse he gave when he got caught: 'I threw the gold into the fire and out leapt these calves.' Which also showed that the Levitical priesthood was not faithful either, even from the very beginning.

God counts these 40 years as **faithless!** They didn't believe God! How many times did they tempt Him, and then they got to the border, ready to into

the 'promised land' and all they did was cry and sob and boohoo. God said, 'Enough! It'll be one day for one year and you're going to wander for 40 years. Faithless generation!'

Why did God not let Moses go into the 'promised land'? *Because he didn't believe God in one instance!* God said, '**Speak** to the rock' and it would bring forth water. But Moses got carried away in his carnality and all the chiding of the children of Israel, and got angry with them and **beat** the rock. God still gave the water, but because God said to Moses, 'Because you didn't believe Me! I've given you the Ten Commandments; you sat in My presence for a total of eighty days—40 days one time; 40 days another time—and you wrote these things down. You even saw My glory, the backside of My glory, and when I told you to *speak* to the rock, you didn't believe Me, therefore, you will not go into the Holy Land. You can come up here on this mountain and you can see it.' That's why!

It's hard to grasp when you just look at it, but it's easier to grasp when you understand the relationship that God called him to be in with Him. That's why! After 40 years Moses should have known better. I can understand why he was frustrated. He's still going to be in the resurrection. *Even though we have some punishment for our sins, God doesn't reject us.* Keep that in mind!

Moses was probably fed-up with the people! Read the last parts of the book of Deuteronomy and you'll know he was! He said, 'I tell you this is going to happen.' And it has happened.

Hebrews 3:7 gives a summary of it: "For this reason, even as the Holy Spirit says, 'Today, if you will hear His voice.'" This is an important principle: Every day you need to hear the voice of God—not the audible sound of His voice—to heed the words of God. Every day is when we are living! Yesterday is over with; tomorrow hasn't come. You can't undo what you did yesterday except through repentance. You cannot predict what's going to happen tomorrow, because it hasn't arrived, yet. The opposite of faith is to harden your heart.

"...Today, if you will hear His voice, harden not your heart, as in the rebellion, in the day of temptation in the wilderness, where your fathers tempted Me *and* tried Me, and saw My works forty years. Because of this, I was indignant with that generation, and said, "They are always going astray in their hearts, and they have not known My ways." So, I swore in My wrath, "If they shall enter into My rest—" (vs 7-11). The answer is *no, they're not!* Except Joshua and Caleb and those who were less than 20-years-old.

Verse 12—the lesson: “Beware, brethren, lest perhaps there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief... [lack of faith] ...in apostatizing from *the* living God.” Apply that today:

- God has called us!
- God has given us His Spirit!
- God has given us His Word!
- God has given us peace!
- God has given us prosperity!

God has given us all of these fantastic blessings, and what excuse are we going to render to God IF we apostatize? We can’t say, ‘Well, God, I was on the rack of torture.’ No one has been there yet in this generation. *NO!* Everything has been there. This is the most spoiled, pampered, prosperous, as well as degenerate and sinful generation that has been in a long, long time.

God calls us out of it, and if we apostatize back to the Roman religion #2, which is Protestantism—see the book *Primitive Christianity in Crisis* by Alan Knight—with all the things that God has done for us, we turn our back on God and go after the things of this world, this is what He’s saying; this is how it applies to us today: *They have not known My ways!*

There have been a lot of people in the Church of God who were never converted. That’s why God had to scatter it and destroy it. He’ll take care of His own. He’ll watch over them. But He has to get rid of the tares without destroying the wheat.

Verse 11: “So I swore in My wrath, “If they shall enter into My rest—”.... [an open question, because it’s not over until it’s over] (Here’s the warning): ...Beware, brethren, lest perhaps there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in apostatizing from *the* living God” (vs 11-12). He’s giving these warnings in there because He knows what’s going to happen.

Just like the sermon *The Coming Economic Tribulation*; what I gave in that sermon is nothing compared to what you can do if you go online and start looking up all these different areas concerning the collapse of the dollar and so forth. I gave you the mild! If you go online and look it up and pull it down, it’s going to scare you to the bottom of your feet!

What I’m trying to do is the same thing that Paul is doing here: *prepare you for the tough times that are coming!* Maybe it’s a year away; maybe it’s two; three; five; seven, but they’re going to come! This is what Paul is doing here. He’s saying, ‘Look!

Tough times are going to come and don’t leave God because of the tough times.’

“...in apostatizing from *the* living God. Rather, be encouraging one another each day, while it is called ‘today,’ so that none of you become hardened by *the* deceitfulness of sin” (vs 12-13). There we come full circle back.

Today we have so many avenues of sin getting into us it’s unreal! We’ve got sin on every side of us! Sin is deceitful, because there can be some benefit from sin—temporarily! ‘The pleasure of sin...’ Yes, it can! Everyone looks at the lotto. A man won \$170-million. Everyone said, ‘Oh, I wish that were me!’ But you fail to realize that you extracted that money from millions of other people through their lust. Yes, Satan rewards us! He gives that which would be thought of as a great blessing—right? Deceitfulness of sin, whatever it may be!

Verse 14: “For we are companions of Christ, **if** we truly hold the confidence *that we had* at the beginning steadfast until the end. As it is being said, ‘Today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts, as in the rebellion’” (vs 14-15).

That’s what happened with Moses. He temporarily one day hardened his heart when God said, ‘Speak to the rock and bring forth water.’ And that’s why Moses was punished and not allowed to go into the land, because he didn’t glorify God. He sinned before God, before the children of Israel. After 40 years, for him to do that after all this time, God said, ‘All right, you’re not going in!’ ***Deceitfulness of sin!***

Verse 16: “For some, after hearing, did rebel, but not all who came out of Egypt by Moses. But with whom was He indignant *for* forty years? *Was it* not with those who had sinned, whose dead bodies were strewn in the wilderness? And to whom did He swear *that they* would not enter into His rest, except to those who had disobeyed? So, we see that they were not able to enter in because of unbelief” (vs 16-19).

What we’re talking about in Heb. 11 is faith! It’s very interesting that in Hebrews 11:29: “**By faith they passed through the Red Sea....**”

We jump forward, v 30: “**By faith the walls of Jericho fell...**” By that time, and with Joshua, they were willing to obey God. Someone could have said, ‘That’s silly for God to tell us you walk around it once everyday and don’t say a word. Then on the seventh day you go around it seven times? Then you expect us to shout and the walls are going to come down.’ NO! ***They were faithful! They did what God said!***

I thought that was very, very interesting with that break for 40 years, and yet, the book of Exodus counts all those 40 years.

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*

Scriptural References:

- 1) Revelation 14:12
- 2) Hebrews 11:8-9
- 3) 2 Samuel 7:1-6
- 4) Isaiah 66:1-2
- 5) John 1:14
- 6) Hebrews 11:10
- 7) John 14:1-3
- 8) Hebrews 11:11-12
- 9) Hebrews 6:11-18
- 10) Romans 4:16-21, 13
- 11) Romans 8:14-18
- 12) Hebrews 1:1-4
- 13) Hebrews 11:16-30
- 14) Hebrews 3:7-12, 11-19
- 15) Hebrews 11:29-30

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Matthew 24
- Revelation 18
- Genesis 12
- Romans 5
- Revelation 21-22
- Genesis 22; 48-49
- Deuteronomy 33
- Exodus 16; 19

Also referenced:

Sermons:

- *The Mark of the Beast is Here*
- *The Coming Economic Tribulation*

Sermon Series: *The Covenants of Abraham*

Book:

- *Occult Holidays or God's Holy Days—Which?*
by Fred R. Coulter
- *Primitive Christianity in Crisis* by Alan Knight

FRC:bo
Transcribed: 6-3-11
Reformatted/Corrected: January/2017

Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews XXXV Foundation of Faith

(Chapter 11)

Fred R. Coulter

We left off last time in Heb. 11:30, and it's interesting: between vs 29 and 30 the whole episode of wandering in the wilderness is deleted from here, because it shows the faithlessness of the people. Paul is concentrating on the faith. *They obeyed God!*

Hebrews 11:30: "By faith the walls of Jericho fell after being circled for seven days." Here again, you have *faith unto obedience*, and that's what God is showing all the way through.

Verse 31: "By faith Rahab the harlot did not perish with those who disobeyed *because* she had received the spies peaceably."

Then Paul gives a summary, v 32: "Now, what more can I say? For time would fail me to relate *the accounts* of Gideon, Barak also, and Samson and Jephthah, David also, and Samuel, and the prophets." In other words, what he's saying is 'go read the Old Testament, we can't reproduce it all here in the New Testament.'

Verse 33: "Who by faith were victorious over kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, shut *the* mouths of lions, quenched *the* fury of fire, escaped *the* edge of *the* sword, were strengthened from weakness, became mighty in war, *and* turned back the armies of foreigners. Women received their dead restored to life; and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a superior resurrection" (vs 33-35)—to be in the first resurrection.

Verse 36: "And others endured *the* trial of *cruel* mocking and scourging; yes, and moreover, of chains and imprisonment. They were stoned to death, they were sawed in two, they were *brutally* interrogated, *and* slaughtered by *the* sword. They went about in sheepskins *and* in goatskins, being destitute, oppressed, *and* ill-treated" (vs 36-37).

I read that and thought: Boy! What are we headed for in the future, because what do we have today? *All cushy!*

- Cold? *Turn on the heat or put on a coat!*
- Too hot? *Turn on the air-conditioner!*
- Hungry? *Go to the refrigerator or go to the store!*

When things come where there's going to be a sudden change in these things, there's going to be a rude awakening not only for the people in the

world, but the people in the Church.

If you are on the Internet, go online and look up Argentina. There are three or four very good reports which shows what happened in Argentina when their monetary system failed. Wiped out all bank accounts! Wiped out the retirement! It was just a terrible mess. People lost their homes; they had to go huddle and live in vacant warehouses and empty factories and things like that. Yes, they have since recovered somewhat.

That's why I have the sermon: *The Coming Economic Tribulation*. Which, by the way, I heard that there were two other noted preachers—one in the a Church of God and one Protestant—who gave sermons similar to that. One man who's in the business of financial counseling called and asked for 50 copies of the sermon: *The Coming Economic Tribulation* and the letter and bought 300 copies of the book *The Coming Economic Disorder* by Larry Bates.

Even today, while we speak, the dollar is still going lower and lower. We are on a collision course with a change of events in America. How quickly or how slowly it comes we don't know, but just keep your eye on two things:

1. deteriorating value of the dollar
2. rising price of gold, silver, platinum and commodities

Throughout the Old and New Testament we come along and then all of a sudden BANG! there's a crisis! We're heading for one! We've been through some crises in the Church, which didn't affect the world, but look how it affected us being in the Church. This is why it so very important that we really understand about the faith that we need to have. This is why Paul goes through and brings this out for us.

Notice, in spite of the fact that this happened, v 38: "Of whom the world was not worthy; they wandered in deserts and in mountains, *living* in caves and in holes in the earth." You read that and think: Are we not living in the Laodicean age? Right smack in the middle of it? *Rich and increased with goods!* With gadgets and remote controls and even robots now to vacuum our floors! They're even designing robots, which now look more like humans, that can run and follow directions

and do things. How far will it go? How great will it become? *We don't know!* That's why we have to *live by faith, walk by faith, believe in hope and live in love!*

Verse 39: "**But these all, though they had received a good report through faith, did not obtain the promise.**" Isn't that interesting? No heaven! Because if righteous people die and they go to heaven, isn't that the promise that is given by the religions of the world? *Yes, it is!* But it says:

They "...did not obtain the promise, *because* God had determined in advance to provide something superior for us... [as well as for them; a superior resurrection] ...so that without us they would not be made perfect" (vs 39-40). Two excellent verses to show that no one has gone to heaven, if heaven is the perfection of the reward of the saved. This backs up the resurrection rather than going to heaven.

Let's review a little bit about faith; add a little bit more to it and see what kind of faith we really need to have. Let me tell you first of all:

What Faith is Not:

1. Faith is not a blind obedience!

As in various secret societies like the Jesuit oath you will obey as if you are a cadaver having no will of your own. *That's not God's way!* That is not faith! In fact, that's the opposite of faith, because that's giving up your free choice, giving up your free will, turning your mind over to someone else.

2. Faith is not an emotion!

Just because you feel something, even feel good, does not mean that that is faith. Let me give you an example: Do people feel good when they win at the slot machine. Oh, yeah! Sure! That's not from God. You've been paid by all the other suckers who have put their money in there and lost it. *It is not an emotion.*

3. Faith is not surrendering your will!

4. Faith is not obedience to a religious leader, be it whomever he may be!

What Faith Is

Now, let's look at what faith is, and what kind of faith God wants us to have. Hebrews 11:1: "Now **faith is the substance of things hoped for...**" We know that that refers to the gift of faith that God gives with the Holy Spirit. But substance is also a foundation. We're going to look at the *foundation of faith*.

"...and **the conviction of things not seen**" (v 1). We just read about all of those who died not

having received the promises. But they saw them afar off!

Verse 3: "**By faith we understand...**" That's an important thing. God wants us to have a faith *with understanding*.

"...that the worlds were created by the Word of God..." (v 3). They're having a big argument today because they want to put into the schools today the theory of intelligent creation. You can't use the name *God*, but neither can they prove evolution. "...the worlds were created by the Word of God..." and today we have more scientific proof that that is so. What is the smallest particle that there is? *I think we will find, as one man—Joseph Newman—has postulated, the magnetic gyroscopic particle.* This is just an example of how faith will work.

Belief

If you believe God who cannot lie; if you have faith in God that His Word is true; God says that He created it—guess what's going to happen in time? ***The proof will come!***

How do we get faith?

You have to grow in grace and knowledge and faith! How do we get faith? Rom. 10 shows us why this is so important concerning proper teachings on the Sabbath and why it's so important for personal Bible study ***because it builds faith.***

Romans 10:14: "How then shall they call on *Him* in Whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in *Him* of Whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without preaching? And how shall they preach, unless they be sent? Accordingly, it is written, 'How beautiful *are* the feet of those who announce the Gospel of Peace, and those who announce the good news of good things!' But all have not obeyed the Gospel because as Isaiah said, 'Lord, who has believed our report?'" So then, **faith comes by hearing, and hearing through the Word of God**" (vs 14-17).

Not by myths, not by traditions, but hearing the Word of God. Isn't that profound! The more that you hear and study the Word of God, the more faith your will build providing you are doing it in faith as you go along.

Another thing that is interesting, too, concerning hearing the Word of God and studying the Word of God, that God has given us His Spirit so that we can learn. With the Spirit of God in us, as we study, as we pray—and prayer is a very important part and function of Christian living; as a matter of fact, one of the most vital—then we grow in faith.

You have faith in God and not doubting what He says. Why? God doesn't want you to have *blind faith*. He wants you to have an educated, knowledgeable faith, which begins with this:

Hebrews 11:6: "Now without faith *it is impossible to please God*. For it is mandatory *for* the one who comes to God to **believe that He exists...**"

In seeing the panel on Larry King the other night, you could tell the only one who had a level of belief in God's existence was the Protestant minister. The Hindu didn't. The Catholic didn't. The Jew didn't. Belief that not only He exists but everything about Him that is stated in the Bible is true!

"...and *that* He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him" (v 6). There's a lot of diligence that we have to do.

Here's what's important. ***You cannot divorce faith from obedience. You cannot divorce faith from belief.***

Obedience

Romans 10:16: "But all have not obeyed the Gospel because as Isaiah said, 'Lord, who has believed our report?' So then, faith *comes* by hearing, and hearing through *the* Word of God. But I say, did they not hear? Yes, indeed, *for it is written*, 'Their voices went out into all the earth; their words went out even to the ends of the habitable world.'" (vs 16-18). He was speaking of the preaching of the Gospel back then.

Matthew 24:14: "And this Gospel of the Kingdom shall be proclaimed in all the world for a witness..." If this is not only a reiteration of what was done, but also a prophecy of what is coming, then there's going to have to be an awful lot of preaching of the Gospel by a lot of people that's going to reach out into the world, and God is going to have to open the door and make it possible. He promised that this Gospel shall be proclaimed to all the world 'and then the end shall come!' That's why it's important to really have the true faith of God.

Romans 10: 19: "Nevertheless, I say, did not Israel know? First, Moses said, 'I will provoke you to jealousy through *those who are* not a people. I will anger you through a people without understanding.'" In other words, God is saying here: 'Look, if you don't believe Me, I'm going to raise up someone who will!' God can do that. Even Jesus said—when the Pharisees said to tell these people to quit saying 'Hosanna to the Highest' to the Son of David—that if they quit saying it even the 'rocks would shout!'

Here's what's important in faith: He wants

us to have *a knowledgeable and provable faith* based upon:

1. God is true!
2. God cannot lie—impossible!
3. God's Word is the Truth!

Every Word of God is true. **This is the first foundation on which to base your belief: Every Word of God is true!** God wants us to base our faith and belief on the Word of God, so you can have absolute, unequivocal confidence and faith in the Word of God.

2-Timothy 3:16: "All Scripture *is* God-breathed..." God is responsible for it. Yes, He used human beings to do it that is true. Can He make human beings write and produce the Truth? *Without a doubt! No question whatsoever!* Peter wrote that 'Holy men were moved by the Spirit of God.' That's why we have the account of Balaam in the book of Numbers. Here's a false prophet dedicated to cursing the children of Israel, received money to curse the children of Israel, and when he went to curse them all he could do is *bless*. That's a good account to understand that the apostles and the writers of the Old and New Testament *wrote the Words of God!* You base your faith on that, not on what some man says.

This doesn't mean that we have understanding of everything, of prophecy and all this. But we do understand the things of the Word of God and the things of salvation and the knowledge of grace and forgiveness of sin. All of these things are known.

Verse 16: "All Scripture *is* God-breathed and *is* profitable for doctrine... [teaching; there are teachings involved] ...for conviction... [believe with conviction] ...for correction..." We all need to be corrected; are we not all still overcoming? *Of course, we are; yes, indeed!*

"...for instruction in righteousness; so that the man of God may be complete, fully equipped for every good work" (vs 16-17).

Let's tie in some other things with this, based upon the Word of God. How do we handle this? God does not expect us to take His Word and hand it over to an expert and have the expert—a priest, a theologian, a scholar—be the sole interpreter of the Word of God. He has given responsibility to *everyone!* Let's see how that is.

This is why it is not just a *blind faith*: you do what I do because I said to do it. 'Why should I do it?' *Because I said!* NO! First of all:

- you prove that God exists

- you prove that He is true
- you prove that the Word of God is true

1-Thessalonians 5:21: “**Prove all things....**” There is one thing that is very important concerning the Truth: You can prove it, reprove it, reprove it and reprove it. Why? *Because there’s no lie of the Truth!* That doesn’t make us anything great. We are only applying what God has told us to do. In doing that, God adds to us the faith because we are:

- proving the Word of God
- studying the Word of God
- reading the Word of God
- letting it be written in our heart and mind

That adds to and builds the faith and belief. We’re to, v 21: “Prove all things. Hold fast *to that which is good*” (v 21). Note Acts 17 about the Bereans. When Paul came into the synagogue in Berea, he preached the Word. They weren’t like the ones in Thessalonica. When he first started there, they threw him out of the synagogue.

NO! The Bereans sat down and said, ‘Oh, let’s open the Scriptures and see whether these things be so or not.’ That’s how God wants us to do it. With that you can understand Truth from error, right from wrong. Then you can base your faith on understanding and knowledge. That’s how you approach the things you don’t understand and cannot yet see.

FOUNDATION—building blocks—OF FAITH

Let’s look at some things of the *foundation of faith*. We will see there are quite a few building blocks in *foundation of faith*. Here’s a promise that God gives with faith:

Proverbs 28:20: “A faithful man shall overflow with blessings...” What are the greatest blessings that can come from faith?

- God’s Spirit
- understanding His Word
- living in the grace of God

All of those things are blessings. This does not necessarily mean just physical blessings; let’s make these spiritual blessings. What you prove you believe. So, you have *faith*, you have *belief*.

Trust

God’s trust works both ways. We trust God through faith and belief and living His way, and He trusts us by giving us understanding of His Word and His Spirit. That’s really something— isn’t it? That’s a tremendous gift of God, *to be entrusted with the understanding of the Word of God!*

Verse 25: “He who is of a proud heart stirs up strife, but **he who puts his trust in the LORD shall be enriched....** [spiritually rich] ...He who trusts in his own heart is a fool...” (vs 25-26). What is that we have today? *I believe, my opinion is!* When you get down to it, it really doesn’t matter what you believe or what your opinion is, especially in things referring to God, relating to God. If it isn’t true, it’s worthless!

“...but whoever walks wisely, he shall be delivered” (v 26).

Faith, belief, trust: all of these are the *foundation of faith*. So, when I say faith, look at that as kind of an outward foundation; like with a house, goes around the outside of the house and the house sits on that. There are other things within that foundation, which then we’re looking at *trust*.

Proverbs 16:20: “He who handles a matter wisely shall find good, and whoever trusts in the LORD, happy *is* he.” In the American Constitution, what is the one thing that it promises that we can have? *Pursuit of happiness!*

Let’s look at Jer. 17; don’t trust in a man. That’s why when you have a religion where you have a hierarchy and priests or ministers who say *I am between you and God*. There was even one minister in the Church of God who came into the front room of some of the brethren and sat down and said, ‘I am here in God’s stead, and if you don’t believe me then you’re going to go to the Lake of Fire.’ *NO!* That’s why it says, ‘Trust no man.’ Wasn’t it during the Cold War between Reagan and Gorbachav that Reagan said, ‘Trust, but verify.’ *Trust, but prove!*

Jeremiah 17:5: “Thus says the LORD, ‘Cursed *is* the man who trusts in man, and makes flesh his arm, and whose heart departs from the LORD.’” **Trust no man!** Yet, our lives are based upon trust. *Yes, they are!* Love and marriage is based upon faith. *Yes, indeed!* What happens when that trust is violated? *Everything comes apart!* That’s why your trust and faithfulness in all of your relationships must be based upon the Word of God and the Spirit of God so that trust is based in God and not in a man.

Let’s look at it this way: You have a religious leader like the one I just talked about that said, ‘Trust me.’ or ‘I’ll interpret the Scriptures for you.’ You must have a priest there or a minister there to interpret the Scriptures for you. Even some people have been told that if you read the Bible and try and justify it with the religious practices that we participate in, you will go crazy. The reason is, because if you read the Bible you will soon find out

that all the practices are not in the Bible. If you try and justify it you will go crazy, because no lie is compatible with the Truth. We'll see it says why not to trust in man in just a little bit.

Verse 6: "For he shall be like a shrub in the desert, and shall not see when good comes. But he shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, *in* a salt land that is not inhabited.... [here's the contrast]: ...Blessed *is* the man who trusts in the LORD and whose hope is the LORD. For he shall be like a tree planted by the waters... [Psa. 1] ...*it* sends out its roots by the river, and *it* shall not fear when the heat comes, but its foliage shall be green; and he is not worried in the year of drought, nor will it cease from yielding fruit" (vs 6-8).

This is telling us that we are to grow in grace and knowledge; continually bring forth fruit—the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5).

Here's why you trust in no man and why you're cursed in trusting in a man. We will soon understand this in our currency situation.

Verse 9: "The heart *is* deceitful above all things..." That's what most politics is based upon; that's what our currency system is based upon.

I was thinking about that the other day. I had a stack of bills—you do, too—and they have to be paid. I get out my checkbook and I start writing checks. After giving the sermon that I gave on *The Coming Economic Tribulation* I'm sitting there saying, 'Hey, there's not one penny here. I've got a piece of paper that says the bank says I have so much in the bank. I've got my checkbook here and I'm allowed to write my own money based upon the figure that the bank has given me, based upon having put so much in there. What did I put in there? *I put in there another piece of paper which said, 'Value so much.'* I'm sitting here writing all of these checks and signing my name on it and thinking, 'There's no money!'

It's all deceitful! You have to use the system because you live in the world, but you can see how foolish it is, and when the day of reckoning comes it going to be just like that huge domino thing that they spent—I forget how many months doing it—and it had millions of dominos and it took an hour and a half until the last domino fell. That's why!

Verse 9: "The heart *is* deceitful above all things and desperately wicked; who can know it?" Know this: It doesn't matter who you are, where you are—righteous/sinful—it doesn't make one bit of difference. God is not way off some place. God is close at hand.

- Doesn't He say that He knows the hairs

that are on your head? *Yes!*

- Doesn't He say that everything that's spoken in secret shall be shouted from the housetop? *Yes!*
- Does God try us? *Yes!*
- Test us? *Yes!*
- Does God also try and test the wicked? *Yes!*

Verse 10: "I the LORD search the heart... [He's called in the New Testament 'the heart-knowing God'] ...*I* try the reins... [What does that mean? *Trying the way that you think!*] ...even **to give to each man according to his ways, according to the fruit of his doings.**" *Good and evil!*

In that God is merciful. Many times God gives us plenty of latitude before the correction comes. What would it be if every time you made some little mistake—BAM!—God was right there to knock you down. Never works! He gives free choice. He's going to try us all, *righteous and sinners!* Let's see here is the solution of one of the things of faith. We have:

- faith
- belief
- trust

with this it does something else:

Fixed Heart—Conviction

It gives you a faith and trust and confidence and belief because of God, His Word, His Spirit, His Truth. Remember, His Spirit is called *the Spirit of Truth!* What this does, it gives you the conviction by fixing your heart.

Psalms 57:1: "Be gracious unto me, O God, be gracious unto me; for my soul trusts in You; yea, in the shadow of Your wings I will make my refuge until these great troubles pass by." Note Psalms 91. The shadow of the wings is God's unseen protection through His angels.

Verse 2: "I will cry to God Most High, to God who fulfills His purpose for me."

Verse 7: "**My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed...**" What does that mean? That doesn't mean that it's repaired necessarily, but that could fall in there, too. It means that it's steadfast; fixed; locked into God! That's the kind of faith that God wants us to have. This is what brings conviction. This is an absolute thing if your heart is fixed and locked on God. That leads to conviction. Let's see what God did to Ezekiel.

Ezek. 3 tells us how your heart and your

mind are fixed. If you want to know the prophet that had the toughest duty of all—outside of Christ—it's Ezekiel.

Ezekiel 3:4: "And He said to me, 'Son of man, go! Go up to the house of Israel and speak to them with My words. For you *are* not sent to a people of a strange speech and of a difficult language, *but* to the house of Israel; not to many people of a strange speech and of a difficult language, whose words you cannot understand. Surely, if I had sent you to them... [these people of strange speech] ...they would have hearkened to you. But the house of Israel will not be willing to hearken to you, for they will not be willing to hearken to Me; for all the house of Israel *are* of a hard forehead and a stubborn heart. Behold, I have made your face strong against their faces and your forehead strong against their foreheads" (vs 4-8). You talk about *fixed*!

Notice Who made it. *God did!* That's the measure of faith Ezekiel needed for the task that he was given.

Verse 9: "I have made your forehead as an adamant stone, harder than flint. Do not be afraid of them or dismayed by their faces, for they *are* a rebellious house.' And He said to me, 'Son of man, receive all My words which I shall speak to you. Receive them to your heart, and hear with your ears.... [all the teaching comes from God] ...And go! Go to those of the captivity, to the children of your people, and speak to them, and tell them, "Thus says the Lord GOD;" whether they will hear or whether they will forbear'" (vs 9-11). Isn't that something?

Then you go read on what he had to do. There was even a place where God told him to go out—because there's starvation coming—and mix up this pottage and put in human dung and you eat it in their presence; and he had to go before them naked. He had to lie on his side 390 days for the house of Israel, and when he was done with that another 70 days for the house of Judah. When God said for him to mix in human dung, he said, 'Oh, Lord God, please!' God said, 'All right, cattle dung!'

God wanted to demonstrate to the children of Israel how they really were to Him. You read Ezekiel, he has the toughest, hardest, most disastrous message that anyone could give. You talk about doom, gloom, death, destruction, plague and all of those things. Note Ezek. 20. The reason that all of these things because of their rebellion, but more importantly, because they *refused* to keep the Sabbath and Holy Days of God.

There is *fixed-heart conviction!* This kind

of faith brings confidence. You don't have to worry about what man can do to you. This kind of faith was what Christ is talking about in Matt. 10. This is the kind of faith that the Apostle Paul, in writing the book of Hebrews, was preparing for those Jewish and non-Jewish (Gentiles) Christians, that they would have to have to survive the great upheavals of the Romans wars and the destruction of the temple.

Those are just great and awesome things that happen. Whenever they happen, God gives a warning first to prepare His people. Here's what Jesus said it's going to be like:

Matthew 10:16: "Behold, I am sending you forth as sheep in *the* midst of wolves. Therefore, be wise as serpents and harmless as doves." This is telling us very clearly not to get mixed up in the political affairs of this world, because it's going to take you down. That's what it is. Keep following God!

Verse 17: "But beware of men; for they will deliver you up to councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues." They did that to the apostles (Acts 4-5). Yes, they didn't scourge them, but they beat them with rods.

Verse 18: "And you shall also be brought before governors and kings for My sake, for a witness to them and to the Gentiles."

Eventually this is going to get down right to the world leaders. This is going to involve more than just one man. Whoever it is, wherever it's going to be, it's going to be numbers of people that will be brought up. I don't know if you know this, but Robert Reich—Treasury Secretary under Bill Clinton our 42nd President—said, 'Terrorists and those who take the Scriptures literally are the most dangerous people to this society.'

So, the die is cast; they just haven't used it yet. But you wait and see, with this 9/11 law passed and Patriot Act II passed—wait and see Patriot Act III pass. Look what they're doing to search people going through the airports. Every time I go through—before I go through I tell them I've got artificial hips so I'm going to zap the thing, it's going to beep.' A couple of times when I've gotten done, I've said, 'I want you to promise me something, for safety and security, please do this to every Muslim that comes through as a passenger.'

(go to the next track)

When it comes time that it is illegal to have a Bible... That may sound wild and strange, but what they're doing in this society, they do not want you to have any public acknowledgement of God! The only place you can worship is in your home,

synagogue or church... 'Don't bother us atheists and us secularists and humanists out here, we don't want to be bothered with your religion and Christ and God.' Who are they challenging? *God!* Who are the ones who are going to have to give the final message? *Wherever Christians are—true Christians—they're going to be the ones who are going to have to do it!*

Brought up to councils? *That is into court!* It happened back Philadelphia. There were a group of Sunday-keeping preachers against homosexuality, went and started preaching outside on the street against homosexuality and the homosexuals came and assaulted them and had them arrested. The one man faces charges equivalent to 47 years in prison. It's there! This is realistic!

Unless you really have faith; unless you really have belief... They're always going to offer a way out. You can't do like Galileo did when the pope said, 'Say the earth is flat.' *Okay, the earth is flat!* 'All right, we'll lift the inquisition off of you.' *Thank you!* He walked out and he said, 'Nevertheless, it's still round!' Do you think that living in the end of the age, which we're living in, and

- having the whole Word of God
- understanding what we understand
- teach what we teach

—I'm including all the Churches of God everywhere, because God is going to get them all involved; that's why they're scattered—that God is going to let us lightly off the hook and not bring a witness as He wants? Who is going to tell these people if it is not those who know? We are on an inevitable collision course! This is not asking for persecution; it is already there! Get the book *Persecution* by David Limbaugh and read that. That will tell you some things!

Verse 19: "Now when they deliver you up, do not be anxious *about* how or what you should speak.... [that's why you have to *know* the Word of God; have it written in your heart and mind] ...for in that hour it shall be given to you what you shall speak. For it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father that speaks in you" (vs 19-20). You are going to be a vessel of God, whoever you are, when this event takes place. God is going to use you personally, through His Spirit, to speak.

Here's how bad it's going to get, v 21: "Then brother will deliver up brother to death; and *the* father, the child; and children will rise up against *their* parents and *have* them put to death. And you shall be hated by all for My name's sake..." (vs 21-22).

- Don't we see that now?
- What is that they don't like about Christmas?
 - ✓ It's not the word 'mass' at the end. It's the word *Christ* at the beginning.
- What do they not like about the Ten Commandments?
 - ✓ The first four
 - you should not have any other gods before Me
 - prohibition on idols
 - taking God's name in vain
 - the Sabbath

"...but the one who endures to *the* end, that one shall be saved. But when they persecute you in this city, escape into another; for truly I say to you, in no way shall you have completed *witnessing* to the cities of Israel until the Son of man has come. A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a servant above his master" (vs 22-24).

- Was Christ persecuted? *Yes!*
- Was Christ martyred? *Yes!*
- Was Christ God in the flesh? *Yes!*

But we're not above Him!

Verse 25: "It is sufficient for the disciple that he become as his teacher, and the servant as his master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub... [referring to Himself] ...how much more *shall they call* those of his household? Therefore, do not fear them because there is nothing covered that shall not be uncovered, and *nothing* hidden that shall not be known. What I tell you in the darkness, speak in the light; and what you hear in the ear, proclaim upon the housetops" (vs 25-27). That is public acknowledgment of God in preaching the Gospel.

Verse 28: "Do not be afraid of those who kill the body, but do not have power to destroy the life; rather, **fear Him Who has the power to destroy both life and body in Gehenna.**" That gives you an idea of what Ezekiel was up against and what we will be confronting in the future. That's why we have to have our hearts fixed and have a conviction. That's part of the building blocks of faith.

Obedience

Obedience is all part of faith, no doubt about it! Jesus said, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.' In light of the sermon *The Administration of Death* and the veil of Moses, I'd like to do a study to show the laws of God that He gave to Moses were the veil removed and those things that Jesus

fulfilled. I think that would be very interesting, indeed!

Let's come to 1-John 2; this is all a part of the kind of faith and obedience that we need to have, so that we have:

- the conviction
- the belief
- the trust
- the confidence
- the fixed heart

This gives us the confidence in our obedience. In other words, it gets back to God does not want you to have just an *emotional* faith, or a belief because someone tells you *believe this*. NO! He wants you to know it because you know it yourself and have proved it yourself, and you come to this; here is a key, all part of faith. Remember where we started with this chapter. Here are those, referring to Christians that have the faith of Jesus Christ and keep His commandments (Rev. 14:12).

- Belief is *the mental* aspect of faith!
- Obedience is *faith in action*!

You can take that and go through and study the Bible from that point of view, too.

1-John 2:3: "And by this *standard we know that we know Him...*" This is the kind of thing that God wants us to have. We *know* that we *know*! That comes by:

- hearing
- studying
- living
- the Spirit of God
- the application of the Word of God
- thinking with the Word of God
- keeping the commandments of God

It's like when people are in doubt about the Sabbath—and they seem reasonable and willing to keep the Sabbath and they haven't kept it before—and they ask me: Why is the Sabbath important? I explain it to them and when I'm done I tell them this: Why don't you keep the Sabbath and study about the Sabbath and God's Word on the Sabbath for six weeks? If you do, then you'll understand how important the Sabbath is. That's the key!

You will never know if you do not have the faith to obey. You can tie that in with tithes and offerings. You will never know the blessings that God will give you if you don't prove Him. That's what it says here. This is *the standard*—the Greek is 'en toutoo'—*by this*, but it implies that *by this standard*—a measure and so forth.

Verse 3: "And by this *standard we know that we know Him*: if we keep His commandments. The one who says, 'I know Him,' and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the Truth is not in him" (vs 3-4). Have we not come full circle back to the Truth, the true God, the Word of God? *Yes!*

If you have some Truth and some error, do you have *the* Truth? *No, you don't!* I thought that interview was quite good when the Protestant said that Jesus is the Way, the Truth and the Life. After they had a discussion that 'you should love your neighbor as yourself' to humanize the teachings of Jesus, he said, 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your mind, with all your soul, with all your strength.' *Oh, that's different!*

They all want to love their neighbors because that's humanism; that's secularism. But to love God, no 'we can't do that.' They said, 'You're an exclusivist then.' He said, 'No, let's look at it this way: If I'm a doctor and you have a disease—we'll call that sin—and there is only one antibiotic that you can take to kill that bacteria and make you well. What would you say? Especially when you understand no other antibiotic can do it, just this one. Would you say that I'm exclusive? *or* That I'm imparting to you the knowledge of Truth so that you can get well?'

If Jesus is the only Way, the Truth and the Life' then everyone needs to know how they can be saved! That's what we're talking about here. When we have that then we can have the faith that this shows, that this gives us. This is pretty profound.

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."

1-Kings 13—I find this really quite interesting. When God sent the warning to Jeroboam—he was the one who setup the golden calves in Dan and Bethel after God split off the ten tribes. 1-Kings 13:1: "And behold, a man of God came out of Judah by the Word of the Lord, to Bethel. And Jeroboam stood by the altar to burn incense." He had a specific message, with specific instructions from God.

Verse 2: "And he cried against the altar by the Word of the Lord and said, 'O, altar, altar, thus says the LORD. "Behold, a son shall be born to the house of David, Josiah by name, and upon you he shall offer the priests of the high places who burn incense upon you, and men's bones shall be burned upon you.'" And he gave a sign the same day, saying, 'This *is* the sign which the LORD has spoken. "Behold, the altar shall be torn apart, and the ashes that *are* upon it shall be poured out.'" Then it

came to pass when King Jeroboam heard the saying of the man of God who had cried against the altar in Bethel, he put forth his hand from the altar, saying, 'Lay hold on him!' And his hand, which he put forth against him withered up so that he could not pull it in again to himself. The altar also was split asunder and the ashes poured out from the altar according to the sign which the man of God had given by the Word of the Lord" (vs 2-5)

Verse 6: "And the king answered and said to the man of God, 'Seek now the face of the LORD your God, and pray for me, that my hand may be restored to me again.'"

Isn't that always the way? When the murderer gets caught and is surrounded by the police, what does he say? *Don't shoot! Don't shoot!* So, we have it here.

Verse 7: "And the king said to the man of God, 'Come home with me and refresh yourself, and I will give you a reward.' And the man of God said to the king, 'If you will give me half your house, I will not go in with you, nor will I eat bread nor drink water in this place, for so was it commanded me by the Word of the Lord, saying, "Eat no bread nor drink water, nor return again by the same way that you came." Then he went another way and did not return by the way he came to Bethel" (vs 7-10).

You can read the rest of it. Here comes a man out who says, 'I am a prophet of God. I am a prophet of the Lord. Come in and eat with me.' And he said, 'No, I can't'—true prophet of God.

The false prophet said, 'God has told me that you can come in and eat with me and rest yourself.' What did he do? *He took the word of the false prophet, went in and ate with him.* After he got up and left, God sent a lion to devour him on the way. Quite an instructive lesson. ***He that says I know Him and does not keep His commandments is a liar!***

1-John 2:5: "On the other hand, *if* anyone is keeping His Word, truly in this one the love of God is being perfected.... [that's what keeps faith working; *the love of God!*] ...By this *means* we know that we are in Him. Anyone who claims to dwell in Him is obligating himself also to walk even as He Himself walked" (vs 5-6). Quite a standard. That's all done by faith!

That's quite an instructive lesson with the true prophet of God and the false prophet of the Lord coming out and saying 'Well, I'm a prophet of the Lord, and God told me...' It reminds me of these ministers that get on television and say, 'God said to me...'

Galatians 5:6: "Because in Christ Jesus neither is circumcision of any force, nor uncircumcision; rather, *it is the* inner working of faith through love." As Paul said, 'These three remain: faith, hope and love.' As we've said: ***Walk in faith, believe in hope and live in love!*** These all work together: *faith through love*, the inner working of it.

Let's see what it's going to do for us or what it is doing for us. The more you know the Truth of God and the Way of God and the Word of God, this is what it will do. This makes people really angry.

1-John 4:4: "You are of God, little children... [Who is to say that you are of God and other people are not? *God is!*] ...and have overcome them... [the false prophets and false spirits] ...because greater is He Who *is* in you than the one who *is* in the world." Never be overwhelmed by the things in the world.

Verse 5: "They are of the world; because of this, they speak of the world, and the world listens to them." Do you think that if any true minister of God would have been on any of those panels and said, 'Hey, you have all missed the boat.' Why you'd be cut off; they'd cut off your microphone. I do when I'm watching it. Doesn't the world listen to them? *Yes!*

Verse 6: "We are of God; the one who knows God listens to us; the one who is not of God does not listen to us.... [they won't stand for the Truth; they can't tolerate it] ...By this *means* we know the Spirit of the Truth and the spirit of the deception."

There is a spirit of deception that is out there. This whole thing that they are now all clamoring about Christ and Christmas is going to bring them all together in the deception—you wait and see! {note 2-Thess. 2} because they don't have the love for the Truth, God gives them over to a powerful deception. How powerful is this deception going to be in the end-time? Religious leaders doing miracles! Calling fire down from heaven! Seeing is believing! Remember this: If you see it on television it may or may not be true, because they can digitize anything now. That's quite a thing! That's what faith does for us!

Love

- faith works through love
- hope works through love

Verse 7: "Beloved, we should love one another because love is from God; and everyone who loves has been begotten by God, and **knows**

God.... [we *know* that we have the Spirit of God; we understand that] ...The one who does not love does not know God because God is love" (vs 7-8). What is the love of God? *Keeping His commandments!* Some people come up to the Truth and they stumble over it and go on and make excuses.

A man who was in the Church of God was working out in this gym and there was a Protestant minister that he got to know and they started talking about the Bible. After many weeks of seeing each other there on the same day doing their exercises, it finally came out that the man in the Church of God kept the Sabbath. The Sunday-keeping preacher was challenged to go prove it in his Bible. So, after a couple of weeks they came back and the Sunday-keeping minister admitted that the Sabbath was what was taught in the Bible, BUT if he preached that from the pulpit he would lose his job.

He had the Truth to come out of the deception, but wasn't willing to do so because he didn't have any faith. Interesting! Had more faith in the false teaching of Sunday and people than he did in God. If you believe God and have faith in God, when God says—in the person of Christ and also—'Man shall not live by bread alone but by every Word of God' (Deut. 8:3). What does God mean? *Precisely that!* The minister didn't have enough faith to do it.

Here is the whole process. I won't go through this in great deal, but notice what Peter wrote. This is the last epistle that he wrote. He really puts himself into this in a very profound way.

2-Peter 1:1: "Simon Peter..." ***He was never in Rome. Peter never went to Rome!*** When Paul got there in 60_{A.D.}, what did he do? *He called for all the Jewish leaders in Rome to come to his house where he was held in captivity; he was under house arrest!*

The leaders came and he said, 'I want to tell you about the Gospel of Jesus Christ.' What did the Jewish leaders say? *Peter's been here a long time before, we know all about it.* NO! They said, 'We haven't heard of this except that this sect is everywhere spoken against.' That's 60_{A.D.} and it should have been 20 years into Peter's being the first pope in Rome. If he was, he surely didn't preach to them. Furthermore, Peter was the apostle to the circumcision, so if he had gone to Rome he should have gone to them first. It doesn't say that.

Verse 1: "Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who have obtained *the* same precious faith as ours... [faith is the substance; we just covered the building blocks] ...by *the* righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ: Grace and peace be multiplied to you in *the* knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, according

as His Divine power has given to us all things that *pertain* to life and Godliness, through the knowledge of Him Who called us by *His own* glory and virtue; through which... [here's the thing that's profound and important with all of this, and the faith] ...He has given to us the greatest and *most* precious promises..." (vs 1-4).

- promise of eternal life
- promise of glory
- promise of being in the first resurrection
- promise of being with Jesus Christ
- promise of being in New Jerusalem
- promise of living forever without sin

Great and precious promises! Not only those we receive today because of faith, but those that we receive through hope.

"...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..." (vs 3-4). That's why God made you in His image. That you may become, through the process of conversion, like Jesus.

"...having escaped the corruption *that is* in the world through lust" (v 4).

Colossians 1:9: "For this cause we also, from the day that we heard *of it*... [of your conversion] ...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... [by faith, study, prayer] ...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" (vs 9-11). This is to get you through all the trials and difficulties.

Verse 12: "Giving thanks to the Father, Who has made us qualified for the share of the inheritance of the saints in the Light; Who has personally rescued us from the power of darkness and has transferred *us* unto the kingdom of the Son of His love" (vs 12-13). That's very profound! Those are tremendous and inspiring words.

- What is the end of all of this?
- What is the purpose of all of this?

Verse 26: "*Even* the mystery that has been hidden from ages..." In understanding the plan of God, realize this: ***God has made known His secret to you! And has entrusted you with it!*** The world does not know! Isn't that an amazing thing? *Yes!* The mystery; that's what mystery means.

“...and from generations, but has now been revealed to His saints.... [not to the world; the world is in the spirit of deception] ...To whom God did will... [purposely do] ...to whom God did will to make known what *are* the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory” (vs 26-27).

That’s the whole purpose of faith! This faith is to do this: ***The people of God must be inspired!*** God is not going to drive us. God is not going to force us! He gives us free choice, and by His Spirit and by His Word to be inspired. When you are inspired to love God and have faith and do the things that He wants, you want to do these things. Which no amount of coercion, no amount of force can make you do it. Inspired, you will do it.

- that gives you the *desire*
- desire translates into *action*
- *action translates into overcoming*
- overcoming translates into *building character*
- building character translates into *Godliness*
- Godliness translates into *the love of God*

- Ezekiel 20
- Acts 4 & 5
- Revelation 14:12
- 2 Thessalonians 2
- Deuteronomy 8:3

Also referenced:

Sermons:

- *The Coming Economic Tribulation*
- *Administration of Death*

Books:

- *The Coming Economic Disorder* by Larry Bates
- *Persecution* by David Limbaugh

FRC:bo
Transcribed: 6-3-11
Reformatted/Corrected: January/2017

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*

Scriptural References:

- 1) Hebrews 11:30-40, 1, 3
- 2) Romans 10:14-17
- 3) Hebrews 11:6
- 4) Romans 10:16-18
- 5) Matthew 24:14
- 6) Romans 10:19
- 7) 2 Timothy 3:16-17
- 8) 1 Thessalonians 5:21
- 9) Proverbs 28:20, 25-26
- 10) Proverbs 16:20
- 11) Jeremiah 17:5-10
- 12) Psalm 57:1-2, 7
- 13) Ezekiel 3:4-11
- 14) Matthew 10:16-28
- 15) 1 John 2:3-4
- 16) 1 Kings 13:1-10
- 17) 1 John 2:5-6
- 18) Galatians 5:6
- 19) 1 John 4:4-8
- 20) 2 Peter 1:1-4
- 21) Colossians 1:9-13, 26-27

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Matthew 24:14
- Acts 17
- Psalm 1; 91

Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews XXXVI Enduring the Race

(Chapter 12)

Fred R. Coulter

The book of Hebrews and the Church of Sardis have much in common. Rev. 3—we find quite a few parallels in Heb. 12.

Revelation 3:1: “And to the angel of the Church in Sardis, write: ‘These things says He Who has the seven spirits of God and the seven stars....’” Emphasizing the spiritual power of God, and emphasizing the fact that Christ is in the midst of all of His Churches.

“...I know your works... [we’re going to see some works that Paul describes in Heb. 12] ...and that you have a name as if you are alive, but are dead. Be watchful, and strengthen the things that remain, which are about to die. For I have not found your works **complete** before God” (vs 1-2).

Complete could also mean *perfect*. One of the things that Paul is emphasizing in the book of Hebrews is the perfection of Christ and our calling also to perfection.

Verse 3 really makes the tie-in to Hebrews: “Therefore, remember what you have received and heard, and hold on *to this*, and repent....” That’s what you could say is a summary of all of the book of Hebrews.

“...Now then, if you will not watch, I will come upon you as a thief, and you shall by no means know what hour I will come upon you” (v 3). This does not mean coming upon them in the sense of the Tribulation. This just merely means that *God is coming to judge*. Of course, that can happen at any time. God judges us all the time!

Verse 4: “You have a few names even in Sardis... [we don’t know how many were in Sardis, but here He’s saying only a few] ...who have not defiled their garments...”—sin, spiritual compromise with false prophets, with bringing in false doctrines and so forth. As compared with the Laodiceans, the Laodiceans are naked, so it looks like the Laodiceans even lose more than what the Sardisites have lost, because they have ‘defiled garments.’

“...and they shall walk with Me in white because they are worthy” (v 4). We know that the white is the righteousness of the saints.

Verse 5: “The one who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments; and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life, but I will confess his

name before My Father and before His angels.”

We’re going to see the wording in Heb. 12 is very similar to it. What you have with the Church of Sardis—you have a name that’s to live, but are dead—you have a group of people who are giving up, not looking to Christ. This is exactly the thing that we find in Heb. 12, and exactly the thing that we find in the Church today; there are many, many parallels.

Heb. 12:1 refers back to all of the martyrs that are mentioned in Heb. 11—all of the faithful, all of the martyrs. Here we have people who are giving up in the face of the possibility of being martyred. That’s very easy for human beings to do. No one wants to die. In that light, what Paul is writing here is to help them understand what they need to do and how they need to be prepared. If you give up when the going gets tough, then you’re not finishing the race.

Hebrews 12:1: “Therefore, *since* we are surrounded by such a great throng of witnesses, let us **lay aside every weight, and the sin that so easily entraps us**; and let us run the race set before us with endurance.” The *King James* says ‘patience.’ Many places in the *KJV* where it says ‘patience,’ it refers to *endurance*. Endurance is a different quality. There are two kinds of endurance that are taught here:

1. **to endure to the end of the race**
—which Christ said the ‘the one who endures to the end the same shall be saved; because He likens it to a race
2. **to endure by bearing up under a great burden**

Verse 2: “Having *our minds* fixed on Jesus, the Beginner and Finisher of *our* faith; Who for the joy that lay ahead of Him endured *the* cross, *although* He despised *the* shame, and has sat down at *the* right hand of the throne of God.” This shows us the goal, what we need to do.

ENDURANCE

Let’s talk about endurance and running a race:

“...let’s **lay aside every weight**...”—when you’re running a race, especially referring to the Greek culture of that age—how did the runners run? *With virtually nothing on; most of them naked!* He’s

referring to laying aside every weight that holds you back.

“...and the sin that so easily entraps us...”—or distracts us. For example, even in auto racing today, what is the one thing that the driver has to do? *He’s got to concentrate on what’s ahead of him! Beware of what’s on the right and left and in the back of him!* If he gets distracted going at 200-plus mph he’s in a terrible wreck!

Even when you’re running a footrace, you don’t want to wear heavy shoes, heavy clothes, you don’t want anything to burden you down. When you’re running you also have to train. In the training—part of the training is to discipline yourself if you’re going to run. You have to practice; you have to run, because you can’t get into the race unless you’re prepared. You can’t start running the race unless you have built up your endurance. This is what he’s talking about here.

Let’s see how Paul draws another analogy; he has several places where he talks about running a race and so forth. We’re going to look at the racing aspect, or the running aspect, and what it takes.

1-Corinthians 9:24: “Don’t you know that those who run a race **all** run, but *only* one receives the prize?...” There was a runner from Jamaica break the 100-meter world record by 100th of a second. When you watch those guys run—they didn’t run naked like they did in ancient Greece, but now they have very, very tight, but flexible, clothes—which there will be no wind-drag. When they get out there and run, they really go! They have to have the endurance, the strength, the training. This is what Paul’s talking about.

“...That is the way you *are to* run in order that you may obtain *the prize*” (v 24). Today people don’t want to do that. Today people want to have everything easy. For example: We’re all trained with a 12-minute attention span. Where did that training come from? *Watching television!*

Give yourself a little measure on your attention span. See how quickly you get distracted from studying, which is part of the race. How quickly you get distracted from praying, which is another part of the race. How quickly you get distracted from doing the things that you need to do in living your life as a Christian all during the week—from Sabbath to Sabbath. The Sabbath is supposed to be a good time of training so that you learn of the Word of God, you get spiritually exercised and so forth.

Verse 25: “For everyone who is striving for *mastery* controls himself in all things. Of course, they *do this* so that they may receive a corruptible

crown; but we *are striving for* an incorruptible crown.”

That’s why we need to be aware of ‘the sin that so easily besets us.’ You can’t be running a race and trying to get to the end to win the prize and as you’re running along someone says, ‘take this’ or ‘take that’ or ‘take the other’—pretty soon you’re all loaded down with all kinds of things and you can’t continue. How did they control themselves?

- by discipline
- by exercise
- by training

If you’re going to run any kind of short-term race, you’ve got to have wind sprints so that your body is used to going at top speed so your lungs will work, your heart will work, your legs and every part of your body will work. Spiritually speaking, we are doing the same thing. That’s why we can’t be burdened down with all of these weights. That’s why Paul says to ‘put those aside.’

Verse 26: “I, therefore, so run, not as one who is uncertain...”

- you’ve got to have a goal
- you need to know *where* you’re going
- you need to know *the way* you are going
- you need to know *how* you are going there

“...so *also* I fight, not as beating *the air*” (v 26). Not just out there struggling around and guessing. It’s with purpose!

Verse 27: “But I discipline my body...” That’s what we have to do:

- discipline our body
- discipline our mind
 - ✓ with God’s Spirit
 - ✓ with God’s Word

“...and bring *it* into subjection, lest, after preaching to others, I myself might be rejected” (v 27)

One thing Paul always does, he applies it to himself. He’s not just preaching to others, but he also applies it to himself. Let’s see some of the things we need to bring into subjection; Paul calls it ‘bringing it into captivity.’ He likens it to warfare; warfare is likened to a contest:

2-Corinthians 10:4: “For the weapons of our warfare *are* not carnal, but mighty through God to *the overthrowing* of strongholds, casting down *vain* imaginations...” (vs 4-5). Setting aside every weight. If you have a mental sin that is a problem, you’ve got to cast it down—that is a weight. If you are discouraged and depressed, that is a weight—you’ve got to get rid of that.

“...and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought into the obedience of Christ” (v 5).

That’s the discipline! We’ll see about the discipline and the correction of God. We’ll put all of those together. When Paul is talking about the race and the sin and the things that do come upon us, then we need to understand what we’re dealing with.

Notice that it’s with *endurance*; that’s the key. Endurance is what we need, and endurance comes from Christ. There’s a way that you build the endurance, much like he was talking about training and disciplining the body. If you’re going to train, you have to build muscles; you have to keep at it. Physical exercise profits for a little while—we all wished it would profit forever. You go exercise once and it’s all done, but that’s not the way that life is. When we come to different things as we’re getting older and the way that our bodies are and the weaknesses of our body, *discipline is harder!* Every excuse is easier! I know what that’s like.

When I exercise, my body tells me every time: *you don’t need to do as much*—I mean, *every time!* I’ve got to have a set thing that I do. I’ve got to make sure that I do it. The one thing about exercise and running a race is that ***no one else will do it for you!***

- no one else can pray for you
- no one else can study for you
- no one else can keep the commandments for you

Not even Christ! He’ll give you the strength to do it, but the endurance is what we need.

FIXED on JESUS

Hebrews 12:2: “Having *our minds* fixed on Jesus...” That is the key. Too many Christians today—not only in the Church, but mostly in the world—are beyond Jesus. Jesus is just a name. I was astonished to hear—I think it was in The Purpose Driven Church—that repentance and baptism was only for the Jews. ‘You don’t have to repent today, God accepts you as you are. God loves the whole world, so just come and join us.’ That’s not the way it is. You have to *fix your mind* on the *real Jesus!* On His life and everything that He stands for, and everything that He taught.

Having our mind on Jesus as far as a race is concerned, let’s see what this terminology has for us. After Paul covered the section on the promises given to Abraham by God ‘swearing by Himself’ and in blessing and multiplying:

Hebrews 6:17: “In this way God, desiring more abundantly to show the heirs of the promise the unchangeable nature of His own purpose, confirmed *it* by an oath.” This is what is important.

Let me just give you a good example: We hired a carpet cleaner to come in and clean the carpet in the office. We had it done later in the afternoon on Friday so it would be able to dry all weekend. Kim was telling him about what we do here: the tapes, books and different things like this. She was going to give him the book *The Day that Jesus Christ Died*. He said, ‘Oh, I’ll read that tonight and I’ll rent the DVD tomorrow. He likens himself to a ‘charismatic Christian’; he’s also Greek by inheritance. I came up because there were a couple of things that I had to do and Kim introduced me to him and I was checking how they were doing the carpet, if they were doing a good job and all that sort of thing.

He came up to me and he had this gold necklace on and a cross with a Christ on it. He said, ‘What do you think about this?’ I said, ‘How does the Bible read? *You shall make unto yourself any graven image of any likeness of anything that is in the heaven above or on the earth beneath.*’ He says, ‘Well, what if I just have a plain cross?’ I said, ‘It doesn’t say a plain cross.’ He says, ‘Whatever works for me, that’s okay’ ***NO! That’s how you get yourself in trouble!***

How do they come to this point? Because every false Christian minister—and there are millions of them—says that God changed. There are certain things that God improved upon, as we cover and see by the comparison of the two covenants {note Appendix J: A Comparison Between the Old and New Covenants in *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order—A Faithful Version*}

Every time God made a change, He made it from physical to spiritual. He made from a basic understanding to a spiritual understanding—and the standard is higher! Never did God lower the standard. But that’s just the way that people think.

He said, ‘Well, if works for me. You know, the Buddhists took a lot of things out of the New Testament.’ I said, ‘Well, Buddhism doesn’t have it. If you’re interested, I’ll give you a New Testament and also *The Day Jesus the Christ Died*. You need to understand, *God doesn’t change!*’

That’s what we are looking to here: the unchangeable nature of His own purpose. You go clear back to the beginning and what was after the sin of Adam and Eve and who was the first one who came along and said that God didn’t mean what He said? *Satan the devil!* Then God promised the

Messiah right there in Gen. 3. It's been God's *unchangeable purpose*, the nature of His own purpose. That's what people don't like, and that's why people give up.

"...the promise the unchangeable nature of His own purpose, confirmed *it* by an oath; so that by two immutable things, in which *it was* impossible for God to lie..." (vs 17-18). God cannot lie! God does not lie! Whatever God gives us is absolute!

Here's the reason when we have difficulties, "...we who have fled for refuge might have strong encouragement..." (v 18). This is what Paul is bringing out in Heb. 12, that through all the difficulties and all the problems and everything that comes along, there's the encouragement that God is dealing with us as long as we have our mind fixed on Christ.

"...to lay hold on the hope *that has been* set before *us*; which *hope* we have as an anchor of the soul, both secure and steadfast, and which enters into the *sanctuary* within the veil; where Jesus has entered for us *as a* forerunner..." (vs 18-20).

A forerunner in relationship to a race is the one who breaks out ahead of the pack. Every time you watch the Tour de France, somewhere along the way Lance Armstrong breaks out of the pack and goes ahead. That's a forerunner. So, when it's talking about Christ as a forerunner, that's why we keep our mind fixed on Him. He is there as the goal. As a forerunner, He has finished the race. He has entered into the reward.

"...having become a High Priest forever according to the order of Melchisedec" (v 20). That's quite a tremendous thing for us to understand here. *The forerunner!*

Hebrews 12:2 "Having *our minds* fixed on Jesus, the Beginner and Finisher of *our* faith..." We can't do it on our own. We have the race ahead of us. Look at the odds. That's what people look to. Whenever there's a race there's betting. What do they have? *Odds!* This is what Paul is talking about here.

Look at everything that was set against Jesus, v 2: "...Who for the joy that lay ahead of Him... [because He kept His mind on the goal] ...endured *the* cross, *although* He despised *the* shame, and has sat down at *the* right hand of the throne of God." That's how Jesus was able to do it.

Think about *enduring the cross*. That is the worst kind of death there can be. It is meant to humiliate, to be painful, torturous, and when they were hanging on the cross, they left them for the birds of prey to come and pluck their flesh right off

of them, starting with the eyeballs—those are the quickest and easiest to get—it was one where there was nakedness; the worst kind of death that could happen. Yet, the One Who is the Creator God did that! That's what Paul is saying.

Now, if you think you have problems in your life, look at what Christ went through. He had human nature just like you and He had to cry out for strength. He had to realize that everything of God's plan hinged on the very fact of His going through the crucifixion and enduring the cross. On top of that, He also prophesied of it. He prophesied in great detail everything that would happen to Him.

This is why the whole focus of the book of Hebrews is on Christ. Let's look at some of the things that He was looking forward to. Heb. 2 talks about His death. We see this all the way through. What happens when you become 'dead' like the Sardisites? *You forget what Christ has done! You have no comprehension of what Christ has done!* When you're confronted with something that's difficult then you give up.

I think today it's going to be very, very difficult for people to face what's going to come down the road. That's why, if you watch the History Channel, look at some of the things that happened to people in WWII, in all the different wars that are there. If you see some of the things like the historical things showing what happened in the coliseums and the death of Christians and the slaughtering and killing that people went through. I mean, it was absolutely horrendous!

Jesus, the Creator God, had to face the worst ignominious death possible. How was He going to do this without the strength of God the Father? How was He going to do this unless He had the discipline of mind, the discipline of body and the yieldedness to God to endure it? When you look at the parable of the talents—God gave the five talents to one, two talents to one and one talent to the other. The one talent to the one who went and hid it and buried it is very typical of people who wait until the last minute and have done nothing up to that point and expect everything to work.

Well, I tell you what, if you start running a race and you haven't trained and disciplined your body; and if you don't have the strength and endurance; you're going to get weary. You're going to get tired! Your lungs are going to start burning; your heart's going to start pounding. Maybe—if you're really weak—you'll drop over dead of a heart attack. This is why we have to be spiritually strong! I would have to say that we have a long way to go to even be physically strong. I can say 'Amen' to that and know how much I have to do just to keep my

body in shape. I'm not as physically strong as I need to be, but I have to keep at it. If I get weary and don't do the things that I need to do, no one else is going to do it for me.

Spiritually speaking, here's what Christ had in mind, Hebrews 2:9: "But we see Jesus, Who *was* made a little lower than *the* angels, crowned with glory and honor..."

Every time that Paul starts talking about the death of Christ, he also shows that Christ has accomplished, that Christ has attained, and as a forerunner He's done it for us.

"...on account of suffering the death..." (v 9). That's the greatest thing that God can do. That God could come in the flesh and die.

"...in order that by *the* grace of God He Himself might taste death for everyone; because it was fitting for Him, for Whom all things *were created*, and by Whom all things *exist*, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Author of their salvation perfect through sufferings" (vs 9-10). That's what Paul is talking about in Heb. 12

Verse 11: "For both He Who is sanctifying and those who are sanctified *are* all of one; for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren." That's a fantastic blessing and relationship with God that gives us hope, that gives us inspiration.

Here's one of the things that He looked forward to, v 12: "Saying, 'I will declare Your name to My brethren; in *the* midst of *the* Church I will sing praise to You.' And again, 'I will be trusting in Him.' And again, 'Behold, I and the children whom God has given Me'" (vs 12-13).

So, in spite of the loneliness of the crucifixion, what happened? *Everyone left Him!* He was totally alone between Him and God the Father, and that's how Jesus kept His mind on the things so He could *endure the race*. He did it for us!

Let's see what else Jesus did and see how He accomplished it while He was in the flesh. He couldn't just come to the day of the crucifixion and then all of a sudden it was there. Here's what happened:

Hebrews 5:7: "Who, in the days of His flesh, offered up both prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears to Him Who was able to save Him from death, and was heard because *He* feared God. Although He was a Son, *yet*, He learned obedience from the things that He suffered" (vs 7-8).

This is our example! God wants us to learn from the things that we suffer. Suffering is not pleasant. No one likes suffering, but how many here

are without some kind of suffering along the way.

Then you start thinking about some of the things that we suffer today, and some of the things that we get upset about, that we think we're suffering over, are nothing! I mean, NOTHING! What's going to happen when we're really facing difficulties! The tendency is, *instead of being in training and learning and obeying*, we want to avoid confrontation, difficulties, because we live in an age of compromise. For us to have the mentality that we need, the very mentality of Christ, then we have to really study these Scriptures and get these things fixed in our mind, ***having our mind fixed on Christ!***

Verse 8: "Although He was a Son, *yet*, He learned obedience from the things that He suffered; and having been perfected..." (vs 8-9). That's quite interesting! How can God Who's perfect be perfected? *When Christ divested Himself and became a human being and took on human nature He could not be totally perfect as God in heaven above is perfect!* Could not be! He had to learn through the things that He suffered and was perfected!

"...He became *the* Author of eternal salvation to all those who obey Him" (vs 8-9).

Let's see what Christ did. Let's see the things that we are also to do. Here's another aspect of the crucifixion. Not only despising the shame of it, but considering what He did to humble Himself to come to that position. I think that if we could do as Heb. 12 says and keep our mind on Christ and what He went through, and ask for the help and strength—especially the spiritual help, the emotional help and the physical help that we need—we will be able to understand more why we go through the things that we do and allow the character of God to be developed in us, through it. That's what to keep in mind. Keep in mind what Christ gave up. Then ask yourself when you stop and think:

- Will I ever make it?
- Does God love me?
- Does God care for me?
- Does God know what I'm suffering through?

Yes! Yes! He gave up His glory to become a human being to save every one of us. The task was not easy, so therefore, all these feel-good, comfortable, tolerant, compromising sermons, teachings and churches are going to fall apart when the going gets tough! How many left when the way of the door to Sunday-keeping and Christmas and Easter and all those false doctrines were opened and people were told 'that's all right, you don't have to struggle against these things any longer'? Just like

that broadband phone ad—people do stupid things—that’s what they did! They just went right out, because they didn’t understand what God had done for them, and they didn’t understand what Christ personally did for all mankind and each one individually!

Philippians 2:6: “Who, although He existed in *the* form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but emptied Himself, *and* was made in *the* likeness of men, *and* took the form of a **servant**... [Greek ‘doulos,’ which can also mean *slave*] ...and being found in *the* manner of man...” (vs 6-8).

He had human nature; every bodily function of a man; everything that we are confronted with in our life He took upon Himself.

“...He humbled Himself, *and* became obedient unto death, even *the* death of *the* cross” (v 8). Here Christ *willingly* did this. He prophesied about it; understood what was going to happen; worked out all the circumstances so that it would occur. Then on top of it, we find that Jesus said, ‘No man takes My life, but I lay it down for the sheep. This I have commandment from the Father that I lay My life down and commandment that I receive it back.’ That was His point of view.

Stop and think for a minute: Any point along the line, with all the temptations, with everything that Jesus went through—the pull of human nature—He could have given into it.

We need to understand that the strength that Christ had from God the Father—which He had to receive—likewise we can receive that strength from Christ and God the Father, too, to face the things that we need to face down the road. People will react: ‘Well, we’re not facing it, yet.’ *True!* Will you be ready when it comes? What is going to come? *We’ve read of some of those things in the book of Revelation!* How bad is it going to be? *We’re going to reach a time when it’s going to be the worst that it’s ever been in history!*

(go to the next track)

Are we looking to Christ and preparing for those things in the way that we need to?

Hebrews 12:2: “...He [Christ] despised *the* shame, and has sat down at *the* right hand of the throne of God.” He is our High Priest. We can come to Him continually

- knowing that He will help us
- knowing that He will forgive us
- knowing that He will strengthen us

so that we realize that we can receive these things

from Christ, because Christ is the forerunner. He has run the race and has completed it. Now we need to finish it.

Verse 3: “Now meditate deeply on Him...” How do you meditate deeply on Him? *By studying the Gospels; by understanding what Christ went through.*

“...Who endured such great hostility of sinners against Himself...” (v 3). Great hatred even to this day. He says, ‘You consider that. You understand that.’

“...so that you **do not become weary and faint in your minds**” (v 3). If you become faint and weary in your mind you are going to give up.

One way you can think on that is: {note books: *The Day Jesus the Christ Died* and *A Harmony of the Gospels* the 28 prophecies in one day concerning the crucifixion.} It would be good to take each one of those, read it, think about it, meditate on it:

- What does it mean?
- What did Christ go through?
- How did He endure?
- Notice, He didn’t talk back!
- Notice, He didn’t answer back!
- Notice, none of those things took place!

Go back and read the things in the book of Isaiah and see all that He was going to go through, and in the Psalms. Here the Creator God came as a human being and everyone rejected Him; even the night that He was arrested all of His disciples fled. There He was, truly alone:

“...Who endured such great hostility of sinners against Himself so that you do not become weary and faint in your minds” (v 3)—because it’s too easy for people to faint and give up in their mind and go against what God says.

In this endurance, this is the kind of endurance to bear up when the pressure is on. You compare yourself with Jesus and His endurance so that:

- you don’t get weary
- you don’t despair
- you don’t get discouraged

and not detour from obedience or abandon the faith.

When the whole world is doing something, *it’s easy* to go along with what the world does. But to go against it and obey God, that takes an awful lot. What Christ went through here with the “...hostility of sinners...” was the total, active oppression against Him—through scourging, beating

and everything that He went through. It's quite a thing when we stop, meditate and think on Christ and think on the things that He went through.

Verse 4: "You have not yet resisted to the point of *losing* blood in your struggle against sin." Now the athletic thing changes a little bit from a footrace to a boxing match. They had boxing back there in ancient Greece. One of the hallmarks of someone who was really an athlete was when they were able to, even against the fact of shedding their own blood, to win. It was a mark of distinction, that in shedding your blood and winning, you became a real hero.

To give you an example of what I'm talking about, there's a movie out called *The Gladiator*. That was a very good movie in depicting all of the horrible things that went on at the coliseum and how that fighting and warring was so ingrained in these people. As we sat there and watched it, we just had to ask how could people become so filled with 'blood-lust' that they enjoyed and cheered and watched people killed, slaughtered, eaten? As I was watching I was thinking that that was a lot of what the Christians in Paul's day went through. That's what a lot of them were facing in the very near future. That's why Paul was writing this in Heb. 12.

- How are we going to make it?
- How are we going to endure when those times come?
- *Well, the answer is right here!*

So, we just have to conclude that we have not yet given the utmost. *No, we haven't!*

PREPARE

Now, let's look about how Jesus told us to prepare for that time. A lot of our training is spiritual training, looking to Christ and Christ *in* us, *leading* us, and having been the forerunner and preparing the way, and that we received the Holy Spirit of God so that we can have the strength to do it. We look at ourselves and we don't have the strength—not at all. But we can be mentally prepared. How many times in any athletic contest it comes up and it's mental: make mental errors. Spiritually, if we are not mentally and spiritually prepared, then we're going to make those mistakes.

Luke 14:25: "And great multitudes were going with Him; and He turned *and* said to them..." Yes, when He was doing the miracles and healing the sick and raising the dead and causing the blind to see and the deaf to hear and dumb to speak, everyone was cheering Him on. 'Oh, Master, this...' Thousands were healed! But how quickly they forgot.

Verse 26: "If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brothers and sisters, and, in addition, his own life also, he cannot be My disciple."

This is the whole point of counting the cost. This is the mental preparation of having our minds fixed on Christ and what we need to do so that if at anytime it's called upon us to do it, we are ready because we have been exercised mentally and spiritually to that point. **"...cannot be My disciple"**—the utterly impossibility of it!

Verse 27: "And whoever does not carry his cross..."—showing that you're going to have your difficulties, struggles, trials, disappointments, discouragements and things in life that don't turn out the way you expect. I don't think there is one human being on earth today whose life has turned out exactly as they expected. Not one of us! We have to 'carry our cross.'

- What happens?
- What is the difficulty?
- What is the problem?
- How do we overcome it?
- How do we handle it?
- Do we collapse?
- Do we give up?
- Do we accuse God?
- What do we do?

Like one movie on *The Gladiators* in the coliseum, when the Christians were thrown to the lions, I think the movie producer had something in it that was very affective. Here the Christians were all locked up in this pre-release to the coliseum floor with the lions and so forth. They were all in there and they were all praying. One boy said, 'Lord, you didn't tell us about this!' As if, 'if I would have known that I would be meat in the coliseum, I wouldn't have become a Christian.' That was kind of the attitude that was there.

That's why Christ made it clear when we study the life of Christ then we can meditate on it. When we know His teachings then we understand what we need to do.

Verse 27: "And whoever does not carry his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple." That's clear! Unequivocal! That's what Paul is expanding there in Heb. 12.

Then He gives an example, v 28: "For which one of you, desiring to build a tower, does not first sit down and count the cost, whether he has *sufficient* for its completion; lest perhaps, after he has laid its foundation and is not able to finish, all

who see *it* begin to mock him” (vs 27-29). That’s what happens.

Driving through the area of Utah and Idaho, we saw a lot of houses that they didn’t have enough to finish. They dug the basement and they had these little basement windows above ground—part of the basement was above ground—and where they were to have the first floor and build the rest of the house they put on a little roof. Everyone of them—I’ve talked to several of them—intended to finish, but couldn’t do it. When that happens, they either have to have the gumption to get up and do it, or have someone come along and be able to loan them the money so they can finish it. The worst ignominy in the world is to start to build a house and you don’t finish it. That’s why He used this analogy here.

“...begin to mock him, saying, ‘This man began to build, and was not able to finish’? Or what king, when he goes out to engage another king in war, does not first sit down *and* take counsel, whether he will be able with ten thousand to meet him who is coming against him with twenty thousand?... [What are the odds?] ...But if not, while his *enemy* is still far off, he sends ambassadors and desires the *terms* for peace” (vs 29-32).

Here’s another analogy for us: As human beings with our carnal nature and our hostility to God, what are we? *We’re at war with God!* It says, ‘the carnal mind is enmity against God and not subject to the Law of God, neither indeed can be.’ *We’re at war with God!* If you’re at war with God you’d better figure out how to make peace, because you’re going to lose. Hands down you’re going to lose. No one yet has defeated God, not even Satan the devil! Satan was cast down!

Here’s the mental training, v 33: “In the same way also, each one of you who does not forsake all that he possesses cannot be My disciple.”

So, today we have to ask what is it that I cannot walk away from today to serve God? Doesn’t mean you have to give it up today, but mentally speaking, have you resolved in your own mind that there is absolutely *nothing* that you will hold onto, that you will forsake all that you possess. “...**who does not forsake all that he possesses cannot be My disciple.**”

Then He shows that when we do that, v 34: “Salt *is* good; but if the salt becomes tasteless, with what shall it be seasoned?” There’s a new ad out that they have on a sports channel, and they’re outside doing some things and all of a sudden it starts raining. It’s a take off on the difference between good tasting beer and bad tasting beer. Here comes all this water from the sky and a man tasting it and

says, ‘It’s beer! It’s beer!’ Then it ends up him running over and looking in the window of a tavern where there’s a Miller Lite and that has better taste than the beer ‘from heaven.’ So, it’s showing that the beer that came raining down from the sky was tasteless.

Well, likewise with salt. If you have salt that is so bad that you can’t even taste the salt. Have you ever had salt like that? You put the salt on and taste it and you can’t taste it. You put some more on and pretty soon you have all kinds of salt on and it’s no good. You have to have salt that tastes.

Verse 35: “It is fit neither for the land, nor for the manure; *but* they cast it out. The one who has ears to hear, let him hear.” That’s all a part of *meditating on Christ!* To be first mentally and spiritually prepared, regardless of the circumstances!

Here’s the thing that’s hard to do: When the times are good, when the times are easy, when the times are comfortable—you’ve got a nice bed to sleep in; if it’s too hot you turn on the air-conditioner; if it’s too cold you turn on the furnace; if you have a draft you put on a coat; or a robe; or some socks on your feet. If you’re thirsty you go get a drink of water; if you want a treat maybe you fix yourself a lemonade; or if you have nice glass of wine and sit back and relax. I mean, today it is so easy you don’t even have to get up to change channels. You just sit there with your remote. How many remotes do you have in your house?

It’s like another ad: This guy comes out to look for his car and all the cars look the same, so he’s got his remote and *beep, beep, beep*—trying to find his car. Then it shows another car of a different kind coming out and it says if you own a Saab you’ll always keep your identity. We have it so easy today. I mean, just look at us here in church. We’re comfortable. If you’re cold you have a coat on, or a blanket. We’re able to have tables to lay out our Bible. We have snacks over here, we have something to eat. The temperature is just right.

Then to talk about how do we mentally and spiritually prepare for the time when we don’t have these things. Let’s talk about the person who is just unable to get out of bed and come to church on the Sabbath. There are some like that. If you’re sick, don’t come. Same way with keeping the Feasts.

Hebrews 12:3: “Now meditate deeply on Him Who endured such great hostility of sinners against Himself so that **you do not become weary and faint in your minds.**” Ask yourself:

- What am I weary of doing in relationship to God?

- What is it that I won't do, or don't do, that you know that God says to do; but you've become weary in well doing?
- Didn't Paul warn against that?

Don't become weary in well-doing! This is where we are today.

I remember years ago—of course, gas was cheaper then—if we had to drive 150 miles to church, no problem, we'd be there. Whatever it may be. How far we had to go to keep the Feast, no problem, we'd be there. Whatever God required of us, we did. When you become weary and faint in your mind because you haven't trained spiritually, to be mentally prepared for it, then you give up. Then what happens?

Verse 4: "You have not yet resisted to the point of *losing* blood in your struggle against sin." Compare the struggle that Christ had with the opposition and the hostility of all of those against Him, and the struggle that we're fighting. We have to sit down and think about it. ***You have to be prepared!***

Let's use the analogy of Homeland Security. What happened when we weren't prepared for 9/11? Look what occurred. What's going to happen to the Church of God that is not prepared for the times ahead? There will come correction before the disaster hits; God is going to correct! *He promises it!*

This is where we come to, v 5: "And you have already forgotten the admonition that He addresses to you as to sons: 'My son, do not despise the chastening of the Lord, nor grow weary of being reproved by Him; for whom the Lord loves He chastens, and He severely disciplines every son whom He receives'" (vs 5-6).

In looking at the trials and difficulties that we are going through, let's begin to have this perspective that Paul brings us. That we go through these things so we can learn. We go through these things so that we can be corrected. What is the greatest pleasure of all when you've gotten through a trial and you look back with 20/20 hindsight and you understand it? You can find that back in Prov. 3.

But look at this. God loves us. That's why we're going through it. What happens when there is no correction, when there needs to be correction? Just look at this society today. How would God's Church be if God never intervened to correct it? Notice the promise:

Verse 7: "If you endure chastening, God is dealing with you as *a Father* with *His* sons. For who is the son whom *the* Father does not chasten? But if you are without chastisement, of which all are partakers, then you are bastards and not sons....

[there's a reason and purpose for it] ...Furthermore, we have had our fleshly fathers who chastened *us*, and we respected *them*; should we not all the more *willingly* be subject to the Father of spirits, and live *forever*?" (vs 7-9). In other words, God is doing this so we can receive eternal life—which is fantastic!

Verse 10: "For in the first case, they chastened *us* for a few days in whatever way seemed good to them; but in the second case, He *chastens us* for *our own* benefit that we may be partakers of His Holiness." Again, what is the end purpose of all of these things?

When a trial comes, if we focus on the misery and the difficulty that is immediate, we get discouraged, despaired, overwhelmed, more than we can handle; we get weary and give up. That's what people do when they focus on it. But if you're looking to Christ and focusing on Him and realizing the purpose of why these things are taking place and ask God to help us to use these things that we can grow in grace and knowledge, to use these things to be strengthened spiritually and mentally, then we'll get through it. We're going to be partakers of His Holiness!

Also keep this in mind: That's why God has the Sabbath, the Holy Days. Spiritual growth is a constant thing. Overcoming sin and human nature is a constant thing. Not just when you come to Church on the Sabbath, that's for strengthening, training, learning and all of this sort of thing. But the application has to come during the week. That's why when some people think that if they can 'just get to church everything will be wonderful.' NO! ***It encompasses your whole life everyday of the week.*** Everything that you do, everything that you think, everything that you experience, and God has the power, capacity and ability to use those things to teach us, train us, to help us to grow and overcome—so we can be *partakers of His Holiness!*

Here's what Paul said, Romans 8:14: "For as many as are led by *the* Spirit of God, these are *the* sons of God." God is dealing with us as sons. God loves us! Part of the difficulty of going through the things that we suffer is that we don't see that the great benefit will be when we enter into the Kingdom of God. We are looking for the immediate benefit now! That may not happen. It's the spiritual benefit, because He's dealing with us as sons.

Verse 15: "Now, you have not received a spirit of bondage again unto fear, but you have received *the* Spirit of sonship, whereby we call out, 'Abba, Father.' The Spirit itself bears witness conjointly with our own spirit, *testifying* that we are *the* children of God" (vs 15-16). That's why you have to know that:

- God has called you!
- God has given you His Spirit!
- God loves you!
- God knows you!
- God is dealing with you!

He is in all circumstances, at all times.

Verse 17: “Now if *we are* children, *we are* also heirs...” Just like Christ looked ahead to the things that would be once He got through the crucifixion, death and resurrection, so we need to look beyond the immediacy of the things we’re going through and see that God has a great purpose for us, that we are partakers of His Holiness! To be as God is! Satan comes along and says you ‘can be God now.’ God says, ‘NO! at the resurrection!’

“...*we are* also heirs—truly, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ—if indeed we suffer together with Him, so that we may also be glorified together with Him. For I reckon that the sufferings of the present time *are not worthy to be compared* with the glory that shall be revealed in us” (vs 17-18).

This is part of the mental and spiritual training that we need to understand when we are going through things. This will help us go through. This will help us overcome. That we might be *partakers of His Holiness!*

Hebrews 12:11: “Now truly, no chastisement for the present seems to be joyous, but grievous...” That is true! Especially for any of you have been in the service, and the Sergeant gets out there and ‘dresses down’ everybody, make you all stand at attention, makes you do this and makes you do that. When you’re a young recruit, and this happened to me right after I joined the Army:

They said, ‘We want to welcome all of you recruits here. We’ve had a whole week of marching and training and drilling and things like this. Tonight we’re going to have a party—a GI party.’ Once you get done with that, you can get a pass. ‘You want to party tonight?’ *Yea!!!* Everyone wanted to party. Well, it wasn’t the kind of party that people had in mind. This GI party was cleaning the barracks to where there was not a speck of dust anywhere to be found! The beds had to be made just right and if they weren’t made just right, the Sergeant rips them all up and says, ‘make it again.’ Those who really had the ‘joyous work’ were the latrine detail. Of course, down at Ft. Ord where I was, they had old plumbing—rusty toilets and so forth. Those had to shine and sparkle. You clean it and everything looks good to you and the Sergeant comes along and he has a little dentist mirror and he says, ‘Look at all of

that; get all of that off.’ Makes you clean it and do it again. The floor wasn’t done good enough, so you’ve got to do it again.

Everyone is upset with this! It’s grievous. It’s the same way with any trial we go through. It’s grievous! I’ve been through some grievous ones. I know it’s not joyous!

“...nevertheless, afterwards it yields *the* peaceable fruits of righteousness to those who have been exercised by it” (v 11).

Let’s see how correction comes; let’s look at the easiest correction. There is always going to be correction. Everyone wants easy correction.

1. Self-correction with conscience

1-Corinthians 11:31: “Now, if we would examine ourselves, we would not be judged.” Examine yourself! How do you examine yourself? *Compare yourself with the Word of God!* That’s why you study the Word of God. You examine yourself. Self-correction with your conscience is the quickest, easiest way. Even people in the world can do that. Their conscience is stricken and they change their ways.

2. Self-correction with the Word of God

Wherever you read something in the Word of God and you find that convicts you of doing things you shouldn’t be doing, then you repent and the Word of God corrects you. No one else is involved. It’s just you, the Word of God and God. You have the correction and you don’t need any great trial coming down on you.

3. Led by the Holy Spirit

You’re going along and the thought comes ‘don’t do this’ but you do it. Then you’ve gone against the leading of the Holy Spirit. The leading of the Holy Spirit you need to pay attention to.

4. Circumstances and Situations

Now it’s beginning to involve other things and other people. The fastest I’ve ever driven my car is 105 mph and that was about when I was 20-21-years-old and I just bought a brand new 1956 Ford Fairlane V8 hardtop and I going on down to visit my mom in California. I came to a stretch of freeway in Oregon and no access, so I said to myself, ‘boy, I want to see how fast this goes.’ I got it up to 105 mph and the thought struck me: ‘what would you do, stupid, if a tire blew out?’ I immediately quit going 105 mph and got down to 65, and I never again went 105 mph. In some cases, with better cars, I’ve gotten up to 90 mph. On the freeways in California only 85 mph. But I tell you what, every time you see an accident that happens to someone else, that’s

corrective.

5. Other people—fathers, mothers, brethren, ministers

That's harder to take. When other people are involved and the correction comes and you know you're wrong. That's not as hard as the next one.

6. God's direct intervention in your life

That can expand considerably! Think of the four sore punishments of God:

- Famine—haven't been though that, have we?
- Sword—haven't been through that, have we?

The other punishments of God you find in Ezek. 14:21—the four sore punishments of God. They didn't listen! They wouldn't listen! God sent the warning.

How many people are weary of hearing about the Laodiceans? And the very ones that weary of hearing it are the ones who need to hear it, because they're going to end up with God intervening in their lives for the correction. The ultimate correction is:

7. Captivity!

All of those are grievous!

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*

Scriptural References:

- 1) Revelation 3:1-5
- 2) Hebrews 12:1-2
- 3) 1 Corinthians 9:24-27
- 4) 2 Corinthians 10:4-5
- 5) Hebrews 12:2
- 6) Hebrews 6:17-20
- 7) Hebrews 12:2
- 8) Hebrews 2:9-13
- 9) Hebrews 5:7-9
- 10) Philippians 2:6-8
- 11) Hebrews 12:2-4
- 12) Luke 14:25-35
- 13) Hebrews 12:3-10
- 14) Romans 8:14-18
- 15) Hebrews 12:11
- 16) 1 Corinthians 11:31

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Genesis 3
- Proverbs 3
- Ezekiel 14:21

Also referenced: Books:

- *The Day That Jesus the Christ Died* by Fred R. Coulter
- *A Harmony of the Gospel* by Fred R. Coulter

Appendix J: A Comparison of the Old and New Covenants (*The Holy Bible in Its Original Order*)

FRC:bo
Transcribed: 6-21-11
Reformatted/Corrected: January/2017

Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews XXXVII Eight Means of Correction

(Chapter 12)

Fred R. Coulter

Let's just review just a couple of things in Hebrews 12; v 1 tells us about all the witnesses of the Old Testament and everything. One of the problems and difficulties that of much of professing Christianity has today is that they reject the Old Testament. They, in effect, are rejecting the laws and commandments of God, and they don't learn the lessons that are there for us.

Therefore, since many of them preach just the gospel of love, peace and joy—like this one man down in Houston, TX. He doesn't preach any correction to his congregation at all, and he's got a massive congregation. They've got a brand new church, which will seat 16,000 every Sunday. Everything is good, fine, lovely, sweet, positive, and all they do is quote a few Scriptures and tell some nice stories. They are not confronting the facts that everyone is going to be confronted with in their lives.

With that kind of preaching they avoid the Old Testament; they don't understand what it's all about. They don't read the lessons that are there when the actual things of life come upon them, which comes upon every one of us. We all have our difficulties and problems and our own personal sins. We all have our difficulties and problems in the world confronting the world and working in the world and living in the world.

Heb. 12:1 is quite an exhortation. Because we have all of these witnesses, Paul is saying to *quit feeling sorry for yourself*—in a nice way.

Hebrews 12:1 "...let us lay aside every weight, and the sin that so easily entraps us..." When we come to God He will lift the problem, lift the difficulty from us, and He will forgive our sins.

Let's see what we need to emphasize in the way of weight, and let's see what we need to do with that weight. We need to take it to Christ always. There are many weights, many difficulties, many problems. Today we're confronted with them over and over again—not only in our personal lives, but in the lives of everyone else who confronts us.

Here's something always to remember, 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.'"

So, the Truth of life is never given to the 'intelligent.' This is the wise and the 'intelligent of the world. In the Church 'you see your calling, not many wise' (1-Cor. 1) so there are some; 'not many mighty' so there may be one or two; 'not many noble' and we don't know of anyone yet of nobility that have been called. God has called the 'weak, the foolish,' the broken down, that which the world does not want. But He expects us—once He calls us—to do certain things so that He will help us. God is not going to come in with a magic eraser and erase all of your problems. Yes, He will do that with your sins when you repent, that is true, but then you have to learn new behavior according to the way of Christ: a new way of thinking and a new way of living. That is called *change and conversion*, which takes place over a period of time. We will see that Paul is addressing himself to the brethren in Heb. 12.

Verse 26: "Yes, Father, for it was well pleasing in Your sight *to do this*...." The rich, the powerful, the intelligent, the sophisticated *think* that God owes it to them because of what they are. God doesn't deal with them.

Verse 27: "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*."

This all ties in with what Jesus said, 'No one comes to the Father except through Me. I'm the Way, the Truth and the Life.' No one comes to the Son unless the Father 'draws him.' This is what is so important. This is what has happened in our lives. Paul in Heb. 12 wants us to keep the focus on this so that we don't lose it when we're overwhelmed with personal problems and living in the world and all those things that happen. It's easy to allow that to happen.

Verse 28: "Come to Me, all you who labor and are *overly* burdened..."—with problems, sins, difficulties—in the world, in your life, your family—mentally, spiritually, physically.

"...and **I will give you rest**. Take My yoke upon you, and learn from Me..." (vs 28-29). That's why we need to study the teachings of Christ.

I joke about it now, but when I did *A Harmony of the Gospels* the church was in great turmoil, and I did it for a sanity project. That was

true! I did, because I figured if I focused my mind on Christ and do that, then I'm not going to get caught up in all this political nonsense, heresy, false doctrine and things like this. It's the same thing. If you have *A Harmony* don't leave it up on the shelf. That contains in Matthew, Mark, Luke and John the Word of God and some explanations of it so that you know some things about the life of Christ and the Gospel and so forth. How can you take His yoke upon you and learn from Him:

- unless you know what Jesus has taught?
- unless you know how He lived His life? U
- unless you know how He's commanded us to live?

Everything else in the New Testament is based upon the sound words of Jesus Christ.

That's what Paul told Timothy. He said that if they don't 'adhere to the sound words of Jesus Christ, withdraw yourselves from them.' That's why it's important. That's the only way you're going to learn from Christ. Come to Him! That's what He says, 'Come to Me.'

"...for I am meek and lowly in heart; and you shall find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light" (vs 29-30).

Even though you go through the trials and difficulties that you do. You put those burdens on Christ. That's what it's all about, and that's what he's talking about here in Heb. 12:1. So, "...**lay aside every weight...**"

How do you do that? *Put it on Christ!* Lots of times people take weights upon themselves mentally, emotionally and spiritually that are not theirs to take, because they belong to someone else and they live in worry, fear and trepidation about how the other person is doing, rather than praying and putting it in God's hands. They burden themselves down with things they ought to put on Christ. You can't live other people's lives. All of that kind of worry is one of those weights that people carry around, which Christ says, 'give to Me.' Cannot Christ change minds, problems, situations? *Yes!* Even the Psalm says that He can make your enemies be at peace with you. That's why Christ is saying this here.

Hebrews 12:1: "...let us run the race set before us with endurance." This is a race that we have to run, and we don't know what lies over the horizon. We don't know what lies around the bend in the road. We have to keep running, enduring, and you have to be spiritually trained to do this. Just like in a physical race, if you don't train yourself, you're not going to get up and run any kind of race at all.

I saw a very interesting race, it was over in Japan. A 95-year-old man set the world's record for the 100-meter dash. He ran it in 22.5 seconds at age 95, which is just a little over two and half times more than the fastest man in the world. I thought of that when I was reading this verse, look at that! I wonder how much this man at age 95 was training to run that one race? I wonder how often that he practiced it?

Just like with us. Look at every Sabbath as part of that race, which gives us the strength through the coming week. That's why we need the Sabbath every week. That's part of our training. That's part of our enduring. There are two kinds of endurance:

- in the long haul
- to bear up under a problem or difficulty

Like Christ did going through the crucifixion!

That's why Paul said, v 2: "Having *our minds* fixed on Jesus, the Beginner and Finisher of *our faith...*" He was looking toward the end result of what it would do in bringing many sons and daughters into the Kingdom of God.

When you're in trouble, v 3: "...meditate deeply on Him Who endured such great hostility of sinners against Himself..." Remember, He was perfect; He did no sin. Sometimes we end up in problems partly because of our own sins; partly because of other people around us.

Paul saying to keep our mind on Christ: "...so that you do not become weary and faint in your minds" (v 3). What is the first thing that happens in any athletic contest?

1. if you're not trained
2. if you don't have the mental mindset
3. if you become weary physically
4. if you start giving up mentally

What happens? *You drop out and you lose!*

Watch especially basketball, and in analyzing why the two top teams went at it the way that they did, and why the one team finally won at the end was because in the face of ultimate problems they set their minds to do what they had to do to the end. That's what endurance is all about. We'll see some of the other diversions that other people go through.

Verse 4: "You have not yet resisted to the point of *losing* blood in your struggle against sin." Then we come to correction. We'll review about the forms of correction as we go through.

Verse 5: "....'My son, do not despise *the* chastening of *the* Lord...' " God uses many different things for chastening and discipline. If you endure it

and get through to the other side—because it's not pleasant going through it—then you will understand it. Then you will have 100%, 20/20 hindsight vision.

But the reason that it's difficult in understanding it while you're going through it is because God wants you *to walk by faith, look to Christ and trust in Him*. That's how to handle the problem regardless of what it is. When a problem first comes up you get all worried and start getting all anxious and start getting all 'twacked' out about it, maybe even mad, bitter or hostile about it, you have not put the focus on Christ. You have forgotten that God corrects you, and God *does* correct us.

What's the matter with the world today is that kids are not corrected. I tell you, any parent that doesn't correct their kids; any parent that allows their kids to yell, cry, scream, have temper tantrums in the store and at home, or come up and hit them is derelict in their duty to God. God has placed mother and father there to correct and teach the children. If you want to know about childrearing, go read the book of Proverbs. That will tell you all about it. Take care of your children.

I remember one time over here in a store years ago, Delores turned her back for just a minute and Stephen stood up in the stroller—he must have been two or three—and he fell over and hit his head on the cement. It really was bad, terrible for him. Whenever I see some kid in the store that's standing up in one of those carts and mom isn't there looking, or mom can't do anything with him.... I remember once the mother couldn't get him to sit down. She was worried, I walked up and I looked at him and said (very sternly) 'Sit down!' He looked at me with big eyes and I said again, 'Sit down! Your mother wants you to sit down. Now, sit down!' He sat down, she strapped him in, and she said, 'Thank you.'

Always remember this: Whatever correction comes is because *it's for your benefit to help get rid of sin, to help draw you close to God* and so forth. Here's a very important thing concerning correction, come to 1-Cor. 11. Here's where correction begins, and it's the easiest and most important way to do it. It's talking about the Passover and what we need to do.

1-Corinthians 11:31: "Now if we would examine ourselves, we would not be judged." Judgment is the ultimate end of correction. If we examine ourselves we have this promise.

Verse 32: "But when we are judged... [by God in severe correction] ...we are chastened by the Lord, so that we will not be condemned with the world." Regardless of what the correction is, there's a purpose in it, so that we don't be condemned with

the world.

Hebrews 12:9: "Furthermore, we have had our fleshly fathers who chastened *us*, and we respected *them*; should we not all the more *willingly* be subject to the Father of spirits, and live *forever*?"

We're going to see an example of that with Esau a little later. Esau could have avoided the whole problem.

Verse 10: "For in the first case, they... [our fathers] ...chastened *us* for a few days in whatever way seemed good to them... [they did make some mistakes in it] ...but in the second case, He *chastens us* for *our own* benefit... [Christ does not make mistakes] (here's the reason; the goal): ...**that we may be partakers of His Holiness.**"

Every time that Paul talks about correction; every time Paul talks about things that are wrong, he also points us to what the purpose of what we need to do and the goal of where we're going and where we're headed. Think about that; meditate on that, **"...that we may be partakers of His Holiness."**

Then he brings us to reality again, v 11: "Now truly, no chastisement for the present seems to be joyous, but grievous... [and it is] ...nevertheless, afterwards it yields *the* peaceable fruits of righteousness to those who have been exercised by it."

He's preparing for the story of Esau in what he's talking about here. So, whatever the correction is, however it comes, *yield to God! Learn from it!* If it's something where there's anger, hostility or conflict and you don't understand it, pray about it and ask for wisdom and strength to be able to handle it and do it. If you try and go out and do it your own way, guess what's going to happen? *It's not going to work too well and you might mess it up and make it even worse!* I've done that and you've done that.

Verse 12: "Therefore, lift up the hands that are hanging down, and *revive* the weakened knees; and make straight paths for your feet, lest that which *is* lame be turned aside; but let it rather be healed" (vs 12-13).

Again, likening it to a race. Whenever athletes are tired, what do you see them do? *Their hands are hanging down*, and in the case of basketball the commentators always draw this to you attention toward the end of the game: When players are really tired, they put their hands on their hips and they lean over and breathe deeply, same way with football.

The coaches know that and they look out there and see that. What do they do? *They send in a substitute that is fresh and strong, that the weary*

person has to guard. Or in football has to run against and defend against the pass or defend against the run, and you've got a fresh one coming in there BAM! hitting the one who's tired and weak and giving up. What happens? *They lose!*

This is the same thing. This is what he's talking about here. That's why the endurance. All of this comes from Heb. 12:1-12 on endurance. Now, let's look at correction.

Eight Means of Correction:

1. **Internal self-correction**—that's why God has given you a conscience
2. **By the Word of God**—that's why you study and read

The other day I was reading in Ezekiel and seeing the things that are there, and I tell you, if you don't read Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel and see how God deals with peoples and nations, you're not going to fear God, you're not going to love God, you're not going to understand that God is calling us to Holiness as we are to be *partakers of His Holiness* and that God is also a *jealous God*! Why is He jealous? Not in the sense of human carnality and evil jealousy. He's jealous because He's a loving God. He's not going to give His glory to other gods, to other means, to other methods.

That's what Paul talking about. ***Let the Word of God correct you!*** That's why you read some of the things there in the Prophets, what God does to individuals and nations. Heed that! Let that be a lesson to you.

3. **Led by the Holy Spirit**

You have the Spirit of God, God's Spirit is in you, God's Spirit will prompt you to change and avoid. It will prompt you to repent and turn from the direction you're going in. Those are the easiest. Those first three are the easiest.

4. **Situations and circumstances**

God uses those to correct us. Many times in situations and circumstances, what do these reveal? *Our attitude and what we really think!* For, 'out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks!' If the situations and circumstances bring up carnality, hatred, bitterness, sin, anxiety, what is God doing? *Revealing it to you, so that you can repent of it!* That's why.

5. **Other people**

Can be a friend, brother, minister. When it gets to other people that's a little different. What happens when that comes up? *You get uncomfortable and squeamish and you really don't*

like to talk about it! That's why God says in Matt. 18, you first go to the person alone—that means face-to-face. It doesn't mean a phone call. If anyone says, 'I did a Matt. 18 and I called...' That's not a Matt. 18. It doesn't say, 'by the way in the 20th century pick up the phone and called the offended brother. ***NO!*** It says ***'go to him alone.'***

When that happens, listen, be anxious, and probably the correction is true that is coming. If there is some sort of misunderstanding, that's when to iron it out. If you've done something that isn't right, admit it. ***Repent and change!*** What do you have to lose? *Nothing, except sin!* If you're worried about losing face, forget it, that's carnal.

Now, on the other hand, the one that brings the correction: make sure you understand what you're doing, so when you get there you're not bringing a lot of false things that are just worked up in your own mind. There are two responsibilities there. Sometimes you can perceive things that you think that someone is doing, which is really not accurately reflecting what they are thinking inside. No one can! Not even wives or husbands read the minds of their husband or wife. Many times they can make a good guess, but that doesn't mean 100% accuracy.

All of these things are part of correction. Again, go to the book of Proverbs; the best place to start in correcting. It goes right/wrong; good/evil; righteousness/sin in very succinct, easy to understand proverbs. For example: 'The hand of the diligent makes rich, **but** the sloth has nothing.' All you have to do is observe life. That's true in life everywhere. The sloth who is sitting down at the entrance of where the diligent go to work and is begging for food and he says, 'Oh, you rich people, you just have everything and you give nothing to us' and all this sort of thing. And the rich man looks down and says, 'Man, what are you doing sitting there' and so forth. Well, the rich man is not to despise the poor; if he can help the poor improve themselves, then that's what the rich man ought to do. This is how socialism comes in.

6. **God's four 'sore punishments'**—what you don't want!

When God brings His four sore punishments it's because all of the above has not worked. God has no other alternative. Ezek. 14 summarizes the whole thing. It's talking about idolatry.

Ezekiel 14:12 "The Word of the LORD came to me, saying, 'Son of man, when a land sins against Me by trespassing grievously...'” (vs 12-13). It shows that God is long-suffering; allows things to go on and on in hopes that they will repent.

“...and I stretch out My hand on it, and break the staff of its bread, and send famine on it, and will cut off man and beast from it” (v 13). When it gets to the point that God is going to do this, and we can look at this at the end when Christ returns.

Verse 14: “And *though* these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they should deliver *only* their own lives by their righteousness,” says the Lord GOD.”

He repeats it again and lists out His four sore judgments. He says it three times! When God says it three times, do you think He means it? *Yes, indeed!* Take the Sabbath for example. How many times has God said ‘remember the Sabbath, keep the Sabbath, don’t break the Sabbath’—over and over again. Then people come along and lie and say that God ‘did away with the Sabbath.’ God’s going to have a surprise for them.

Verse 21: “For thus says the Lord GOD, ‘How much more when I send My four evil judgments against Jerusalem... [and now it’s going to come upon the whole world] ...the sword... [war] ...and the famine, and the destroying beast, and the pestilence, to cut off man and beast from it.’” If you think that’s just the God of the Old Testament, you’ve got another thought coming.

Let’s see that it follows in exactly the same sequence You don’t want that kind of correction to come upon you. If it does and you find yourself in that situation, what do you do? *Repent!* That’s what it’s all about! Remember that Jesus said that He’s the ‘Beginning, the Ending, the First and the Last.’

Revelation 6:3: “And when He opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature say, ‘Come and see.’ And another horse went out *that was* red; and *power* was given to the one sitting on it to take peace from the earth... [which is *war*] ...and *to cause* them to kill one another; and a great sword was given to him” (vs 3-4).

Look at the next one: famine! Sword, famine, pestilence and wild beasts. Isn’t that what it said back there in Ezek. 14? *Yes!* We have sequence right here.

Verse 6: “And I heard a voice in *the* midst of the four living creatures say, ‘A measure of wheat for a silver coin, and three measures of barley for a silver coin...’ *Rationing!* Because as soon as war happens, supply lines are cut off. How quick is famine going to set in before it takes place here? *Instantly!* There’s going to be famine within two weeks. If you’ve got it all stocked up in your home, you can have a riot out in front of your home, they’re going to come in and kill you and take everything and feed their bodies. Once it gets to that

point, you don’t want that kind of correction. This is what the United States and the world doesn’t understand! *It is* coming, because they turn their backs on God!

Verse 8: “And I looked, and behold, *there was* a pale horse; and the name of the one sitting on it *was* Death, and the grave followed him; and authority was given to them over *one-fourth* of the earth, to kill with *the* sword and with famine and with death, and by the beasts of the earth.” There it is, God is ‘the same yesterday, today and forever.’ What He said back in Ezek. 14 is absolutely true today.

If you survive all of that:

7. Captivity

How many times do we find that in the Old Testament, and yes, in the New Testament they’re going into captivity because of sin! If in captivity, God says if you seek Him and repent, you’ll find Him. *Every one of the steps of correction is to bring you to repentance*, to put you in right standing with God when He forgives you. Ultimately, if that doesn’t work, what comes next?

8. Death

If you die in the faith, *fine*. If you die in hostility and rebellion against God, *beware!* That’s the whole lesson of the Bible and summarized here in Heb. 12. Take the better course of correction.

Look at what Jeremiah said. Jeremiah had to deliver some of the strongest messages and the most condemning of human nature and the way that people behave, because during his ministry Judah, and parts of Israel that were still left there, were so given over to Baalism and paganism and sexual licentiousness and official abominable sins like Manasseh that he had to write some pretty tough stuff! You read what he wrote and it takes your breath away!

If you think that’s bad, read Ezekiel! You’ll almost need a resuscitator to finish reading that one if you think that Jeremiah takes your breath away. Here’s what he said, and Jeremiah had to deliver the toughest form of correction. *Death! Correction for sin!* He pleaded with them! God pleaded with them though Jeremiah. There was even a revival during Jeremiah’s ministry with Josiah. He set the Jews back on course. God said, ‘Ok, because your heart was tender and because you repented and you brought the people back and you re-instituted the right worship and got rid of idols and Baal and the priests of Baal, the captivity will not happen in your lifetime. But after you die it’s going to come.’

Jeremiah witnessed that and gave the

lamentations after Josiah was killed in the battle when he was distinctly told *'don't go to battle!'* He disguised himself and thought he could get away with it. But that message of *'don't go to battle'* was from God and he was shot with an arrow and died. That's when Jeremiah gave the lamentation. You need to know that concerning the ministry of Jeremiah.

Here's what he said concerning himself; this is the first step in repentance. Jeremiah is taking the easy way because he had to preach and warn the hard way. *Over and over again!*

Jeremiah 10:23: "O LORD, I know that the way of man is not in himself; *it is* not in man who walks to direct his steps.... [in the right way and in the way of God] ...O LORD, correct me, but with judgment... [implying mercy] ...not in Your anger, lest You bring me to nothing" (vs 23-24). This is something that we can take and apply to ourselves. *Correct me in that way!*

Verse 25: "Pour out Your fury on the nations who do not know You, and on the families who do not call on Your name; for they have eaten up Jacob and have devoured him, and have destroyed him, and have made his dwelling desolate."

Here he was in the middle of his ministry of condemnation for the people of Israel. What did he do? *He prayed for them!* Isn't that something? Isn't that absolutely amazing? He didn't get up there and say, 'Well, I'm sent from God and I'm giving a warning message and all you people are going to die, and I'm going to be saved! BAM!' *NO!* There's no repentance in that! Those are some lessons for us to learn.

(go to the next track)

Let's add a little bit more to Heb. 12:12 by going to Isa. 35. I think that when you go through that and just take a survey of the references in your Bible and you're going to see how much the New Testament is built upon the Old Testament. Yet, people just want to throw it away. Here's where Paul quotes from Heb. 12:12:

Isaiah 35:3: "Make the weak hands strong and make the feeble knees sure." That means to make them strong.

I tell you what, if your foot goes out on you, or your knee goes out on you, or your hip goes out on you, you're in bad shape. Think about it spiritually. What if you handicap yourself by living in sin? What if you handicap yourself by doing stupid things? It's just like spraining an ankle, knocking out a knee or getting a hip out of joint.

Verse 4: "Say to those of a fearful heart, 'Be strong, fear not...'" Look to God! Again, doesn't this tie in. See how Paul is writing: *fixing your mind on Christ!* This is where he's getting it from.

"...behold, your God will come *with* vengeance, with the full recompense of God. He will come and save you." Then it shows the getting into the preaching of the Gospel.

Let's see the encouragement that God wants us to have. How are you in the face of disaster? Ready, willing and quick to give up? Get angry and mad and throw everything over? Now you know why God had to do what He had to do with His Church: *to see who was faithful; to see who really believed God!* Not only in the Church, but also in our individual lives. When you have a difficulty or a disaster come upon you, a real hard and tough circumstance; let God intervene to help you. Always have what people in the world say, *a positive attitude*; but, I would like to say a *Godly attitude of trust* rather than a 'positive' attitude like the world says, because that's 'bootstrapism.'

Joshua 1:5: "No man shall be able to stand before you all the days of your life...." Realize this: no man can take salvation from you, regardless of the circumstances.

"...As I was with Moses, *so* I will be with you. I will not fail you nor forsake you" (v 5). We're going to see that in Heb. 13 where God says, 'Christ says He will not ever leave you. Christ won't! But why are people willing to leave Christ? *Makes you wonder!*

Verse 6: "Be strong and of good courage, for you shall divide for an inheritance to this people the land, which I swore to their fathers to give it to them. Only be strong and very courageous..." (vs 6-7).

Here's where strength and courage comes from. If you love God—Who is absolute; and you keep His commandments and statutes and laws—which are absolute; and you trust in faith and God and absolute Truth, you cannot have any stronger confidence than that. *No, you cannot!* That's what He's talking about here.

Here's what we need to do as He told Joshua, v 7: "...so that you may observe to do according to all the Law, which My servant Moses commanded you. Do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, so that you may prosper wherever you go. This Book of the Law shall not depart out of your mouth, but you shall meditate therein day and night..." (vs 7-8).

Doesn't that sound an awful lot like Heb.

12? *Meditate deeply on Him!* For us, we can take not only what Moses wrote, but we can add to it what Christ said and what the apostles wrote.

Verse 8: "...so that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it, for then you shall make your way prosperous, and then you shall have good success. Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage. Do not be afraid, neither be dismayed, for the LORD your God *is* with you in all places where you go" (vs 8-9).

If you know that and you believe that and you act upon that, then whatever the circumstances are, you will be able to handle in a much better and greater and more fantastic way through the power and Spirit of God. Not because of you, but because of God! Not because of any greatness that we might have, but because of the greatness of God!

Isaiah 42:1 is talking about Christ: "Behold My Servant, Whom I uphold; My Elect, *in Whom* My soul delights..." Isn't that what happened when Christ was baptized? A voice came out of heaven and said, 'This is My beloved Son in Whom I have great delight.' When Christ was transfigured on the Mt. of Transfiguration with Peter, James and John, isn't that what the voice said? *Behold, this is My Son the Beloved, in Whom I have delight!*

"...I have put My Spirit upon Him; He shall bring forth justice to the Gentiles. He shall not cry out, nor lift up, nor cause His voice to be heard in the street" (vs 1-2). In other words, He's not going to be out there in a 'gang rally' following a movement kind of thing.

Verse 3: "A bruised reed He shall not break, and a smoking wick He shall not quench... [He's not going to come in and do what people think] ...in Truth He shall bring forth justice. **He shall not fail nor be discouraged...**" (vs 3-4).

That's why Paul says, 'Get your mind on Christ lest you think you have great troubles.' That's why every year for the Passover we go through the events and things leading up to the crucifixion so that we understand what He did. Did Christ finish it? *Yes, He did!* What were the last words He said? *It is finished!* Too many people get discouraged because they look at the problems, look at the difficulties that come along. Look at the correction rather than look for the reason for the correction; rather than looking to Christ and so forth.

"He shall...not be discouraged..." What happened? *The whole world was against Him!* Was it not? *Yes!*

"...until He has set justice in the earth; and the isles shall wait for His Law" (v 4). That's quite

something.

Hebrews 12:13: "And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which *is* lame be turned aside; but let it rather be healed." *In other words, look upon the problems and difficulties that come to heal you spiritually.*

Prov. 4—the reason I'm going here is to show how much that the New Testament is based upon the things that are in the Old Testament. That's why Christ said, concerning the Law and the Prophets, 'do not think that I've come to abolish the Law or the Prophets. I have not come to abolish the Law or the Prophets, but to fulfill.' What we are actually reading here is that in the New Testament how He is fulfilling what is in the Old Testament by adding to it. Not fulfilled to eliminate, but to fill to the full by adding to it.

Proverbs 4:23: "Above all **guard the door of your mind** with diligence... [this is all part of what we're talking about here] ...for out of it *are* the issues of life. Put away from you a deceitful mouth, and devious lips put far from you" (vs 23-24).

In other words, overcome your human nature. Isn't that what it's talking about? You can read in there where Paul says, 'Lie not one to another. Be careful of the things that come out of your mouth.' Christ said you'll have to 'give account for every idle word.' That's why you need forgiveness and the grace of God so that account is eliminated.

Verse 25: "Let your eyes look right on, and let your eyelids look straight before you. Ponder the path of your feet, and all your ways *will be* established. Do not turn to the right hand nor to the left; remove your foot from evil" (vs 25-27). That's where Paul is quoting from; isn't that amazing?

That's why I say that Proverbs is good for everyone to read and study. If your Bible study has gotten a little stale, just take the book of Proverbs and study through it. Maybe organize all of the different verses according to some of the topics. I think you'll find it very profound.

Once you've been healed; once you've overcome the difficulties and problems:

Hebrews 12:14: "Pursue peace with everyone, and Holiness, without which no one will see the Lord." This is in pursuing the peace. This is giving a strong sense of urgency. When you have the problems and difficulties pursue the peace, because the end result is going to be sanctification and Holiness. Understand that sanctification is the process of conversion, or ***the end result of conversion is Holiness.***

Isn't this something how we're going back and forth between the Old and the New Testaments, and what are we doing? *We are seeing that it is one complete work!*

1-Peter 1:14: "As obedient children, do not conform yourselves to the former lusts, *as you did in your ignorance....* [Like Paul said, 'The soul that sins usually besets us.'] ...But according as He Who has called you *is* Holy, you yourselves also be Holy in all *your* conduct" (vs 14-15).

What does that mean? *Keeping the commandments of God as led by the Holy Spirit of God, and keeping the commandments of God in the Spirit, not only the letter, but the Spirit.* That's how you're Holy in your conduct.

Verse 16: "For it is written, 'You be Holy because I am Holy.'" So, the whole purpose, the end result, is Holiness. In other words the end result is so that you can be in the Kingdom of God as a son or daughter of God. That's what it's all about. That's what he's saying there, that's why it's so important.

Pursuing peace is the opposite of being the enemy of God. What does it say of those who are peacemakers? *They shall see God!* That's what it's talking about here. What is the opposite of this? *The carnal mind is enmity against God—it's hostile to God—not subject to the laws of God, neither indeed can be!* This is just the opposite of it.

Every introduction of all the Epistles of Paul, when referring to God, say 'Grace and peace from God the Father.' We have been called to have a peaceful relationship with God, not a hostile and fighting relationship. The Holiness and sanctification is all a part of it. We have to realize that all comes from Christ.

Let's see again how the book of Hebrews all ties together in a tremendous and fantastic way from the very beginning to the end. Let's see how when God inspires it—because it's the mind of God—and the way that this is laid out is one of the most highly developed and sophisticated epistles because it's really a sermon, as I explained in the commentary, that Paul must of have given over and over again. It's very evident that he had Luke doing the writing of it under Paul's instructions. That's why it's on such a high level. It's one of the highest levels of Greek—actually the highest level of Greek—in the New Testament. Also, the most highly structured in the way that it's been put together. You can take Heb. 1:1-3 and this lays out the whole format for the whole book. Isn't that amazing?

Hebrews 1:1: "God Who spoke to the fathers at different times in the past and in many ways by the prophets... [Paul is including them; are

we not going back and reading those?] ...has spoken to us in these last days **by His Son.**" What does Paul say in Heb. 12? *Having your mind fixed on Christ Who's the Beginner and Finisher of our faith!*

Verse 2: "Whom He has appointed heir of all things... [pointing to the ultimate goal] ...by Whom also He made the ages... [so you know Who's dealing in your life] ...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" (vs 1-3).

Those three verses tell you everything that the rest of the book of Hebrews is going to cover. That's quite an amazing thing when you think about it. Then you can take that and overlay that chapter-by-chapter all the way through the book of Hebrews. Christ has done it for us. Holiness and sanctification comes as gifts from God. Doesn't that also show that Christ was Creator of the earth? *Of course it does!*

But you go back and you analyze those three verses, not only does it lay the groundwork for the book of Hebrews, but it also sets the tone that you can go back to the beginning, creation, Christ and everything that God has done through Moses, the Law and the Prophets, the Psalms and everything coming up to it.

Understand this: Anyone who says that the Scriptures are just the work of men and not inspired of God doesn't have a clue as to what they are talking about. They're just enemies of God and hostile and contrary to God, and they are the ones who are the experts in scholarship and tearing down the Word of God. How can you study the Word of God and get anything out of it if you don't believe God, you don't believe in God and you don't believe that He inspired the Word of God?

Hebrews 12:15: "**Looking diligently...**" Showing we have to be on top of it all the time. That's why, brethren, we have the Sabbath every week. For what?

- encouragement
- exhortation
- instruction
- building of faith
- building of love

—all of these things come. Stop and think what it would be like if you didn't keep the Sabbath for one month. At the end of the month how carnal would you really descend in your behavior and thoughts? Well, sure you would! It's something you have to do. This is talking about our own actions that we

need to be diligent.

“...lest anyone fall from the grace of God...” (v 15). This becomes important! How do you fall from the grace of God?

- by unbelief
- by carelessness
- by willful rejection of the grace of God

Have we seen people who have done that? Have we talked to those whom you walk away and wonder: Can they ever repent? There comes a point—that’s what he’s talking about here—that if you are not:

- growing
- overcoming
- diligently doing the things that you should do
- let the correction that God gives have it’s work
 - ✓ change
 - ✓ repent
 - ✓ grow
 - ✓ overcome

There is the opposite progress where you will come by your own actions. You will fall from the grace of God. So, there are three things here:

- 1) fall from the grace of God—by your own actions

Repentance will always bring you back to the grace of God

- 2) bitterness

“...lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you...” (v 15). What does that do?

- 3) Defiles many

“...and through this many be defiled” (v 15).

Verse 16: “Lest *there* be any fornicator...”—spiritual adultery—Rev. 17, drinking of the wine of the wrath of her fornication. That’s why God does not want people to go out and bring in other religions and say, ‘Oh, this is quaint and good and right and this is what we need to do to God.’ *NO!* That’s the way of the world!

“...or godless person, as Esau, who for one meal sold his birthright” (v 16).

Let’s concentrate on this thing concerning *falling from grace* or *unbelief*. That’s what the whole book of Hebrews is all about. Remember, we covered the *unpardonable sin*. What we’re going to see is that the book of Hebrews covers the unpardonable sin in three locations: Heb. 6, 10, 12. There are three powerful warnings! If you fall from grace and then you add to that bitterness, then you come to point that it’s talking about here:

Hebrews 6:4: “For *it is impossible...*” The Greek here means *there is no power possible* to make it happen.

“...for those *who were* once enlightened, and who personally obtained the heavenly gift, and became partakers of *the* Holy Spirit” (v 4). See what God has done with you in giving you the understanding of His Word.

“...and who have tasted *the* good Word of God, and *the* powers of *the* world to come, if they have fallen away... [falling from grace] ...to renew *them* again unto repentance...” (vs 4-6). We’re going to see how this ties in with Esau. You don’t want that to happen.

Let’s look at the thing concerning *bitterness*, because it affects many, many people. I’m going to mention this because a lot of people who listen to our studies have been in the Worldwide Church of God. The one who succeeded and finally took over and destroyed the Church was *bitter*

- against God
- against the doctrines
- against the laws and commandments of God

and led the Church down the garden path of Satan into Protestantism. Did his bitterness defile many? *Yes, indeed!* He hated the Sabbath, the Holy Days, the laws and commandments of God. Total carnality, and actually you can say that he was a *spiritual Esau!* Let’s look and see where bitterness starts.

Bitterness and resentment are twins. If you have resentment, you’re going to get bitter. Never be resentful about anything, because *anyone’s resentment cannot change the situation or person over which you are resentful or bitter*. It’s that simple! A lot of people can’t understand the sins that Job had; you might go through and really read it and understand it. Reading the book of Job wears you out somewhat. The reason that it is so long, and the reason that it is here, and the reason that it is important—even though it wears you out reading it—*every human philosophical argument about life and God and correction are contained in the book of Job*.

Here Job had his lament, his complaint, Job 10:1: “My soul is weary of my life... [that happens to people] ...I will give full vent to my complaint; I will speak in the bitterness of my soul. I will say to God, ‘Do not condemn me; make me know why You contend with me’” (vs 1-2). You go to the end of the book of Job and you will see that he changes his tune considerably.

Verse 3: “Is *it* good to You that You should

oppress, that You should despise the work of Your hands, and shine upon the counsel of the wicked?”

Is that not an accusation against God? *Yes!* What happens when you speak in bitterness? *You say a lot of things that are very hurtful! You say a lot of things that are very condemning!* In doing so, in speaking in bitterness and resentfulness, what happens? *You reveal your own deep inner problems that you need to go to God and repent of and deal with!*

- *anger* is not going to correct bitterness
- *resentfulness* is not going to correct bitterness
- *blaming others* is not going to correct bitterness
- *blaming God* is not going to correct bitterness

Even though I mentioned some things concerning Worldwide [Church of God], people also need to get over Worldwide—it is never coming back! Face the circumstances that are, repent and draw to God. Don't be accusing God. Here Job is even accusing God. He's saying, 'God, You don't know what it's like to be human.'

Verse 4: “Have You eyes of flesh? Or do You see as a man sees?...” You're not looking at things the way that I do. You're impossible! Isn't that what happens? *Yeah, God, You live forever!*

Verse 5: “*Are Your days like the days of man? Are Your years like man's days, that You seek out my iniquity, and search for my sin?*” (vs 5-6).

God, You're just finding fault. Notice the difference in the attitude of this and Jeremiah, who says, 'Oh, God, correct me in Your mercy. I know that the way of man is not in him.' Quite a different thing!

Why is this? *Because Job was not converted until the end!* This is the unconverted, bitter mind speaking and viewing God from a human point of view. You have the same thing with the problem of the Jews today, especially those who are orthodox and keep all of these laws. Why do the Jews have so much trouble?

- they have rejected Jesus Christ
- they cling to their traditions
- they blame God and they're bitter against God

They produce the greatest number of atheists per portion of population of any people in the world, because of this very attitude here.

Verse 7: “Although You know that I am not

wicked, yet *there is* none who can deliver out of Your hand.... [You've got me unjustly, God] ...Your hands have made me and shaped me, together all around; yet, You destroy me” (vs 7-8). What did God do in the end? *He rewarded him double and gave him double length of life.*

Verse 9: “Remember, I beseech You, that You have formed me as the clay; and will You bring me into the dust again?”

Verse 14: “If I sin... [which, God, I haven't] ...then You mark me... [go ahead, You do it then, but now] ...and You will not acquit me from my iniquity. **If** I am wicked, woe to me; and **if** I am righteous...” (vs 14-15).

That's why you have to keep your mind fixed on Christ. Job had his mind fixed on himself. He was judging God entirely from his internal resources and his carnal mind.

“...I will not lift up my head, *being* filled with confusion—therefore look upon my affliction” (v 15). Doesn't this sound an awful lot like what we've covered in Heb. 12? If you let bitterness reign you're going to be in trouble.

Deuteronomy 29:9—this is exactly what the world's Christianity has come to; very profound! “Therefore, keep the words of this covenant and do them so that you may prosper in all that you do. You stand today, all of you, before the LORD your God... [we have direct access into the presence of God through prayer] ...your captains of your tribes, your elders, and your officers, all the men of Israel, your little ones, your wives, and your stranger that is in your camp, from the cutter of your wood to the drawer of your water” (vs 9-11).

Here's this great congregation that Moses is giving his final speech to before he walks up onto Mt. Nebo and dies.

Verse 12: “So that you should enter into covenant with the LORD your God and into His oath which the LORD your God makes with you today; that He may establish you today for a people to Himself...” (vs 12-13).

That's what God is doing with us. He calls us especially to establish us to Him.] ...and *that* He may be your God as He has said to you and as He has sworn to your fathers—to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob” (vs 9-13). Again, notice how everything goes back to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

Verse 14: “Nor do I make this covenant and this oath with you only, but with *him* who stands here with us today before the LORD our God, and also with him that is not here with us today” (vs 14-

15). In other words, those who shall be born in the future.

Verse 16: “(For you know how we have lived in the land of Egypt and how we came through the nations which you passed. And you have seen their abominations and their idols, wood and stone, silver and gold, which *were* among them), lest there should be among you man, or woman, or family, or tribe, whose heart turns away today from the LORD our God to go serve the gods of these nations... [the whole purpose of the Passover] ...lest there should be among you a root that bears gall and wormwood” (vs 16-18)—the source of bitterness.

Verse 19: “And it shall come to pass when he hears the words of this curse that he shall bless himself in his heart...” In other words, when he hears the words of what’s going to happen in the correction from God, if he goes out and serves other gods; if he goes out and does as the other nations have done.

“...saying, ‘I shall have peace, though I walk in the stubbornness of my heart,’ to the sweeping away of the watered and the parched” (v 19). Going out and serving idols. Isn’t that what has happened to Christendom today? *Exactly!*

Verse 20: “Then the LORD will not be willing to forgive him, but the anger of the LORD and His jealousy shall smoke against that man, and all the curses that are written in this book shall lie upon him, and the LORD shall blot out his name from under heaven. And the LORD shall separate him unto evil out of all the tribes of Israel, according to all the curses of the covenant that are written in this Book of the Law” (vs 20-21). God has a controversy with the nations.

Because evil things are not happening in your neighborhood don’t think that everything is well. ***God is going to judge the world and it is coming!*** For example: I gave the sermon on *The Coming Economic Tribulation*. It hasn’t happened right away, but it will happen! And the other things that God has promised to happen *will happen!* Just like when we read in the Prophets and so forth, because what they spoke and said was going to happen didn’t happen immediately, people continued in their sins and continued in the things that they were doing as if it wouldn’t happen.

Likewise in the Church, people continue in their laziness and their slothfulness and the different things that come along, let it pile up and become like Job in bitterness, or go out and give up on God and become an apostate like Esau and say, ‘I will have peace. I will have blessings.’ Because God doesn’t strike them down immediately in their tracks, people think that it’s okay and good.

No! It’s coming! God’s mercy is just holding off to see if there’s repentance. What is happening, the Church is going to the world for ‘religion.’

I got a call from a man in Idaho who is the director of ministerial teaching for the Church of God Seventh Day. He wants to use some of the material we have to help teach different ministries. I sent him *A Harmony of the Gospels; The Day Jesus the Christ Died*, and some other things, and he said the same thing. He said that the Church of God Seventh Day and the ministers are going to the Protestants to see how to be ‘religious.’ I reflected to him, ‘That’s because of lust, because they want numbers.’

What happens is that when you’re not drawing to God, you’re looking to physical things and carnal numbers and you are counting. God starts with the individual, not with the masses. You need to understand that. There’s going to be no cure for the Church unless it starts with each one of us individually. There is no cure for the ministry unless they apply themselves to the Word of God and believe God and stop being ‘religious’ and stop being stubborn toward God and rejecting His laws and commandments.

I also told him about the Holy Days, and he believes in them and he keeps them. He says, ‘Yes, there are a lot more Church of God Seventh Day people that are beginning to see that.’ He asked if there was anything that I could do and I said, ‘Yes, I will let you know up front that if you have me speak to any of your ministers is concerning the Holy Days.’

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*

Scriptural References:

- 1) Hebrews 12:1
- 2) Matthew 11:25-30
- 4) Hebrews 12:1-5
- 5) 1 Corinthians 11:31-32
- 6) Hebrews 12:9-13
- 7) Ezekiel 14:12-14, 21
- 8) Revelation 6:3-4, 6, 8
- 9) Jeremiah 10:23-25
- 10) Isaiah 35:3-4
- 11) Joshua 1:5-9
- 12) Isaiah 42:1-4
- 13) Hebrews 12:13
- 14) Proverbs 4:23-27
- 15) Hebrews 12:14
- 16) 1 Peter 1:14-16

- 17) Hebrews 1:1-3
- 18) Hebrews 12:15-16
- 19) Hebrews 6:4-6
- 20) Job 10:1-9, 14-15
- 21) Deuteronomy 29:9-21

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- 1 Corinthians 1
- Matthew 18
- Hebrews 13
- Revelation 17
- Hebrews 10

Also referenced:

Sermon: *The Coming Economic Tribulation*

Books:

- *A Harmony of the Gospels* by Fred R. Coulter
- *The Day that Jesus the Christ Died* by Fred R. Coulter

FRC: bo

Transcribed: 6-21-11

Reformatted/Corrected: January/2017

Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews XXXVIII Lessons of Esau & Jacob and The Inheritance of the Firstborn

(Chapter 12)
Fred R. Coulter

The book of Hebrews was written for a time just like we are living in today; a time when there was enough peace and safety that you could still worship God in Spirit and in Truth. It was a time just before the disaster and the destruction of Jerusalem. That's similar for what it is for us today. We're living in time just before the demise of the nations of Israel. It also brings about something that's very, very important and necessary for people who have been in the Church a long time.

When we've been in the Church a long time and we've known about God's Word for a long time and we have a great deal of knowledge of God's way, what happens? *We do not exercise ourselves spiritually in the way that we need to.* We become weak, just like someone who's running a race; unless they are trained and keep in training, and keep themselves up they're not going to be able to cross the finish line. This is what Paul has brought out here in everything that he has written in Heb. 12 especially. He's coming down to the final conclusion of what he is bringing out.

Hebrews 12:12: "Therefore, lift up the hands that are hanging down..." In other words, be strengthened spiritually, just like a runner has to when he's tired and exhausted, his arms are hanging down.

"...and *revive* the weakened knees... [don't let the troubles and difficulties get you down] ...and make straight paths for your feet... [you have to make straight the way you are going with the Word of God] ...lest that which *is* lame be turned aside; but let it rather be healed" (vs 12-13).

Likewise with whatever the problems and difficulties that you are going through, or whatever stresses in your life, or whatever trial you are going through, because we will! Trust God, the trials that we are going through today, though they may impact us emotionally, though we may feel that they are very difficult upon us, it is nothing compared to what lies ahead. We need to understand that. So, while we have the time, **"...let it rather be healed."**

Verse 14: "Pursue peace with everyone... [peace with God and everyone within the Church] ...and Holiness, without which no one will see the

Lord." That's the whole point! We are going to see God! We are going to be with God! He's going to bring out some things here to show it.

Verse 15: "Looking diligently... [it's something that has to be done continuously] ...lest anyone **fall from the grace** of God..."

The way you fall from the grace of God is outlined all the way through the book of Hebrews, because that was the thing that God inspired Paul to see and understand what was happening then. If you could say that there is any one book for all the Churches of God in the end-time to really study and to really know and really understand, it is the book of Hebrews. It's talking about our condition today that is a prelude to the disasters which are coming on the world, just like it was then before the destruction of Jerusalem.

"...lest any **root of bitterness** springing up trouble *you*..." (v 15). That's what happens when things don't work out the way that you *think* they should work out, and the way that you *think* God should answer your prayers, then you can be very troubled and bitter. Notice how it is:

- you *fall from grace*
- then a *root of bitterness*

"...springing up trouble *you*..."

In a recent publication there are some people that are very disillusioned with one of the Churches of God and they are now suing that Church of God for \$93,000 as re-imbursement for tithes and offerings that they have sent. Just like in the world when the government mis-spends money, what happens? *People get bitter! They get mad! They get angry!* Well, in sending the money into this particular Church of God, if they felt that way about it, why should they send it in?

That's why not only should the tithes be given, but there should also be given a report on how they are spent. That's what we do. Are these people, because they feel that money was given under false pretenses, now going to be angry when they lose their case and the judge denies that money? You can't prove how your money was spent at all. Are they then going to get bitter? I know a lot of people

who got bitter over different things—what happened?

“...and through this many be defiled” (v 15). Then many people are affected. You can’t have that. Then what happens? *Once it gets to that point and bitterness brings forth its fruit, then there is apostasy!*

Verse 16: “Lest *there* be any fornicator or godless person, as Esau... [Esau is quite a lesson!] ...who for one meal sold his birthright.” There are many different things that are involved here that are instructive to us.

Verse 17: “Because you also know that afterwards, when he wished to inherit the blessing, he was rejected; *and* he found no room for repentance, although he sought it... [the blessing; not repentance] ...earnestly with tears.”

Let’s go back to the book of Genesis and examine concerning Esau and Jacob. Let’s see how that, in many cases, some of the choices that we make could change the outcome if we would make a different choice. Let’s see what happened to Esau. Let’s get a little background and history:

Genesis 25:19: “And these *were* the generations of Isaac, Abraham’s son. Abraham begat Isaac. And Isaac was forty years old when he took Rebekah to wife, the daughter of Bethuel the Syrian of Padan Aram, the sister of Laban the Syrian” (vs 19-20)—not really of the Syrian race as we would call it today, but he lived in the area of Syria.

Verse 21: “And Isaac prayed to the LORD for his wife because she *was* barren. And the LORD heard him, and Rebekah his wife conceived. And the sons struggled together within her. And she said, ‘If *it is* well, why *am* I this way?’ [Why is this such a difficult pregnancy?] ...And she went to inquire of the LORD. And the LORD said to her, ‘Two nations *are* in your womb, and two kinds of people shall be separated from your belly. And the one people shall be stronger than the other people, the older shall serve the younger’” (vs 21-23).

This was by *God’s decree!* So, there are certain things, by God’s decree and by God’s creation, that He alone is going to determine. He said that there are ‘two nations and He said the elder shall serve the younger.’ God already pre-determined what was going to happen.

Verse 24: “And when her days to be delivered were fulfilled, behold, twins *were* in her womb!.... [they didn’t have electronic scanning back then] ...And the first came out red, like a hairy

garment all over. And they called his name Esau” (vs 24-25).

This also tells us that God, at any time, can raise up a race of people that may in fact look different from mother and father. Maybe that will help us answer the question: How did the races come about? *God caused them!*

Verse 26: “And after that his brother came out, and his hand took hold on Esau’s heel. And his name was called Jacob. And Isaac *was* sixty years old when she bore them. And the boys grew. And Esau was a skilled hunter, a man of the field. And Jacob was a quiet man, living in tents.... [more like a merchant] ...And Isaac loved Esau because he ate of *his* venison. But Rebekah loved Jacob” (vs 26-28).

Here you have father and mother problems. You’ve got the difficulty of showing partiality one to the other. Then you also have the competition between the boys and the approval of mother or the approval of father. All of this is mixed in there. Nevertheless, through it all, God is going to bring out what *He* desires.

Verse 29: “And Jacob boiled soup. And Esau came from the field, and he was faint. And Esau said to Jacob, ‘I beg you, let me eat of the red, this red *soup*, for I am faint.’ Therefore, his name was called Edom.... [because of red pottage] ...And Jacob said, ‘Sell me your birthright today’” (vs 29-31).

Jacob did not have to do that, because mother and father should have told them that God had decreed that the older would serve the younger. If they would have understood that things could have been different, but you have carnality involved. So, Jacob says, “...**Sell me your birthright today.**”

Verse 32: “And Esau said, ‘Behold, I *am* at the point of dying...’” This was not just coming in out of the field and he was hungry. He may have been out there hunting for days and days and come back and at the point of death.

“...and what *profit shall* this birthright be to me?” (v 32). Esau didn’t have any faith to say, ‘No, I’m not going to sell it, and if you don’t give me some pottage to eat, then God will provide some food for me some other way.’ He didn’t exercise any faith at all.

Verse 33: “And Jacob said, ‘Swear to me this day.’ And he swore to him, and he sold his birthright to Jacob. Then Jacob gave Esau bread and soup of lentils. And he ate and drank, and rose up

and went his way. Thus did Esau despise *his* birthright” (vs 33-34).

This is a New Testament lesson for us. What is your birthright at the resurrection? *To be born again into the Kingdom of God!* Esau had an inheritance. The birthright goes to the firstborn, provided that the firstborn does not violate that birthright. Remember the case of Reuben. Reuben was the firstborn of Leah, and Joseph was the firstborn of Rachel. Why did Reuben lose his birthright? *He went up on his father's bed and committed adultery with one of the handmaids!* He violated the inheritance of the firstborn. The next firstborn was Joseph, the firstborn of the second wife. The birthright went to Joseph.

Likewise, we have a similar thing here. Esau despised his birthright. If Esau would not have sold his birthright, and if Esau would have said, ‘No, I’m not going to do that, do you not think that both of them would have received what God intended them to receive? *Of course!* Jacob could have said, ‘You’re my brother, sure I’ll feed you.’ He would have known that the blessing was coming to him. Why would he have to go out and exercise his will? This is a good example that ***you don’t help the prophecies of God with your own schemes!***

One man believing that the place of safety was in Petra tried to negotiate to buy Petra from the king of Jordan, to help the prophecies of God along. Well, it didn’t work out; same way here. Now what do we have?

Genesis 26:1: “And there was a famine in the land (besides the *former* famine that had been in the days of Abraham). And Isaac went to Abimelech, king of the Philistines, to Gerar. And the LORD appeared to him and said, ‘Do not go down into Egypt. Live in the land, which I shall tell you of. Stay in this land, and I will be with you and bless you, for to you and to your seed, I will give all these lands; and I will establish the oath, which I swore to Abraham your father. And I will multiply your seed as the stars of the heavens and will give to your seed all these lands. And in your seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, **because Abraham obeyed My voice and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws**” (vs 1-5).

That is a prophecy expanding clear out to the whole fulfillment of the plan of God. All the way! That’s projected all the way forward to Rev. 21-22. Yet, he didn’t know it! Then he dwelt there and so forth. He got into lying, like his father.

Gen. 27—here we find some more chicanery going on. Here we find that Rebecca wanted to help Jacob get the blessing. The blessing was going to go to Jacob anyway. But, what happened to Esau because he sold his birthright? Esau probably would not have had such a horrible thing happen to him had he said, ‘It is God’s will, it belongs to you, I acquiesce. I’m not going to fight God.’ Just think how the history of the world could have been changed.

Then you know what happened. Rebecca said, ‘Look, Esau is gone, I will help you get the blessing. It apparently was time for the blessing to come. Since Isaac loved Esau so much, ‘what we’re going to do is we’re going to get you some goat’s skin and make you hairy on the back of your neck, and I will fix up the venison from the goat to taste just like the stew that Esau cooks for Isaac and you go in, since he is almost blind, and you go ahead and present yourself as Esau.’ So he did! Jacob said, ‘Well, you feel like Esau—as he felt the back of his neck—but you sound like Jacob. Are you my son Esau?’ *Yes! I am!* Jacob had to pay for that when he went to get his wife—remember? Laban lied to him. God’s justice is all the way through here on this.

What happened when Esau did not get the blessing? You can’t give the blessing twice—it’s only once! Inheritance is only transferred once! That’s the whole point. You cannot despise the Word of God. You cannot try and work things out your way and expect to get the blessing. God foreordained that it would go to Isaac. That’s just the way that it was. Isaac doing what he did, did not change from what God had planned. Esau doing what he did, did not change what God had planned. BUT, in the receiving of the blessing from God, it didn’t come the way that Jacob expected. *No!* God had to correct him for his sins first, *which He did!* Now then, we have Esau and if he would have said, ‘I know that it goes to my brother, then he would not have received this blessing which is nigh unto a curse!

Genesis 27:34: “And when Esau heard the words of his father, he cried with a great and exceedingly bitter cry, and said to his father, ‘Bless me, even me also, O my father!’ And he said, ‘Your brother came with deceit, and has taken away your blessing.’ And *Esau* said, ‘Is he not rightly called Jacob? For he has supplanted me these two times—he took away my birthright, and behold, now he has taken away my blessing.’ And he said, ‘Have you not reserved a blessing for me?’” (vs 34-36).

Right at that point there could have been a

change. He wanted the blessing; instead of repenting for giving it away for such a cheap price. The reason it was for a 'bowl of pottage' is to show the absolute insanity of giving up eternal life for a slight physical satisfaction. That's quite a lesson.

Then the blessing came, v 37: "And Isaac answered and said to Esau, 'Behold, I have made him your lord, and all his brethren I have given him for servants. And with grain and wine I have sustained him. And what shall I do now to you, my son?' And Esau said to his father, 'Have you but one blessing, my father? Bless me, even me also, my father.' And Esau lifted up his voice and wept. And Isaac his father answered and said to him, 'Behold, your dwelling shall be far from the fatness of the earth and far from the dew of heaven from above. And you shall live by your sword and shall serve your brother. But it shall come to pass that when you shall have the dominion, you shall break his yoke from off your neck'" (vs 37-40).

So, Esau is going to have a great hand in bringing down Israel. It's no marvel the problem we are involved in, in the Middle East and so forth. That's all a part of this. Esau is going to break that yoke. That's what the hatred and the vengeance is all about. Still to this day, we have the blessing and they don't! God is going to use them to correct us. That's what's going to happen in the end.

Verse 41: "And Esau hated Jacob..." Isn't that what we have today? Isn't the hatred from the descendants of Esau and Ishmael—not so much Ishmael, but mostly Esau—hatred? Blind, unreasoned cruelty! God is going to use him to correct us because we have despised the blessing that God has given to us. There's quite a lesson here!

Here's the lesson for us, Heb. 12:16, and let's read into this a little bit more and I want you to put this in the context of the soon destruction of Jerusalem. I want you to put this in the context of, at the time the destruction of Jerusalem, that many of the Edomites—or Esauites—were circumcised practitioners of Judaism and known as Jews. I want you to look at the true inheritors of the spiritual promise, who were then beginning to get mixed up in a movement with the Esauites Jews to fight the Romans. That's what the whole thing is about here. This is also a very direct warning that don't go join Esau to try and work things out physically and leave God and give up on God and God's way for a physical cause.

Hebrews 12:16: "Lest *there* be any fornicator or godless person, as Esau..." You can read in the book of *Josephus* what happened. The

Esauites turned them over to the Romans. When it came time to defend the city against the Romans when Titus came with his army at the last, all of the Esauites withdrew. Instead of defending the city, they withdrew. The Romans came and conquered. They betrayed the true Jews. Just like people do today, they still want the blessing of God without doing it God's way. They want to have eternal life but not trust in Christ. They want to receive the blessings of God but not the way that God says.

What happened? *He was rejected!* Found no room for repentance, because he'd already done it. It was over and done, v 17: "...although he sought it earnestly with tears."

This is instructive, because when Israel was out there in the wilderness, and when it was time for them to enter into the 'promised land' you know what happened. They sent in the spies and they came back and all of them said it's 'impossible for there are giants and their cities are walled up.' But Joshua and Caleb said, 'No! No! God will fight for us.' Here's what happens: God said, 'All right, you're not going in.'

Deuteronomy 1:26: "Yet, you would not go up..." God is saying, 'I'm going to give you the inheritance, go in.'

"...but rebelled against the commandment of the LORD your God. And you murmured in your tents and said, 'Because the LORD hates us...'" (vs 26-27).

How many people have said that keeping God's commandments is a hateful thing? How many then end up hating God? Here is a root of bitterness among them; look what happened.

"...He has brought us forth out of the land of Egypt to deliver us into the hand of the Amorites to destroy us. Where *shall* we go? Our brethren have broken our hearts, saying, "We have seen there a people greater and taller than we *are*. The cities are great and walled up to heaven, also the sons of the giants *are there*.'" Then I said to you, 'Do not dread them nor be afraid of them. The LORD your God Who goes before you shall fight for you, according to all that He did for you in Egypt before your eyes'" (vs 26-30).

Great lesson! Whatever problem you have, **let God fight it for you.** Don't stand by and do nothing, but you let God open the doors and close the doors and fight for you.

Verse 31: "And in the wilderness where you have seen how the LORD your God carried you,

as a man carries his son, in all the way that you went until you came into this place.’ Yet, in this thing you did not believe the LORD your God, Who went in the way before you to search you out a place to pitch your tents, in fire by night, to show you by what way you should go, and in a cloud by day. And the LORD heard the voice of your words, and was angry and swore, saying, ‘Surely there shall not one of these men of this evil generation see that good land which I swore to give to your fathers’” (vs 31-35).

That was when all of those over 20-years-old would die in the wilderness and they wandered for 40 years.

Verse 36: “Except Caleb the son of Jephunneh; he shall see it, and to him I will give the land that he has trodden upon, and to his sons because he has fully followed the LORD.” Key lesson! To avoid all these things we’re talking about, *wholly—completely*, follow the Lord.

Verse 37: “Also the LORD was angry with me for your sakes, saying, ‘You also shall not go in there. Joshua the son of Nun, who stands before you, he shall go in there. Make him strong, for he shall cause Israel to inherit it. And your little ones, who you said would be a prey, and your children who in that day had no knowledge between good and evil, they shall go in there. And I will give it to them, and they shall possess it. But you turn and take your journey *back* into the wilderness in the direction of the Red Sea.’ And you answered and said to me, ‘We have sinned against the LORD; we will go up and fight...’” (vs 37-41).

The whole lesson here is this: ***There comes a point when a change of mind is too late!*** That’s the whole point here. What did they do?

“...according to all that the LORD our God commanded us.’ And when each one of you had buckled on his weapons of war, you were ready to go up into the hill. But the LORD said to me, ‘Say to them, “Do not go up, nor fight, for I *am* not among you, you will be beaten by your enemies”’” (vs 41-42).

A good cause! ‘We’re going to go in and do it!’

Verse 43: “So, I spoke to you. And you would not hear...” That’s happened with many people in the Church. How many people have you spoken to that have just given up on everything. What are they doing? *They’re rejecting the inheritance! They’re refusing to walk in the way of God!*

Verse 43: “...but rebelled against the commandment of the LORD, and went presumptuously up into the hill. And the Amorites who lived in that mountain came out against you and chased you, even as bees do, and destroyed you in Seir, to Hormah. And you returned and wept before the LORD. But the LORD would not hearken to your voice, nor give ear to you” (vs 43-45). That’s the same thing that happened with Esau. You have two cases:

1. one giving up the birthright by selling it
2. the other refusing to do what God said to get it

Then trying to have a change of heart after God already made up His mind. The key is this: IF anyone out there still has the Spirit of God within them, now is the time to stir up that Spirit of God before it comes to the point that it is no longer there. That’s what Paul is writing about and trying to stir them up to realize that their inheritance is greater and more fantastic than anything that you could even imagine. Now then, He begins to draw a comparison so that they would understand what He’s talking about.

So, in both cases—even though they cried, moaned and groaned—Esau and the children of Israel, because they didn’t do what God wanted them to do *when* He wanted them to do it, they didn’t receive it. Let that be a great lesson for us. We can tie that in with many other things. Look at the parable of the ten virgins, the parable of the talents, the parable of the different things that Jesus taught about receiving the Kingdom of God.

Everything has been leading up to this to show how great what God is going to do for us compared to the things that we have seen in the Old Testament.

Hebrews 12:18: “For you have not come to *the* mount that could be touched and that burned with fire, nor to gloominess, and fearful darkness, and *the* whirlwind.”

Paul is talking about when the children of Israel came before God to meet God at the base of Mt. Sinai and the giving of the Ten Commandments, and the powerful expression of God’s Word then—which was an awesome thing.

Verse 19: “And to *the* sound of *the* trumpet, and to *the* voice of *the* words, which those who heard, *begged* that *the* word not be spoken *directly* to them.”

This is what people say: 'I wish God would talk to me.' When God talked to them, they didn't want to hear it. Just like today. 'Oh, if I knew the will of God!' *You do, but you reject it!* God was kind, He put it on paper; preserved His Word so you can read it. As a physical human being you don't want to come into the presence of God in His full glory, because it is a death event! God is righteous! That's why He spoke the Ten Commandments from the top of Mt. Sinai.

Verse 20: "(For they could not endure what was being commanded: 'And if even an animal touches the mountain, it shall be stoned, or shot through with an arrow'; and so terrifying was the sight *that* Moses said, 'I am greatly afraid and trembling')" (vs 20-21). Just like today: You can get people's attention with great power. But will that great power change the heart?

Let's get a little bit of what happened; let's see the reaction and a recap of it. That's why the book of Deuteronomy is such a good book to read; there are a lot of spiritual lessons in it. Let's understand that they heard God give the Ten Commandments. They didn't want to hear the voice of God any longer. It's the same thing that we have today in a little bit different perspective. Everyone wants God to help them and be on their side.

But do they want to be on God's side, under God's terms? *NO!* You see the same thing today when you approach so-called Christians and talk about the commandments of God, and talk about the Sabbath of God and the Holy Days of God. Those are part of the things that God wants us to hold onto. This is the comparison that is being drawn. God spoke the words to them, wrote it on two tables of stone—twice—one table that God made and wrote with His finger, that Moses destroyed because of the sins of the children of Israel. They couldn't even wait 40 days for Moses to come off the mount. Then another table of stone that Moses hewed and carried up and God wrote on. God spoke those words! They didn't want to hear the words, because it cut across their carnal nature and their lust and the things that they wanted to do. God spoke it; they didn't want to hear.

(go to the next track)

I think that this will be most instructive. You're going to learn a lot of lessons, especially if you have become sort of ho-hum in your spiritual life toward God. We're going to see what Paul is talking about here; what we need to keep our minds on to inspire us and to keep us zealous and diligent in going forward in the race of eternal life that God

wants us to run. We'll see that. He's using the example of the Israelites hearing the Word of God.

Deuteronomy 5:28: "And the LORD heard the voice of your words when you spoke to me. And the LORD said to me, 'I have heard the voice of the words of this people, which they have spoken to you. They have well *said* all that they have spoken.'" In other words, they were sincere in what they said. They were also correct in what they said from two points of view:

1. they couldn't stand to hear the voice of God
2. they wanted to have another man between them and God—that was Moses

Here's the key, which is the key to the New Testament, the New Covenant:

Verse 29: "**Oh, that there were such a heart in them...**" That's why the New Covenant, with *repentance, baptism and circumcision of the heart!* People, unless they are converted and have their heart and mind changed are always going to be hostile against God. That's why when we're converted and changed and have the Spirit of God, that the worst and the most horrible thing we can do is reject the promises of God, reject the inheritance of God and reject the Holy Spirit of God! That's what Paul is talking about in Hebrews. That's why these examples from Deuteronomy.

Verse 29: "Oh that there were such a heart in them that they would fear Me and **keep all My commandments always**, so that it might be well with them and with their children forever!" Carnal nature is so deceitful, and Satan is out there to do it, too:

- God, we want Your blessings, *but we want to do it our way*
- God, we want Your blessings, **BUT:**
 - ✓ don't tell us to not have other gods
 - ✓ don't tell us we can't make images—we love our little images
 - ✓ don't tell us how we are to preach
 - ✓ don't tell us to keep Your Ten Commandments
 - ✓ don't tell us to keep Your Sabbath and Your Holy Days
- be nice to us
- be good to us
- give us Your blessings

BUT, *we're not going to obey You!* That's the whole lesson here; they didn't do it.

Deuteronomy 6:3—this is important; this is

a spiritual lesson: “Hear therefore, O Israel, and be diligent to *observe* it, so that it may be well with you, and that you may greatly multiply, as the LORD God of our fathers has promised you, in the land that flows with milk and honey. Hear, O Israel. Our one God is *the LORD, the LORD*. And **you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might**” (vs 3-5).

That’s what God wants! The whole lesson of the whole Bible—Old Covenant/New Covenant; Old Testament/New Testament—is to **love God first!** With all your heart, mind, soul and being. If you do that, then God is going to do something for you. He’s going to write His laws and commandments within your heart and within your mind. In the New Testament He is going to do something profound.

Verse 6: “And these words which I command you this day shall be in your heart.” That’s where God wants them, but they can only be there spiritually, written, inscribed be part of our very being.

Now, let’s come back to Hebrews 12 and we’ll see a difference here. Who was the mediator between the children of Israel and God? *Moses!* Now we have something entirely different and this is what the whole book of Hebrews is about. Now we have the opportunity to come *directly to God*—that’s the whole point! We are looking forward to the resurrection, which is the beginning of our inheritance. You inherit nothing until the resurrection, so if you don’t get to the resurrection you’re not going to inherit anything.

Hebrews 12:22: “But you have come to Mount **Sion**... [that’s in heaven above] ...and to the city of *the living God*... [not some mountain out in the middle of the desert] ...heavenly Jerusalem... [that’s where we’re going to live. Jesus is preparing a place for us in heavenly Jerusalem] ...and to an innumerable company of angels; *to the joyous festival gathering*...” (vs 22-23)—the first resurrection, which this also helps cement that it’s going to be on Pentecost.

Why? *That’s when God gave the Law from Mt. Sinai and they were all assembled below the mountain!* On Pentecost, at the resurrection, we are not assembled below a mountain, but we go up to God on the Sea of Glass. That’s what Paul is talking about here.

Verse 23: “*To the joyous festival gathering; and to the Church of the Firstborn*...” See how that ties in with the inheritance, the inheritance of the

firstborn? *Yes, indeed!*

“...registered in the *Book of Life* in heaven...” (v 23). That’s where your name is; that’s what’s important. A lot of people say today that it’s important that you’re enrolled on the voting list so that you can vote. *NO!* Where your name is written in heaven, that’s the important thing!

“...in heaven; and to God, *the Judge* of all; and to the spirits of the just who have been perfected; and to Jesus, *the Mediator of the New Covenant*; and to sprinkling of *the blood of ratification*, proclaiming superior things than *that of Abel*” (vs 23-24).

This is an awesome thing! Go back and read part of the giving of the Ten Commandments and so forth and what it was that was there and what an awesome event that was. But this is greater! This is more fantastic! This is the real thing! This is the receiving of the inheritance.

That’s why Paul says, v 2: “Having *our minds* fixed on Jesus, the Beginner and Finisher of *our faith*; Who for the joy that lay ahead of Him... [which is what we’re looking to] ...endured *the cross, although* He despised *the shame*, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.”

What’s the lesson for us? *Keep our mind on the heavenly Jerusalem! Keep our mind on Jesus Christ and God the Father!* Don’t be bogged down in physical things on this earth. That doesn’t mean to avoid the physical things; that doesn’t mean that you don’t take care of yourself, etc. It doesn’t mean that at all. It means that you are involved in preparing for the Kingdom of God so that you can rule and reign with Christ, so that every evil and wrong that you know of in the world, you can have a part in changing then, which will be a permanent change! That’s what’s important.

Let’s see what it is that we are coming to; let’s see what it is that John—and only John—was allowed to see. Paul wrote of it, he understood it, but he didn’t see it! *John saw it!* Amazing! Here’s what it’s like, and we’re going to see some things concerning the throne of God and who’s there and who’s not there. every good Catholic should read this; every good Protestant should read this.

Revelation 4:1: “After these things I looked, and behold, a door opened in heaven; and the first voice that I heard *was* as if a trumpet were speaking with me, saying, ‘Come up here, and I will show you *the things* that must take place after these things.’”

I wonder what John thought when he was

given these visions by Christ. I wonder what he thought when he wrote this after he literally saw these things. Paul said that in his visions he didn't know whether he was in the third heaven or not, whether he was actually there or whether it was just in vision. Here John has a clear picture of it, and he's told to write it for us. Why? *So that it can complete what we're reading in Heb. 12!*

Verse 2: "And immediately I was in *the* Spirit; and behold, a throne was set in heaven, and *One* was sitting on the throne. And He Who was sitting was in appearance like a jasper stone and a sardius stone; and a rainbow *was* around the throne, like an emerald in its appearance" (vs 2-3). Great, awesome and fantastic beauty! He couldn't describe it in any other way.

Verse 4: "And around the throne *were* twenty-four thrones; and on the thrones I saw twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in white garments; and they had on their heads golden crowns" (vs 2-4).

A lot of people want to know who are the 24 elders. Well, the best we can determine is this: They are special, created beings that assist God in managing the universe. God built the universe to share. He didn't build it just for Himself. He has a heavenly kingdom that He wants us to enter into to share eternal life with us. That's why it's important that we keep our mind focused on this. That's why it's important that we understand what God has called us to.

Verse 5: "And proceeding from the throne were lightnings... [this sounds a little bit like Mt. Sinai] ...and thunders and voices; and seven lamps of fire, which are the seven spirits of God, *were* burning before the throne. And before the throne *was* a sea of glass, like crystal. And around the throne and over the throne *were* four living creatures, full of eyes before and behind" (vs 5-6).

I can't imagine this myself, but this is something! Here is the first really complete picture of God's throne and what it's like that has been given to man. John—the one whom Jesus loved—was given that privilege. He wrote it down for us. All we can say is that we can read what it is here, but for us to completely understand what it looks like is very difficult. I have to admit that!

"...four living creatures, full of eyes before and behind... [I can't imagine that.] ...and the first living creature *was* like a lion, and the second living creature *was* like a bull, and the third living creature had the face of a man, and the fourth living creature *was* like a flying eagle" (vs 6-7). Awesome spirit

beings that God has created for His glory and His honor.

Verse 8: "And each of *the* four living creatures had six wings respectively; *and* around and within *they were* full of eyes; and day and night they cease not saying, 'Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty, Who was, and Who is, and Who *is* to come.'"

What I want us to understand, brethren, look at the great and fantastic inheritance that God has laid out for us. Think about that! Pray about that! Then look at your problems, your difficulties, your aches and pains, your sufferings, and count it all but nothing! That's what they are! That's why—if you keep your mind fixed on Jesus and come to Him as our High Priest and Mediator, pour out your heart to Him, put everything in God's hands—God is going to take care of it. His inheritance for us is special, *the firstborn!* We don't want to do anything to disqualify that. As we have seen, the Church of the Firstborn and Christ is the Firstborn among *many* brethren. He is coming! This is an awesome sight!

For all good Catholics, notice: Mary is not there! Peter is not there! Paul is not there! *No one is in heaven!*

John 3—we'll see why John edited this in, and he probably edited this in his final editing—when he was canonizing the New Testament—and he wanted to make it absolutely clear to everyone. Did John have a vision of the throne of God and God, and Jesus Christ? *Yes!*

After Jesus told Nicodemus that you have been *born again*, John 3:6: "That which has been born of the flesh is flesh; and that which has been born of the Spirit is spirit." It's really very simple, because the false doctrine of being *born again* when you accept Jesus is nothing but a pagan substitute when you really understand it for the Truth of born again.

Verse 7: "Do not be amazed that I said to you, 'It is necessary for you to be born again.' The wind blows where it wills, and you hear its sound, but you do not know *the place* from which it comes and *the place* to which it goes; so *also* is everyone who has been born of the Spirit." (vs 7-8).

If you run across a so-called, self-proclaimed born again 'Christian' say, 'Fine, walk through the wall, go where you will, disappear so I can't see you, and then I will believe that you are born again, because this is what you're able to do in relationship to physical things.' *Not so!*

Verse 9: "Nicodemus answered and said to

Him, 'How can these things be?' Jesus answered and said to him, 'You are a teacher of Israel, and you do not know these things? Truly, truly I say to you, We... [God the Father through Him speaking, Christ] ...speak that which We know, and We testify of that which We have seen; but you do not receive Our testimony. If I have told you earthly things, and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things? **(And no one has ascended into heaven...)**' (vs 9-13)

John wrote this in; this is an editorial insertion at this place to clarify what it means to be born again and to show that no one but Jesus is in heaven. When John saw the vision of the throne of God, none of the saints were there, only Jesus was. This is quite a doctrine against the Catholic doctrine of the bodily assumption of Mary into heaven, which is a blatant lie to lock people into slavery of that ungodly system.

"(And no one has ascended into heaven except He Who came down from heaven, even the Son of man, Who is in heaven.)" (v 13). John saw Jesus there. *Confirmed statement!* If it were true that all souls go to heaven when people die, then John, in this vision, would have said, 'I saw the souls of all the saints there. I saw Mary, blessed be Mary, worship Mary. After all, I authorize you to do this, because Jesus placed Mary in My charge before He died.' *Interesting!*

Let's look at some other things and all of the angels and so forth. When you come and pray before God, realize that this is *how and to Whom and the place where* your prayers are going—and they are heard! We may have to keep at it in prayer, because Jesus said, 'Ask and you shall receive.' That means keep on asking. When God gives you an answer to your prayer—and it may not be the answer that you want—do not think that God has not answered your prayer, He's just answered it in the way that He decided to do so. That's why in all of our prayers, what do we say? *Your will be done as in heaven, so on earth!* We have come to God on His throne and His being.

You don't need an inside track to God; **you have one! Use it!** Don't close it off and throw it away and reject it. That's the whole message.

Revelation 4:9: "And when the living creatures give glory and honor and thanksgiving to Him Who sits on the throne, Who lives into the ages of eternity, the twenty-four elders fall down before Him Who sits on the throne; and they worship Him Who lives into the ages of eternity, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, 'Worthy are You,

O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power because You did create all things, and for Your will they were created and exist'" (vs 9-11).

Think about this: For all of those of you who get discouraged and down, all of those of you who have a problem and difficulty that you're working on and need to overcome—whatever there is—remember this:

- God has called you
- God has given you His Spirit
- God is creating in you His Holy and righteous and perfect character
 - ✓ so that you can attain to the resurrection
 - ✓ so that you can be created for
 - His pleasure
 - His will
 - His goodness
 - His love
 - His plan into the ages of eternity

This is what Paul is writing for: to let them know that all the physical things on the earth are like a 'bowl of pottage.' *They're nothing!* The reality that God is going to give you is what God wants you to have. That's what He's going to do. That's what He's going to give. So, if you face every problem, every difficulty, everything that comes along with this perspective; and as you're praying ask God to help you understand and grant you His Spirit, then you can face the problems and difficulties because you have them in the right perspective.

Then you can endure whatever you have to go through because you know that it will be worth it. That's what's important. That's what Paul is saying here. Just like God always does, He inspires us first, then corrects us. Then inspires us again so that when we look at the greatness of what God is giving, that we will not cast it away. That's what He wants us to really understand and get.

Then it shows Christ Who is going to open the seals and so forth. When He took the book, Revelation 5:7: "And He came and took the book out of the right hand of Him Who sits on the throne."

What did Jesus say? *'Only the Father knows the day and the time, the hour!'* So, here He gets it from the Father.

Verse 8: "And when He took the book, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each having harps and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints."

There you are, God has other people intervening, helping. Your prayers go to God, God the Father will answer them, He has these other spirit beings who are there to help, to guide, to direct and everything; to carry out! You ask the prayer and Who answers it? *God does!* How does He do it? *Through these other spirit beings!* He'll do it! And Christ in you! This is something! This is amazing!

Verse 9: "And they sang a new song... [the song of the saints] ...saying, 'Worthy are You to take the book, and to open its seals because You were slain, and did redeem us to God by Your own blood, out of every tribe and language and people and nation, and did make us unto our God kings and priests; and we shall reign on the earth'" (vs 9-10). Again, the whole purpose of why we're called.

If you're inspired by this, I want you to take this inspiration and the Word of God and I want you to understand how important that it is that you view all of the things in your life from that perspective. That will help you put it in the right frame. Our calling is so great!

If you have the *Messiah*, go to the very last one from which this is taken—*Worthy is the Lamb*, turn it on and let it blast loud. Ask God to help you have this picture that is written here in Rev. 5, and listen to that music. God made and inspired music to uplift us, to give us the feeling, emotion and the impact. I am convinced that God inspired Handel to write the *Messiah*. You read of how he wrote it. He wrote that thing in 30-33 days. He was so fixated on writing it that he had an aide feed him different Scriptures through a hole and give it to him. He would sit down and write the music to go with it, the orchestration and the words, the singing and the solos and put this all together. We have it preserved today so we can have it on a little disc and put it into a little machine and to have that inspiration come out to us.

Verse 11: "And I saw and I heard *the* voices of many angels around the throne, and *the* voices of the living creatures and the elders, and thousands of thousands... [those are the angels] ...saying with a loud voice, 'Worthy is the Lamb Who was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory and blessing'" (vs 11-12)—***which He is going to share with us!*** Think on that!

Our calling to eternal life is so fantastic and it is so great and so awesome that there is *nothing* in this world that can compare. There is *nothing* for which we would give up on God!

Verse 13: "And every creature that is in

heaven, and on the earth..." Remember, it says in Rom. 8 that the 'whole creation is groaning till now, waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God.' Yes, here it is right here!

"...and under the earth, and those that are on the sea, and all the things in them, I heard saying, 'To Him Who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, *be* blessing, and honor, and glory, and sovereignty into the ages of eternity.' And the four living creatures said, 'Amen.'..." (vs 13-14).

What a song that would be to hear all those angels singing and the power and the magnitude of it. John saw this and wrote it so that we, with God's Spirit, can share in it and understand it and see the hope of our calling and see the very reason why we're here.

"...And the twenty-four elders fell down and worshiped *Him Who* lives into the ages of eternity" (vs 14).

You know it's the ages of eternity that God wants to share with us, that God has a place for us, and that is why God has called us. This is what God's people need to know so that they can be inspired to love and serve God and not get all cranked down in causes or carnal things or false doctrines, power and authority. But ***that they can truly love God with all their heart, mind, soul and being.*** That's where everything is.

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*

Scriptural References:

- 1) Hebrews 12:12-17
- 2) Genesis 25:19-34
- 3) Genesis 26:1-5
- 4) Genesis 27:34-41
- 5) Hebrews 12:16-17
- 6) Deuteronomy 1:26-45
- 7) Hebrews 12:18-21
- 8) Deuteronomy 5:28-29
- 9) Deuteronomy 6:3-6
- 10) Hebrews 12:22-24, 2
- 11) Revelation 4:1-8
- 12) John 3:6-13
- 13) Revelation 4:9-11
- 14) Revelation 5:7-14

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Revelation 21; 22
- Romans 8

Also referenced: Book: *Josephus*

FRC:bo

Transcribed: 6-21-11

Reformatted/Corrected: January 2017

Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews XXXIX Warning—"Do Not Weary in Well-Doing"

Fred R. Coulter

The book of Hebrews is the most important book for us today because of what it teaches. It brings everyone back to the Truth; it brings everyone back to Christ; it brings everyone back to understanding and keeping the commandments. It helps us understand the difficulties and problems that we go through: our trials, suffering and everything that we're confronted with. Why we need to keep the faith and stay close to God and realize that we're also going to have correction from God because He loves us and cares for us and wants us in His kingdom, and He wants us to have the 'peaceable fruits of righteousness.' In that He doesn't want us to turn out like Esau who sold his birthright for some pottage.

It's a good example because it's very much like people do today: They are not willing to do as God says, but they demand from God to have blessings and eternal life. They end up, instead of submitting to God, they demand that God submit to them and their ways. That doesn't work! Never has worked! The whole story of the Bible shows that that is an impossible thing. There is something in human beings—which is part of their human nature, without a doubt—that think that they can add to what God has said, or take away from what God has said and improve on God. God is perfect, and if God is righteous—which He is—and if whatever God does is perfect, what makes human beings think that they can improve on God? You can see this not only in religion, you can see this in science, in the conduct of human beings.

Someone just recently sent me four versions of the Ten Commandments, which other people in their 'do-goodism' have said, 'Well, we don't like the Ten Commandments that are in the Bible, but here are our Ten Commandments.' Then when it comes down—and the point will come to this—that they won't be accepted by God, they're going to get all angry. That's why there's 'weeping and gnashing of teeth' at the Lake of Fire.

We're going to see that Paul is making a comparison. On Pentecost we cover this most years about how Israel came to Mt. Sinai and received the Ten Commandments.

Hebrews 12:18: "For you have not come to *the* mount that could be touched... [we will see that we come to Mt. Zion in heaven above] ...and that burned with fire, nor to gloominess, and fearful darkness, and *the* whirlwind; and to *the* sound of *the* trumpet, and to *the* voice of *the* words, which those

who heard, *begged* that *the* word not be spoken *directly* to them" (vs 18-19).

They couldn't stand it. The reason being it's still the same thing. The Word of God is preserved in the Bible, and when people read it they can't stand it. They rebel against it and come along and say, 'God, I have a better version.' *Never works!*

Verse 20: "For they could not endure what was being commanded..." Isn't it interesting while Moses was on the mountain receiving the Ten Commandments and the judgments and the statutes and the other laws that God gave? The people that heard the Ten Commandments, what did they do? *They came to Aaron and he made a golden calf and they rejected God right in His face, right at the foot of the mountain!* Which shows the complete hostility of the carnal mind to God. That's why it's called 'enmity.' The human mind is an enemy of God!

People will say, 'I'm not an enemy. I'm wise, intelligent, important, calm, smooth, sophisticated. We don't need the Ten Commandments of God.' That's no different than someone standing up in vehement hatred rejecting God's way. Either way you reject God. You can reject God and think you're a nice person, or you can reject God and be hateful and mean. Either way you reject God!

It was so important, v 20: "... 'And if even an animal touches the mountain, it shall be stoned, or shot through with an arrow'; and so terrifying was the sight *that* Moses said, 'I am greatly afraid and trembling'" (vs 20-21).

There's the comparison. People think that that was awesome. Go back and read in the book of Exodus, Numbers, Leviticus and Deuteronomy and see what the children of Israel did *right in the presence of God!*

Paul is making a comparison here so that we don't do the same thing. Just like everything else that we have found in the Bible and also in the book of Hebrews, whenever there is come correction, then there is encouragement. Whenever there is some correction coming, then Paul has us focus on the goal, the main thing we need to look to. Here he's focusing in on the greatest blessing and privilege that we have coming right into the presence of God the Father in heaven above at any time.

Verse 22: "But you have come to Mount

Sion, and to *the* city of *the* living God, heavenly Jerusalem..." You cannot get a greater place to come to. It's greater than anything on earth. There's no other place in heaven like it. There's no other place in the whole universe like it. And the calling that God has given us is that we have direct access to Him through Jesus Christ. This is awesome!

People who get tangled up, just like they did with Moses, 'Moses, you and Aaron take too much to yourself.' And they fell on their faces and said, 'Look, we didn't take anything to ourselves, God put us here.' When people get focused on men instead of God, their perspective becomes carnal and they're looking at things the way that men look at it rather than seeing God in it.

Since we're talking about the children of Israel in the wilderness: After seeing all those miracles and what God did to deliver them out of Egypt and bring them across the Red Sea and so forth, you would think that they would be so grateful to be in the presence of God. You would think that they would be so grateful to have such a tremendous mission given to them to represent God as a nation to the whole world; to have the mission of having His laws and commandments to set the standards for everybody in the world, so that when they would come to Israel they would say, 'Wow! What a nation! Who has God so close to them and all the blessings and all the things that are there? They didn't do that!'

Now we're in a different situation. We have been called of God and He has given us something greater. He has given us something more profound. We're going to reign as kings and priests with Christ. We, under Christ—and all the saints with us—are going to bring:

- the proper government
- the proper worship of God
- get rid of Satan the devil
- get rid of sin
- help fulfill the plan of God to bring many sons into the glory and Kingdom of God

Of course, when we understand that we're coming to God in heaven above, the greatest blessing, the greatest privilege and all of this is accomplished through the simplest thing: ***prayer and study of the Word of God!*** Simplest thing!

- You don't need a temple!
- You don't need ritual!
- You don't need a priesthood!
- Christ is our High Priest!

Isn't that something! How many millions of people go through all the rituals of their religion in vain,

serving Satan the devil, and think they're doing well? God says, 'Away with all of that!'

- You repent to Me!
- I'll forgive your sins!
- Christ will be your High Priest!
- You can come to Him at all times!
- You can pray to Me at all times!
- You don't have to have anyone between you and Me!

You can get on your knees and you're right in touch with Mt. Sion, God the Father and the city of the living God, Heavenly Jerusalem (Rev. 4-5).

"...and to an innumerable company of angels; *to the* joyous festival gathering..." (vs 22-23). This has got to be the resurrection and all the saints resurrected on the Sea of Glass. 1-Thess. 4 says that we are going to meet Christ in the air 'for the meeting with the Lord.' This is what Paul wants us to focus on. This is what we need to have our heart and mind fixed on, because this will help overcome the problems and difficulties and trials and things that we go through so that we don't get discouraged and give up on God. If you are not focusing on God and His plan and His purpose, you can get totally discouraged and down just in facing all the problems in life:

- in trying to overcome self
- in trying to overcome sin
- in dealing with people who are double-minded
- in dealing with friends, neighbors, children and parents and the whole thing

Today we live in a society that is dysfunctional from top to bottom. Who is 'normal' today? *It's hard to find!* What is a normal person today? *It's been defined down to the lowest perversions accepted as normalcy!* God has this for us: that we keep our mind *fixed* on it.

Let's go to Matthew, the sixth chapter, and let's see how this very simple outline of a prayer covers everything that I just talked about, and helps us always to focus in on God. We need to understand that it matters not who you are or where you are, you're accountable to God. If you're in the world you're still accountable to the *letter of the Law* and the authorities that He has set there. He gives you the authorities according to your conduct. If you don't want to control yourself, if you don't want to be law-abiding, then He's going to make the authorities become more forceful with the Law, more intrusive with the Law because you can't control yourself. When people do not focus in on God and do the things the way that God wants, then they're

confronted with all these problems and don't know how to handle them. That's why this prayer in Matt. 6 follows along with what I've said.

How does it start out? Matthew 6:9: "Therefore, you are to pray after this manner: 'Our Father Who *is* in heaven...'" What are we talking about? *Heavenly Jerusalem, the city of God, the throne of God, the innumerable company of angels*, everything that is there contained in that sentence.

"...hallowed be Your name..." (v 9). God's name is Holy! No other gods, no statues, don't take the name of God in vain.

"Your kingdom come..." (v 10). That's the goal. You have your mind on God, then you have your mind on the goal. 'Your kingdom come...' because that's the only solution for the problems on earth.

"...Your will be done on earth, as *it is* in heaven" (v 10). God's will is being done on earth exactly as He has said according to the prophecies, based upon the cumulative choice of the people. There's nobody up in heaven going against God. Those on earth who go against God still carry out the will of God, because God's judgment is upon them. God judges all whether you're a sinner or a saint.

Verse 11: "Give us this day our daily bread." Even though you may store up things for a few weeks, God has got to provide it.

"And forgive us our debts..." (v 12). It says in another place 'our sins.' So, everyday we need to have our sins forgiven because the way that our minds and our lives are. Our very nature requires it and God desires to do so.

"...as we also forgive our debtors" (v 12). This is 'love your neighbor as yourself.' Love the brethren as Christ has loved us.

Verse 13: "And lead us not into temptation..." In other words, whatever trial, chastisement, we're going to have, let it not be in temptation to sin against God.

"...but rescue us from the evil one...." (v 13). That's an interesting thing in the Greek. It literally means *rescue*! To save us in an emergency, rescue operation. Satan is the god of this earth.

- he is the one who is hateful against the Church
- he is the one who instigates war against the Church

There are many different kinds of wars against the Church—not just slaughtering and killing, but

- sending his agents to infiltrate

- sending weird an silly people to come with strange and foolish doctrines
- sending those who bring in, what I have just called *creeping Protestantism* with a lawless grace; a clever, clever counterfeit.

"...For Yours is the Kingdom..." (v 13). What do we end with? *After we talk about and pray about the things that we need and how to live our lives* that's what it is, "**...rescue us from the evil one.** For Yours is the Kingdom..." Back to the Kingdom. Back to looking forward to heavenly Sion, heavenly Jerusalem.

"...and the power..." (v 13). There's no greater power than God.

"...and the glory forever. Amen" (v 13). Right here in this daily outline prayer that we have, that people have memorized and the heathen in their 'Christian orthodox churches' recite it. If they do some sin and they go to the priest and they're forgiven and you do 200 'our fathers' and 400 'hail Marys.' They memorize it! But they don't understand it!

So, we have the same pattern. You can take this pattern of inspiration and go right through the whole Bible and see how this always fits. Maybe expanding a certain point at a certain time, expanding another point at a certain time and so forth, but you can go from Gen. to Rev. and there is the whole pattern. Look at the pattern that God did with the seven churches in Rev. 2 & 3. Is it not the same? *Absolutely!*

We're to look forward to and we're called, Hebrews 12:23: "...and **to the Church of the Firstborn...**" That's why it's important to understand about the firstborn. The firstborn has *the inheritance*. Let's understand something else we find in the Bible:

In the Old Testament when a man had more than one wife and the firstborn hated the firstborn of the other wife, then the hated one was to get a double portion. We have that fulfilled in the fact that Reuben—who was the firstborn of Jacob—sinned and went up on his father's bed and lost the birthright. The firstborn of Rachel was Joseph. He received the birthright. He also got a double-portion with the blessings on his two sons: Ephraim and Manasseh.

Let's take that and apply it spiritually: We are in the New Covenant with Christ. We are going to receive a spiritual inheritance from God the Father through Christ forever. Is it going to be double of what any of the others who come into the Kingdom of God after the first resurrection receive? *I don't*

know, but we do know that it will be pre-eminent above them. We will always be in a position greater than they will be. What I want us to focus on is not only God, not only our calling, but the *greatness* of the calling. This is what Paul is talking about here.

"...**the Church of the Firstborn**, registered in the *Book of Life* in heaven..." (v 23). Our names are written there. If you endure to the end, you are guaranteed! God guarantees it by His very existence, by His covenant, by His life!

"...and to God, *the Judge* of all; and to the spirits of the just who have been perfected" (v 23). That's what's happening with us. God is perfecting us so that we can die in the faith, or if we're alive when Christ returns, to be changed in a 'moment, in the twinkling of an eye'—*perfected!* I would have to say that perhaps 90%-plus of the perfection comes at the resurrection.

You're perfected now so that you then can await the first resurrection. Then when we are resurrected we will be perfected in glory. That's what Paul means when he talks about 'now we see through a glass darkly' and so forth, but then 'we will see face-to-face. Now I know in part,' then 'I'll know as I am known' and so forth. The perfection is not going to be finished until the resurrection. The perfection that comes in our mind—through growing, changing and overcoming—comes through the power of the Holy Spirit is to a certain degree. This shows the perfection.

When a man dies the body goes to the dust and the spirit returns to God Who gave it. The Spirit is the essential, important connection of God to make us human beings, to give us human intelligence, to have us be able—with the spirit of man coupled with the Spirit of God—to receive the Spirit of God, be begotten of the Spirit of God so we become the children of God. No other created thing has that possibility, just human beings. What Paul wants us to understand is how great this is.

Verse 24: "And to Jesus, *the Mediator of the New Covenant*..."—which this is showing here.

- whatever help you need, *you have it*
- whatever assistance you need, *you've got it*
- whatever difficulty you're going through, *you have the strength from Christ—Mediator of the New Covenant*

Now, let's look at this thing concerning the Mediator. Then we'll also talk about His sacrifice. Every Catholic ought to read this; it's in your Catholic Bible:

1-Timothy 2:5 "For there *is* one God, and **one Mediator between God and men**—the man

Christ Jesus." Mary is not a mediator—in fact, she is dead in the grave awaiting the resurrection. The one who took care of Mary, the Apostle John, wrote way after the time that Mary had died: 'For no one has ascended into heaven but He Who came down from heaven, Who is Jesus Christ.'

IF the pope had 10,000% hindsight and 1800 years later could proclaim that Mary was bodily assumed into heaven, do you think their statement on that carries any validity when the one who probably buried her—the Apostle John—did not say that? Would not his one witness that 'no one has ascended to heaven' supersede anything that a pope could declare? *Absolutely!* Just like Moses, no one knows where she's buried. Just think of the mobs of people that would go there and bow down to her grave. Are people misled and deceived? *Of course!*

Verse 6: "Who gave Himself *as* a ransom for all, the testimony *of which is to be preached* in its appointed times."

That is according to the way that God opens the doors for preaching the Gospel—that appointed time—but also during the Holy Days and the Feasts of God, which are appointed times of God. That's something! **He is the Mediator!** Let's look at Jesus Who is the Mediator. This becomes important for us to really grasp and understand. This is given to us so that regardless of the difficulty of the problems that we face, regardless of the trials that we go through—coupled with what we have there and other places in Hebrews, that God is always there to help us and strengthen us—that we have a Mediator and a High Priest, therefore, there's no other priesthood needed—

- Who knows everything about us!
- Who loves us!
- Who gave Himself for us!
- Who paid for your sins through His death!
- Who, through God the Father, gives us the Holy Spirit!
- Who is there as the *propitiation* of our sins!

When we come to God we need to get rid of the notion that we're not honest with God.

Hebrews 4:12: "For the Word of God *is* living... [you can't say that of any other book in the world] ...and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of both soul and spirit..." No other book can lead men to repentance other than the Bible and the Spirit of God. How far does it go down? *Clear down into your being!*

"...and of both *the joints* and *the marrow*,

and *is* able to discern *the* thoughts and intents of *the* heart" (v 12). Go back and read in the book of Psalms and Proverbs and see how it does discern the thoughts and intents of the heart.

Verse 13 tells us *no one* can fool God: "And there is not a created thing that is not manifest in His sight; but all things *are* naked and laid bare before the eyes of Him to Whom we must give account."

There it is. You can be honest and straightforward with God. Don't be accusative, don't be angry, don't be mad. God can change all circumstances, regardless of how bad they are.

Read the book of Jeremiah. Remember, he was thrown down in the sewer. He thought he had it! He was up to his neck in yuck!—called in Greek 'skubalon.' He was in the sewer and it looked like that God was going to leave him there. Even at one time he said, 'God, this is too much for me to bear.' What did He do? *God sent an Ethiopian there who tied some rags together, threw it down as a rope and helped pull him out!* Can you imagine the stench, the foul rottenness that comes from that? ***God still heard him!*** It doesn't matter if you have been slammed into the sewer, ***God will not leave you!*** Think of that! He knows all!

Here's the reason, v 14: "Having therefore a great High Priest..." No man is to come between you and God the Father and Jesus Christ. Any priest who says you have to come to him is a liar and a fake and of Satan the devil so that Satan can control you in *his* way, under the guise of being Christian. You need repentance! You need to pray directly to God and Jesus Christ!

"...Who has passed into the heavens..." (v 14). You don't have to worry about going to any special place on the earth. You can pray to Him anytime anywhere on earth, and always get through, because He's in heaven.

"...Jesus the Son of God, we should hold fast the confession *of our faith*" (v 14). All the way through, the whole book of Hebrews is:

- to the faithful: *hold fast*
- to the sinners: *repent*
- to those who are in doubt: *look at the goal*

Keep your mind on that!

Verse 15: "For we do not have a High Priest Who cannot empathize with our weaknesses... [this is the very reason that He came] ...but *One Who* was tempted in all things according to *the* likeness of *our own temptations*; yet, *He* was without sin."

He understands it. After all, was He not the Creator of Adam and Eve? *Yes!* Did He not give us,

as human beings, our heart, mind, emotion, everything about us? *Yes!* He formed us with His own hands.

- He loves us!
- He wants us!
- He knows our difficulties!
- He knows that we have the law of sin and death in us!
- He knows that we are weak!
- He knows that we are going to have temptations and sins come upon us!

Therefore, He understands completely.

Stop and think about this: If God forgave Manasseh, the worst king of all the kings of Israel and Judah, which He did. If God forgave Ahab, God can forgive you. Look at the sins that they did. God is interested in repentance and forgiveness. Though, if there is not repentance and seeking of forgiveness, there will be judgment. That's what He wants us to understand.

Verse 16: "Therefore, we should come with boldness to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need."

That's just the way that it has to be. What a perfect system. You don't have to go to a psychologist. You don't have to go to a psychiatrist. You don't have to go to a confession booth and tell your sins to a priest, who, in many cases with women, will take advantage of them; and little kids will be pedophilic toward them, and all that sort of thing. Besides, think of this: the *sacrifice of the Mass* is sacrificing Christ over and over and over again. It is a blasphemous thing! A man is supposedly commanding God to sacrifice Himself. Jesus said, 'No man takes My life, but I have been given commandment to lay it down and to receive it back again.' So, the whole operation of the *sacrifice of the Mass* and the Eucharist and the false communion in various churches against the Passover of God are blasphemous!

The way you distinguish between a carnal religion supposedly representing God and the true function of a Christian in relationship to Jesus Christ and God the Father is this: ***The carnal mind cannot stand the Word of God!*** Just like the Israelites, they didn't want to hear God give the commandments as we saw in Exo. 20 and Heb. 12, no question about that. They wanted a man between them and God, or a king between them and God. All of those who have a priest or a minister between them and God or just carnal because they want to have someone else to accuse when things go wrong: it's the priest or it is the minister. NO! *It is you!* That's why it's very important. You have got to put down all your

pretenses and come to God.

Verse 13: "...are naked and laid bare before the eyes of Him to Whom we must give account." Everyone's going to give account of himself alone before the throne of God. This is what he's talking about. This is the greatest thing that God can offer man at this time, if we do it and take it the way that God has said. That's what's so fantastic and important. For those who don't want it and want to have a man, then it becomes a cursed thing because they have a carnal religion contrary to the Word of God. You can see that. All you have to do is just observe and comprehend that.

Let's talk a little bit more about how He is able to understand our temptations and so forth. Heb. 5:5 is talking about Christ. This also tells us the great humility of God. Stop and think: What am I willing to give up for God? *The fact is, God demands your life!* Here's what Christ did, like Paul said, 'Who would die for another man?' *Maybe someone would for a righteous man!* But how many would die for sinners? *Christ did!* Because He did:

Hebrews 5:5: "In this same manner also, Christ did not glorify Himself to become a High Priest, but He Who said to Him, 'You are My Son; today I have begotten You.' Even as He also says in another place, 'You are a Priest forever according to the order of Melchisedec'" (vs 5-6). In order to qualify for that, and in order to be the Priest for all mankind:

Verse 7: "Who, in the days of His flesh, offered up both prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears to Him Who was able to save Him from death... [everything was hinged on the plan of God and the fact that Jesus would not sin] (notice what He had to do in order to not sin): ...and was heard because *He feared God.*"

Jesus needed to be saved from death—didn't He? That's quite a thing! {note book: *The Christian Passover*—read the sections: The Nature of God and The Nature of Man and what Jesus Christ did as our Passover. That will give you some understanding.} God has not only gone above and beyond, God laid all eternity in the universe on the line to save the ones He has created so they can enter into His kingdom.

Verse 8: "Although He was a Son, yet He learned obedience from the things that He suffered." That's what we need to understand with every trial and difficulty that comes along. Gives us an opportunity to learn obedience.

Verse 9: "And having been perfected..." Isn't that what we read, 'just men being perfected'

(Heb. 12)? *Yes!* Christ—as God in the flesh—was not perfected until He lived a perfect life without sin and then laid His life down as the perfect sacrifice for all human beings, because He's the Creator of man. You could not ask for anything greater; you could not ask for anything better.

- show me a pagan religion that has anything that comes close to it
- show me the stupidity that men have come up with to replace what God has given
- show me where it is better
- show me where the Protestants and Catholics know better than what God does
- show me that their way is better than the Truth and the love and the grace of God and what Christ has done

Yes, they like to borrow part of it, but they won't wholly submit themselves to God.

Verse 9: "And having been perfected, He became the Author of eternal salvation to all those who obey Him... [if you receive grace, you must obey; very simple] ...after He had been designated by God as High Priest according to the order of Melchisedec" (vs 9-10).

Let's see how we have a great Priest. This is why prayer and study and bringing every thought into captivity to God and Christ is so important. That's our full-time occupation. Whatever we do for a living is secondary.

Hebrews 7:24: "But in the other case, because He is living forever, **His priesthood never changes.**"

(go to the next track)

I want you to think about that! Does that make null and void the papacy and all of its priesthood? And the Dalai Lama and all of his priesthood? And whatever fake, counterfeit religion that is out there saying they represent God and they don't? Does that make them all null and void? *Yes, indeed!* Elders, teachers, ministers, pastors, evangelists and prophets ***are to teach the people of God to be perfected!*** That's what they're there for. You come to Christ! He has a "...priesthood that never changes."

Verse 25: "Therefore, He has the power throughout all time to save those who come to God through Him *because* He is ever living to intercede for them. For it is fitting that we should have such a High Priest *Who is* Holy, blameless, undefiled, set apart from sinners and made higher than the heavens; Who has no need, as *do* the *other* high priests... [as they did at the temple, because this was written before the temple was destroyed] ...to offer

up sacrifices day by day, first for his own sins *and* then for the *sins* of the people; **for this He did once for all time when He offered up Himself**" (vs 25-27). That's what's important! **Christ did it once for all time by His one sacrifice.**

Verse 28: "For the *priestly* law makes high priests *of* men who have weaknesses; but *by* the word of the swearing of the oath... [by the order of Melchisedec] ...which supersedes the *priestly* law, the Son, Who has been perfected forever, *has been made High Priest.*"

The reason I'm going through this is so that we can understand the contrast of what people do if they give up on God. What are they giving up on? What are they taking in exchange? Is it not the same as Esau who gave up the inheritance for a bowl of pottage? That's the whole lesson.

Hebrews 8:1: "Now, *here is* a summary of the things being discussed: We have such a High Priest Who sat down at *the* right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; a Minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord set up, and not man" (vs 1-2).

You can't have it any better. This is the greatest thing that God could do so that He can communicate with you through His Spirit and His Word, and you can communicate to Him through your prayers and living your life. There can't be anything greater. That's why He's done it this way.

Let's look at the sacrifice of Christ as the Mediator and so forth, Hebrews 9:11: "But Christ Himself has become High Priest of the coming good things..." What is that? *The resurrection! The coming Kingdom of God! Everything in the plan of God!*

"...through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made by *human* hands (that is, not of this *present physical* creation)." (v 11). Anyone who goes to a great cathedral or temple or church and sees all the things that are there—think about it—that cannot compare to your personal relationship with God.

Verse 12: "Not by *the* blood of goats and calves, but by the means of His own blood, He entered once for all into the Holiest... [right into the presence of God the Father] ...having *by* Himself secured everlasting redemption *for us.*" That's what Christ has done.

Then he makes a comparison which is very important and which helps us understand what God is doing; and helps us to realize that God is for us, with us and loves us, and is perfecting us, working with us and how He does it—all of these things

together.

Verse 13: "For if the blood of goats and bulls, and *the* ashes of a heifer sprinkled *on* those who are defiled, sanctifies to the purifying of the flesh."

That's an important thing to understand. They never received eternal life under the Old Covenant through the sacrifice system; they were only justified to the temple. Only the ones that God had called like the patriarchs of the Old Testament and certain of the prophets and kings received eternal life under the Old Covenant. All the rest were just justified to the temple, that's it! That's as far as it went. They weren't justified in heaven above, because God did not set up the operation that those sacrifices could justify anyone to God the Father in heaven above. All they were was justified to the temple. They were forgiven their sins so they could live in a physical society and not have the curses come in relationship to the blessings and cursings in Deut. 28 and Lev. 26.

This is the key, v 14: "To a far greater degree, the blood of Christ, Who through *the* eternal Spirit offered Himself..." That's why it blasphemous for any priest to say that he can command God to come into the wine and bread—the literal body and the literal blood.

"...without spot to God, shall purify your conscience from dead works to serve *the* living God" (v 14). That is the perfecting of your spirit.

Today people are all caught up in superstition. If something happens like an earthquake, they all run and get a statue of the saint that they worship or the statue of the supposedly virgin Mary, as if that were to save them. You need to read in Isa. 40-44 the stupidity of idols. Take blocks of stone, build a house, you live in the house and what's left over you make a little statue of a god and you bow down and worship it. God says that's insanity!

God wants a clean heart and mind and to purify your conscience. That is a continuous work in you day-by-day, week-by-week, month-by-month, year-by-year. As we are going to see, one of the greatest problems we have today is **people weary in well-doing**. Think about that! Think about your life! Think about what you're doing! Think about Christ and so forth. This is why direct access to God the Father and Jesus Christ is so important. No evil human being is between you and God. No one can mediate between you and God.

Verse 24: "For Christ has not entered into the Holy places made by *human* hands, *which are mere* copies of the true; rather, *He has entered* into

heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God **for us...** [as a Mediator, as a propitiation for our sins.] ...not that he should offer Himself many times..." (vs 24-25). That's why the *sacrifice of the mass* is a blasphemous, pagan, satanic counterfeit of the sacrifice of Christ.

"...even as the high priest enters into the Holy of Holies year-by-year with *the* blood of others" (v 25).

That's the difference. We can come into the very Holy of Holies of God the Father's throne room in heaven above, through Jesus Christ, anytime day and night, any day, any week, any month, any year *directly*. That's what's so important. We don't have to go through a man. Christ is the Mediator.

Verse 26: "For then it would have been necessary for Him to suffer many times since the foundation of *the* world.... [He didn't do that! That's what the *sacrifice of the Mass* does.] ...But now, once and for all... [all time] ...in the consummation of the ages, He has been manifested for *the* purpose of removing sin through His sacrifice of *Himself*."

What we need to understand; this is why it's so important; this is why not only do we look at the things that are false, but while we understand the things that are false, ***let's not become complacent and 'weary in well-doing.'*** The whole point of all of what we're going through here is this:

- Why should we not want to pray to God?
- Why should we delay it?
- Why should we put it off?
- Why should we think it is a difficult thing?
- Why can't we make any time to pray?
- Why can't we make any time to study?

Because we have forgotten—*weary in well-doing*—and it's the most important thing to do!

- through that then comes contact with God
- through that then comes the perfecting of the spirit
- through that then you grow in grace and knowledge

That's what it's all about.

Verse 27: "And inasmuch as it is appointed unto men once to die, and after this, *the* judgment; so Christ, having been offered once to bear *the* sins of many, will appear *the* second time without sin unto salvation to those who are eagerly awaiting Him" (vs 27-28).

To maintain the zeal that we need. That's what the whole book of Hebrews is all about, people

weary in well-doing Paul said twice, 'Do not weary in well-doing.'

You need to also consider this, and this is an important thing: We live in a 'gadgetized' speeded up society. Everybody has been programmed and trained by television to have a ten-minute attention span. That's it! If you're watching television and it becomes boring you have a much smaller attention span and you're channel-surfing here and there and everywhere. People like to have everything quick and fast and now. Not everything comes that way! You can't have everything new and exciting all the time. What is new and exciting is what God has provided and the way to Him through Christ! It's guaranteed! That's what's so absolutely important!

Hebrews 10:9: "Then He said, 'Lo, I come to do Your will, O God.'.... [Isn't that what we ask everyday? *To do the will of God!*] ...He takes away the first *covenant* in order that He may establish the second *covenant*; by Whose will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ **once for all**" (vs 9-10). Everyone who comes to Him and for all time; can be applied in both ways.

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

That is that you have the Holy Spirit of God. You see all the perfecting. That's what God is doing. He's perfecting us. He's working with us. To be perfected we have to overcome human nature and all of those things.

Hebrews 12:24: "And to Jesus, *the* Mediator of *the* New Covenant..." We just went through the various Scriptures showing why He's the Mediator, why He's the High Priest and so forth.

"...and to sprinkling of *the* blood of *ratification*... [the blood of Jesus Christ] ...proclaiming superior things than *that of* Abel" (v 24).

When Paul wrote this, he had some understanding that we don't have today about what the situation was with Abel and what he was doing and so forth. I think we have perhaps a greater understanding of Cain's sin and what he did than that of Abel, because hardly anything is said of Abel except what he writes here. We'll just have to leave that as a question mark, but nevertheless, we have to look at it this way: Abel was probably the very first one to truly serve God with a pure heart. That's why it's referring to that and referring to the fact that he was martyred and killed by Cain as compared to

Jesus Christ Who was martyred and killed by the political and religious leaders of His time.

Here's a warning; this is why all of this is important. Unless you know what you're dealing with first, then the warning doesn't have that much affect.

Verse 25: "Beware that you **do not refuse to hear Him Who is speaking!**...." God speaks to us through His Word. God speaks to us with His Spirit in our mind by putting thoughts in our mind, what to do and what to say. "...do not refuse to *hear Him Who is speaking!*"—from heaven!

"...For if they did not escape *judgment*, who refused *to hear* the One Who was on the earth Divinely instructing *them*..." (v 25).

When God came down and revealed Himself to the children of Israel and gave the Ten Commandments and laws, statutes and judgments on Mt. Sinai and was with them in the pillar of cloud by day and the fire by night, they refused Him! This really shows the hardness of the heart of human beings. Think of what God provided for them everyday. Cloud cover in the desert. Don't you think that's a wonderful thing? *Yes, indeed!* And a pillar of fire at night so it lit up in the desert, otherwise it's pitched black and cold!

He provided manna six days a week, and after the first Sabbath that they found no manna they understood which day was the Sabbath. I mean, you couldn't miss it. For 40 years, but still they refused! Look at all the rebellions and fighting and arguing and quarreling and apostasy right under the nose of God! Or, as you could say, in your face rebellion toward God!

"...For if they did not escape *judgment*, who refused *to hear* the One Who was on the earth Divinely instructing *them*, how much more *severely will we be judged*, if we ourselves apostatize from Him Who speaks from heaven" (v 25).

That's very interesting. We ourselves apostatize. That's one of those middle-voice Greek verbs where you are the one who is doing it. You can't blame someone else; you can't blame God. You yourself are apostatizing—or in this case "...we ourselves..." Isn't it interesting that Paul includes himself, because didn't he say in another place that he 'disciplined himself lest after he preached to others that he himself would be a castaway'? *Yes, indeed!* "...if we ourselves apostatize from Him Who speaks from heaven."

Let's see how apostasy begins; I already mentioned '**weary in well-doing.**' What is the 'well-doing' that people weary themselves in today?

Because of the condition of the Church and the scattering of the Church and the problems of ministers and the problems of brethren and people, it's hard to get some people to get together for fellowship on the Sabbath; sometimes even on a once a month occasion.

Hebrews 10:23: "Let us hold fast without wavering *to* the hope *that* we profess, for He Who promised *is* faithful; and let us be concerned about one another, and *be* stirring up *one another* unto love and good works" (vs 23-24).

This is all a part of not wavering. This is all a part of continuing. This is all a part of not 'weary in well-doing.' Of course, this is what the whole book of Hebrews is about. ***Don't 'weary in well-doing'!***

- look at the goal
- look at the stakes

Verse 25: "**Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together**, even as some *are* accustomed to do..." If you really love God, really believe God, really love the brethren, should not want to fellowship with them whenever you have an opportunity? *Yes!* That's also to say we need to be wary of false brethren and things like that—that's true. That's not to say about those who live way out and isolated and can't get together.

When I travel to different places, people will drive to come and that's good, I'm happy to see them. I'm glad they come. I know all the difficulties and problems that people have, but we should not forsake the assembling of ourselves together, even if it's just a few—that's just the way it is today. Let God do the growing and adding.

Also today—we need to be fair in it—we're all a lot older and driving is a little more difficult and greatly expensive. I remember when I first started attending church, I would ride with brethren all the way up to Sacramento, which was 125 miles one way. I also remember—even though the wages were lower, gas was only about \$.30 a gallon. Now it's ten times! There are all of those factors. What we need to do is if there's an opportunity to assemble together on the Sabbath and if it's going to involve an expense in driving, then work things out where it can be done, say, once a month, twice a month—something like that.

But let's remember, regardless of where you are, ***do not 'weary in well-doing.'*** That's the whole key. It's interesting how, in both cases—Heb. 10 & 12—that what comes right after that is *a warning* again about apostatizing from God. Whoever says that it's impossible to fall from grace doesn't

understand what is written. What happens with all these 'lawless grace' people—once saved always saved and that there's nothing that can take you from God—just don't read their Bibles. If they do, they only pick out the Scriptures, which seem to verify their positions and avoid the others.

Hebrews 12:26: "Whose voice then shook the earth, but now He has promised, saying, 'Yet, once more I will shake not only the earth, but heaven also.' Now the *words* 'once more' signify the removing of the *things* being shaken, as of things that were made, so that those *things*, which cannot be shaken may remain" (vs 26-27).

What Paul is doing here is drawing an analogy. ***Don't let anything shake your faith***—that's what he's talking about. Just like it says in Psa. 116:, ***'My heart is fixed!'*** that's what we need to do, have our heart fixed with God and His way.

Verse 28: "Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken... [the greatness of the inheritance and the reward] ...let us have grace, through which we may serve God in a pleasing *manner* with reverence and awe; for our God *is* indeed a consuming fire" (vs 28-29). Apostatizing or falling away!

Let's see some of the warnings that Paul has written all the way through. Let's see how being 'weary in well-doing' starts.

Hebrews 2:1: "For this reason, it is imperative... [you can't get anything stronger than that] ...that we give much greater attention to the things *which* we have heard..." Here's the thing that happens when you 'weary in well-doing': You put the things out of your mind. Here is something that is true: ***Spiritual things cannot stay in a carnal mind! The Spirit of God in us must be used, accompanied with:***

- prayer
- study
- controlling thoughts
- overcoming

If it's not used

- because you don't pay attention
- because you don't study
- because you don't pray
- because you don't listen to the things that you have heard

"...lest at any time we should slip away" (v 1). ***That's a start of 'wearying in well-doing.'***

Let's see what else can lead to apostasy and falling away, and hence the *unpardonable sin!* Hebrews 3:12: "Beware, brethren, lest perhaps there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in

apostatizing from *the* living God."

Satan's going to come along and make it appear wonderful. That's what he does, makes it alluring. Isn't that what he told Eve? *Eating of the fruit, it's going to be great! Try it; you'll like it!* She didn't stand for God; neither did Adam!

Verse 13: "Rather, be encouraging one another each day, while it is called 'today'..." That's what's important. Take today and use it to the fullest. Don't worry about yesterday, that's already gone. You can't recapture it. If you had problems and difficulties yesterday, don't bring it into today, because all you're doing is polluting today with something that happened yesterday. What good is it going to do? It's not going to change anything.

Encourage "...one another each day, while it is called 'today,' so that none of you become hardened by *the* deceitfulness of sin" (v 13). It is so tricky. You know how you fight your carnal mind. You know the tricks that your mind plays on you. That's why we are called *to perfection*, so we can overcome that through Christ.

Verse 14: "For we are companions of Christ, ***if*** we truly hold the confidence *that we had* at the beginning steadfast until the end.... [there's another way of overcoming being 'weary in well-doing'] ...As it is being said, 'Today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts, as in the rebellion'" (vs 14-15). That's what we need to understand, realize and do.

Let's look at it this way: When I'm flying in a plane and I look down and see the clouds and earth, when you're way up there all you can see is an outline of a city or town, or if it's at night you can see the lights and so forth. But you can't see anything specific. When you're taking off, you can see everything and the higher you go the less you can see.

It's the same way when people start apostatizing. They can see everything around them and it looks the same and they don't realize where they're going, but they're getting farther and farther away, and pretty soon they can't look back and see anything. That's why, if that's your condition, you have to be like you're coming in for a landing and everything becomes clear again. And lo and behold you come down to a certain level and you see the highways and you can see trucks and cars on it. Then you see the city, the houses, the roads, the buildings and lo and behold you're back on the ground. That's what we need to do spiritually, because if you get way out and you give up on God and apostatize, then there comes a point here:

Hebrews 6:4: ***For it is impossible for***

those who were once enlightened, and who personally obtained the heavenly gift, and became partakers of the Holy Spirit, and who have tasted the good Word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they have fallen away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing that they are crucifying the Son of God for themselves, and are publicly holding Him in contempt" (vs 4-6).

Here is the ultimate, Hebrews 10:25: "...encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the day drawing near." Isn't it just the way that people do when they're getting closer and closer to the point of really achieving what God wants them to achieve, then Satan is right there to try and take them away. That's why we have to be diligent in it.

Verse 26: "For if we willfully... [with a determined attitude of hatred and rebellion against God] ...go on sinning **after receiving the knowledge of the Truth**... [we've had the Truth expanded for us, and the relationship that God has given to us] ...there is no longer any sacrifice for sins."

There does come a time, and we are living in that time, when more people are in danger than have been in last 30 years!

I got a letter from someone saying, 'Thank you for the tapes, but all the brethren I know are just falling away.' Why?

- they've allowed themselves to be deceived
- they are wearying in well-doing
- they do not understand or realize the greatness of their calling

So, they go right back into the world, and we have seen time and time again that those who do so just don't care! There's another reason why people stay home: *Because too many fellowship groups have allowed kooks and nuts into the fellowship*, which should never be allowed in and it discourages everybody and causes arguments and things like this.

There was a man who recently said: 'Do you think it's possible for us to sit down and have a civil dialog concerning the observable calendar and the equinox. I said, 'No, there will be no dialog, God has already answered the question with the Calculated Hebrew Calendar. By the way, how much do you know about it? Do you know anything about it?' *No!* 'What dialog can you have?' People like to make themselves important and false brethren like to come in and upset the fellowship of the brethren. You've got both things:

1. brethren who want to fellowship but can't because of age and distance
2. those who need to fellowship and when

they get together Satan is there sabotaging it with kooks and nuts and false brethren and ministers

Those are the problems we are confronted with today. It is a struggle! It is a lot of work! It does take a lot of diligence and individual effort to stay faithful to God. That's why your individual relationship with God is so important. That's what the book of Hebrews is talking about.

Let me just read here: *The Unpardonable Sin!*—here's what it is (from the printout):

The unpardonable sin is a deliberate, willful choice and rejection of God the Father and Jesus Christ, and a repudiation of the forgiveness of sins and the gift of salvation through Jesus Christ's sacrifice and His blood.

It all starts with 'wearying in well-doing.'

The unpardonable sin is a deliberate and calculated renunciation of God. It is not an accidental sin, nor a sin under temptation, nor a sin through weakness. But the unpardonable sin is a knowing, determined, calculated, premeditated, willful decision and choice arrived at by rejecting any pangs of conscience, leading of the Holy Spirit, pleadings of the Word of God, or ministers and brethren. It is a willful, determination to reject the gift of repentance, and hostile contempt for the commandments of God, the Spirit of God, a willful repudiation of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ and His blood for the forgiveness of sins and the salvation of God. Those who have committed the unpardonable sin have no regrets, no sorrow and no conscience that they have turned their backs on God the Father and Jesus Christ, and the Word of God. It is impossible to renew them to repentance. It is impossible for the Holy Spirit to move them to repentance, for others to move them to repentance, or to move themselves to repentance. They have seared their consciences with a hot iron and there is no power—human or Divine—that is able, or has the ability to renew them to repentance. Their choice is final, their judgment is final and God's judgment against them is final.

That says it all!

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

Scriptural References:

- 1) Hebrews 12:18-23
- 2) Matthew 6:9-13
- 3) Hebrews 12:23-24
- 4) 1 Timothy 2:5-6
- 5) Hebrews 4:12-16, 13
- 6) Hebrews 5:5-10
- 7) Hebrews 7:24-28
- 8) Hebrews 8:1-2
- 9) Hebrews 9:11-14, 24-28
- 10) Hebrews 10:9-10, 12-14
- 11) Hebrews 12:24-25
- 12) Hebrews 10:23-25
- 13) Hebrews 12:26-29
- 14) Hebrews 2:1
- 15) Hebrews 3:12-15
- 16) Hebrews 6:4-6
- 17) Hebrews 10:25-26

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Revelation 4; 5
- 1 Thessalonians 4
- Revelation 2; 3
- Exodus 20
- Deuteronomy 28
- Leviticus 26
- Isaiah 40-44
- Psalm 116

Also referenced:

- Book: *The Christian Passover* by Fred R. Coulter
- Printout: *The Unpardonable Sin*

FRC: bo
Transcribed: 6-22-11
Reformatted/Corrected: January/2017

Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews XXXX Preparing the People of God

(Chapter 13)
Fred R. Coulter

The book of Hebrews is a profoundly important book for our day. Chapters 1-12 are basically a compilation of a sermon that the Apostle Paul undoubtedly gave over and over again to show the difference between the covenant with Israel and the covenant with the Church all based upon the promises given to Abraham. Now, beginning in Heb. 13 we have what is called an epistolary or an epistle kind of writing. The first 12 chapters are in a preaching or homily type of writing. This now becomes personal and direct with *encouragement, commands, warnings* and all those things.

Hebrews 13:1: "Let brotherly love be present *among you* continually...." Continually follows along down the first three verses of everything that is said here. It means:

Verse 2: "Do not forget to show hospitality... [in other words continually show hospitality] ...for by this some have unknowingly welcomed angels *as guests*. Be mindful of prisoners... [continually] ...as if you were imprisoned with *them*; and think of those who are suffering afflictions, as if you yourselves were in *their* body" (vs 1-3).

Let's go back and analyze these things here, which are very important. He starts out showing that the thing that becomes most important with the brethren—the love of God, loving each other.

Verse 1: "Let brotherly love be present *among you* continually." Or *continue in brotherly love*. That goes back to the commands of Jesus, where He said, 'A new commandment I give you that you love one another as I have loved you' (John 13:34). That's the high standard that God has given, as Christ has loved us. He also repeated it in John 15 to show that brotherly love is to continue.

What we're going to do is look at some other Scriptures and I think that if you do a separate study comparing Heb. 13 with Rom. 13^[transcriber's correction], you will see the similarities in what is said, and the similarities also in the admonitions.

Romans 13:8^[transcriber's correction]: "Do not be indebted to anyone for anything, unless *it is* to love one another.... [see the similarity there] ...For the one who loves another has fulfilled *the* Law..." That doesn't mean the whole law, but fulfilling the law of loving your neighbor and loving the brethren as

yourself. Notice how this upholds what the Apostle John wrote, that love is the keeping of His commandments.

Here's how you fulfill the Law. It is an active, doing thing, v 9: "Because *it says*, 'You shall not commit adultery. You shall not commit murder....'" When we come back to Heb. 13, what are we going to talk about, the first thing: marriage is honorable! You see the similarity and the thought flow here.

"... 'You shall not commit murder. You shall not steal. You shall not bear false witness. You shall not lust.'...." (v 9). We're also going to see in Heb. 13 about lust, covetousness and the love of money.

"...And if *there be any other* commandment... [Is that not broad? Does that not cover all of them? *Yes, indeed!*] ...it is summed up in this saying, *even by this standard*: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' Love does not do any wrong to *its* neighbor; therefore, love *is* the full expression of God's Law" (vs 9-10)—which is the most accurate translation of that. See the similarity there and how that follows along with what we find in Heb. 13.

The reason I bring it out is because a lot of people do not believe that Paul wrote the book of Hebrews. I talked to a man who said, 'Well, Apollos wrote it.' I said, 'No, Apollos didn't write it.' You have nothing of Apollos and when you read 2-Corinthians very carefully you see that Apollos refused to go to Corinth when Paul asked him to go.

When you understand that Apollos came from Alexandria, Egypt, he was probably a part of the Hellenistic Jewish group, which maybe later fell away. You hear nothing of Apollos. If it were written by Apollos, and it was his first thing that he wrote and recorded in the Bible, would you not think that his name would be associated with it? And would that not be more readily accepted by the Hellenistic Jews than Paul? *Of course!* It was written by Paul, and that's why when we come to Heb. 13 we see the hand of Paul and the way that he has expressed different things here, which shows that he wrote it.

Today we have problems with *brotherly love*, a lot of problems with it. Let's look at some of them. Let's see what they are. Let's see the biggest

problem we have with love in general in the world. What happens is that because people are confronted by these things. When you really read Matt. 24 from the point of view of the end-times you really understand that these things—as listed here and as Matthew wrote and that Jesus said these things—you know the end is near.

This is a prophecy of the end-time much more than a prophecy of the events leading up to the destruction of Jerusalem. When we understand and juxtaposition this with the book of Revelation, how Revelation shows worldwide events, this also follows right along with worldwide events. Here's why that it is difficult in loving each other, and yet, also should serve as an incentive to follow what Paul said in Heb. 13 to love one another.

Matthew 24:9: "Then shall they deliver you up to affliction... [that's going to be happening] ...and shall kill you; and you shall be hated by **all** nations..." When it says *all* you need to pay attention. It means *all*! That's a time that is coming very, very soon.

"...for My name's sake. And then shall many be led into sin... [Have we seen that within the Church? within the world? *Yes!*] ...and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another" (vs 9-10).

That's part of the problem with *brotherly love* that we have. One of the difficulties: hatred in the world/betrayal in the world, hatred within the Church/betrayal within the Church. Have we not lived through those things? *Yes!* Do these not leave an impression at the very least, and a wound at the very most: in trusting people, in loving them, in committing yourself to one another? *Of course!* We also have that within marriages. Just compound all of that and we see that that is a problem in loving one another.

Verse 11: "And many false prophets shall arise, and shall deceive many." That's what we are on guard against all the time: false prophets, false teachings. That presents the difficulties that are going on. I suppose if we sat down and analyzed all the things that are taught in all the Churches of God that there are probably more sermons given concerning false doctrine, false prophets, false people coming into the Church than anything else, because we are so assaulted with it. Not only that, we are assaulted by false brethren, like Paul said there in Gal. 2: *false brethren stealthily came in unawares to spy out our freedom in Christ!* There it was a real problem, because that was circumcision inspection—deceived many!

Verse 12: "And because lawlessness shall be

multiplied..." This is the great thing to watch out for today. *Lawlessness!* There's a thing we need to understand about lawlessness: ***It is a changing of the laws of God by adding to it with laws of the 'religions' of the world—satanic interpretations and things like that—with the commandments of God!*** It's a very tricky thing.

And because it says that "...lawlessness shall be multiplied... [and everything leading up to that] ...**the love of many shall grow cold**" (v 12). That becomes the #1 problem in society and the #1 problem within the Church. Especially when you're dealing with people coming in and try and take over.

I just talked to a man in Idaho who said that they had their summer meeting and they advertised it. Guess who showed up? *A whole bunch of Judaizers with praise dancing, prayer shawls and all this sort of thing!* They constantly disrupted their meetings. That's just one little example. It's awfully hard to maintain brotherly love and really love each other when you have all of these contentions going on. *Very hard!* We really have to work at it today.

We really have to have forbearance and understanding, yet, at the same time have an absolute rigid standard by which we do not allow false doctrines to come in and take root. That's why it is so imperative in the things that we do and our studies and our sermons that we meticulously go through the Word of God, because that is, coupled with the Holy Spirit and the love of God, our defense. That's what makes it difficult.

Verse 13: "But the one who endures to the end, that one shall be saved." That ties right in with Heb. 12 about all the endurance that we need and everything like that. Then you can read in there about all the false prophets. If you want an interesting study, go through the Bible and study about the prophets of Baal, the prophets of these other false gods. Read about the false apostles and things in the New Testament, and I would think with that then you will understand the real spiritual war that we are confronted with all the time. After all, who is Satan interested in derailing, but those who love God and keep His commandments. Who is he interested in getting off the track and going in a different direction? *The true believers in Christ!*

The #1 issue that starts it, that takes you away from God quicker than anything else is *Passover!* ***The #1 issue is keeping the correct Passover as Jesus instructed at the time that He gave it on the day that He gave it!*** That is the first thing that is under assault because Satan knows that if he can get you off base on that, then he can bring in other false doctrine and other leaven.

Why is Passover primary? *Because you are in covenant with God!* Sabbath then would come next. You can look at it this way: When you first come to the Truth, the first thing you come to is the knowledge of the Sabbath, that is true. When you come to the knowledge of Sabbath where does God lead you after that? *To the Holy Days and the Passover!* Then you understand that the Passover is very important.

Have there been subversions of the Sabbath? *Absolutely!* All you have to do is just look at the way the Seventh Day Adventists understand other doctrines, because they don't keep the Passover. The Sabbath is secondary, although when you first start coming to the knowledge of the Truth, it does become primary. It's a mix. It's primary as you're coming to the Truth, then Passover and being in covenant with God becomes the most important thing. If you are not in covenant with God and that is not renewed year-by-year then you leave yourself open for other problems that come along. Have we not seen that down through time? *Yes!*

Hebrews 13:2: "Do not forget to show hospitality..." Very interesting! This is also talking about a time when there were a lot of 'house churches'; there were a lot of people traveling in different areas. So, hospitality was an important thing. Let me just mention concerning hospitality that is important. For those who do receive hospitality, be thankful and grateful and do not take advantage of it to make yourself covetous and obnoxious! We've also seen that, too!

There is a balance: to the one who shows hospitality, and also the one who receives hospitality: Be thankful, be grateful, do what you can to help out and so forth. I don't know if we've ever done this, but:

"...for by this some have unknowingly welcomed angels *as guests*" (v 2). I don't think we've ever had an angel walk in here in the form of a human being, or visit any of our fellowship groups, or anything like that. That would be astounding! I'm sure as we go on down in time, when things get more difficult, that there will be angels to help us, because God says they are 'sent as ministering spirits to those who are heirs of salvation.

Let's see some things about hospitality; again we see this parallel; notice how these admonitions come and how similar they are to Heb. 13.

Romans 12:12: "*Be* rejoicing in hope. *Be* patient in tribulation. *Be* steadfastly continuing in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints, *and*

strive to be hospitable.... [Very similar, isn't it?] ...Bless those who persecute you; bless, and do not curse. Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep; *be* of the same mind toward one another. Do not set your mind on high ambitions... [we're going to see that again, how similar it is in Heb.13] ...rather, be accommodating with those of low estate. Do not be wise in your own eyes" (vs 12-16).

Today being hospitable is a little different than back then. Some people take advantage of it and make themselves dependents of those who habitually give hospitality and sort of make it a quasi welfare thing. What it's talking about here is to help people, especially when they were traveling, with food, drink and lodging, to help them on their way so that they would go someplace else, not continually stay in one place. You have to use judgment in understanding that and seeing how these things work out.

You need to study and read the book of Proverbs because it will give you practical applications of dealing with people and so forth. It balances it out. Let me give you another example of something that happened concerning hospitality and helping. There was one woman that we were helping with assistance from the Church and we found out that she was getting assistance from four churches and then bought herself a house with the money. Well, that's obviously taking advantage. I wrote her a letter and said that we're happy to help people in need, but since you're getting from three other churches I'm sure that you no longer have any need for assistance from us. I didn't tell her how we found out she was getting from three other churches, but a watchful brother wrote us and told us that. That sort of gets into the other one: *Don't have the covetousness of the love of money.*

Let's see the parallel things that come along here. Let's see the proper fulfillment of these things and how they come about and how they happen and the lack thereof and the problems with it.

Matthew 25:34: "Then shall the King say to those at His right hand, 'Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from *the* foundation of *the* world. For I was hungry, and you gave Me *something* to eat..." (vs 34-35).

If someone truly has the Spirit of God and is a true brother and is a true Christian, in helping and serving them you're doing it to Christ. That's how He looks upon it. That's why we are to have the *brotherly love* and love each other the way that God wants us to and to do the things that He desires us to do.

Verse 35: "...I was thirsty, and you gave Me *something* to drink; I was a stranger, and you took Me in; *I was* naked, and you clothed Me; I was sick, and you visited Me; I was in prison, and you came to Me.' Then shall the righteous answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry, and fed You? Or thirsty, and gave You a drink? And when did we see You a stranger, and took You in? Or naked, and clothed You? And when did we see You sick, or in prison, and came to You?' And answering, the King shall say to them, 'Truly I say to you, inasmuch as you have done *it* to one of the least of these My brethren, you have done *it* to Me.'" (vs 35-40).

It shows that we do have the responsibility, plus with the safeguards and you have to exercise judgment and discernment as you do it. If it's truly for brethren who have the Spirit of God, they'll be grateful, they won't take advantage. They won't want to take and get, but they're just happy to receive. On the other hand, if you let the *spirit of lawlessness* cutoff all love and you do not help and do not do these things, then you come into the category here.

Verse 41: "Then shall He also say to those on the left, 'Depart from Me, *you* cursed ones, into the eternal fire, which has been prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry, and you did not give Me *anything* to eat; I was thirsty, and you did not give Me *anything* to drink; I was a stranger, and you did not take Me in; *I was* naked, and you did not clothe Me; *I was* sick, and in prison, and you did not *come to* visit Me.' Then they also shall answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and we did not minister to You?' Then shall He answer them, saying, 'Truly I say to you, inasmuch as you did not do *it* to one of the least of these, neither did you do *it* to Me.' And they shall go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life" (vs 41-46). So, that shows the difference. Those are the two extremes.

If it happens that someone does take advantage and you find out, like we did with this woman who was getting aid from four different churches—God is the One Who let it be known, of course—God would still rather have you give the benefit of doubt and help out instead of closing up and having no mercy and no kindness and no giving and no hospitality. All of these things are lessons for us, and we need to make the judgment concerning it.

Hebrews 13:3: "Be mindful of prisoners, as if you were imprisoned with *them*..." We do have a program with the Church that we do this: There's

another church group out there that we're not affiliated with, but they actually do prison visiting and do things to go and see those who are in prison. We do our part by providing, at no cost, the Bible for them. If that helps them to get their lives squared around and to begin to find out about God and what they need to do when they get out of prison, then we are in a sense visiting with them, because we're sharing with them the best thing that we've been able to produce as a group, a church and so forth.

Likewise, here were those who were suffering, v 3: "...and think of those who are suffering afflictions, as if you yourselves were in *their* body." This helps us to understand what we need to do. Let's realize that Paul was in prison, many times. In the Roman times there were two kinds of prisons:

1. the ones which put them in dungeon conditions, like the incorrigible or hardened criminals
2. the ones which were under house arrest—that's what Paul was in

That's what Paul was in when he was in prison in Caesarea for two years. He was actually under house arrest within the complex of the Roman governor in Caesarea. They had facilities there within the palace in Caesarea where they would keep prisoners under house arrest. In that situation Paul had where people could come and go. They could visit him, he could teach them. He probably had Sabbath services there, and actually down in the history of the writings of Paul—and especially the Gospel of Luke and the book of Acts—the time in Caesarea was a very important time for the writing and compiling of these things.

Then when Paul went to Rome, what happened was, he was, again, in his own hired house; he was under house arrest. No one was forbidden to come to him. I imagine he had Sabbath services there regularly, Holy Day services. As a matter of fact, when he first got there, the first thing he did was send off for the leaders of the Jewish synagogues in Rome and they came to him. What did he do? *He preached to them about Christ!* What did they say? *We have heard of this sect and it's everywhere spoken against, but we don't know anything about it! We'll come back and hear you again!* (Acts 28).

That's a very interesting thing from this point of view: What does that prove? *Peter was never in Rome!* If Peter had been there, beginning in 40-something A.D. and then Paul comes there beginning in 60 A.D. Peter would have been there 20

years. Since he was the apostle to the circumcision, then all of those Jews who came to Paul would have already known about it and said, 'Peter's been here; we already know all about this. What are you doing coming here? Aren't you the apostle to the Gentiles and why should come here and teach us?' That ties in with several different things.

Go through and read the different places where Paul says, 'I, the prisoner of the Lord...' and 'certain ones were not ashamed of my chains...' and 'when I was brought to trial, everyone deserted me' and everything like this. Then you come to the last of it in 2-Tim. 4 where he says, 'I've run the course, I've finished the race and now I'm going to be delivered up.'

There's going to come a time when there will be those of us who will be in prison. Not for sin, but for preaching the Word of God. In Ethiopia there was a man who was thrown in prison because he translated something from one of our publications concerning Easter, and guess who had him put in prison? *The Seventh Day Adventists!* So, let's just understand that if things like that happen over there, sooner or later they're going to come here.

Verse 4—Paul is talking about the family, about marriage: "*Let marriage be held* honorable by all, and the marital union *be* undefiled; for God will judge fornicators and adulterers."

Marriage with one husband and one wife upholds the Holiness of God! Anything that gets into the realm of fornicating and adulterating then despises the Holy union that God has created. This is a very important and imperative thing, because this is where many people fail. They fail either because of sin—of fornication or adultery—or they fail because they become focused entirely on themselves, which then creates problems and tensions within the marriage. Living in the world we live in today, this becomes very important for us to understand about that.

Verse 5: "*Do not allow the love of money to influence your behavior, but be satisfied with what you have...*" Very important for today. Let's see where it talks about the 'love of money.' A lot of people have gotten off base because of the love of money, as well as churches merchandizing brethren for more money, building great, elaborate things that the church really doesn't need.

1-Timothy 6:6: "But Godliness with contentment is great gain." To know that you love God, love the brethren, are in right standing with God, you're pursuing Godliness (Heb. 12) and *contentment with it is great gain.*

Verse 7: "For we brought nothing into the world, *and it is* evident that neither do we have the power to carry anything out *of the world.* But having food and clothing, we should be satisfied with these" (vs 7-8). If you've suffered as the Apostle Paul suffered, then, yes, you'd be very happy for that.

The next time I start grumbling and griping about something—and we all do, don't we? If something doesn't work just right. Today we're spoiled. We have air-conditioners, we have heaters, so we don't get too hot or we don't get too cold. Just think of how you would immediately start grumbling and griping if you lived in Arizona where the temperature has averaged 115 degrees, where over 30 homeless have died. Immediately you'd say it's too hot. What happens if you don't get your food just the way you want it? *It's not done or it's burned, or it's too much or not enough!* You start griping and complaining.

When you've come to the point that you've suffered enough so that you know—with food and clothing—that you're going to be very happy with. Paul was!

Verse 9: "For those who desire to become rich fall into temptation..." Why? *If you start making money then you figure you're going to make more!* This is especially exemplified in the lotto and in gambling, because these are shortcuts to make money. There are widow women who *go to Las Vegas, they go to Reno and they gamble away their money!* The owners of the casinos are very happy to have them come. Others who don't go to that, they go down to the local store and they buy their little lotto tickets and buy them every week.

I know people who are on welfare that take so much of their welfare and they go down and they buy lotto tickets in hopes of making money. I also know of other people—I've heard it many different places—where there are widows and widowers who sit at home and believe everything that Reader's Digest sends them, and they spend a lot of money every month trying to win the \$10-million check that comes out. I've never seen it, yet! It hasn't happened in my neighborhood! They send that to everyone! They write these letters that sound like you're right in line for the next check. Never happens! But you have a lot of magazines, whatever!

That is a form of covetousness and a "...temptation and a snare, and many foolish and hurtful lusts, which cause men to sink into destruction and perdition" (v 9). What else comes along with that? *Sex, power, the love of money!* So, along with gambling, also comes illicit sex, too much drinking, drunkenness, all of this; all of those

come with it.

Paul gives us a summary here, v 10: “For the love of money is a root of all evils...” That follows along in every field that you want get into today. We know some examples of what happens to churches that get into that, but in Hollister the Red Cross—who is supposed to help people; give them money, rescue them; if there are problems and difficulties, supposed to help them—the director absconded over \$150,000 in this little old county. They had to combine it with the chapter over in Monterey. I know this since where our office building is there was a Red Cross office and they have shut it down and have moved out, because someone had the *love of money* and was covetous in taking it for their own personal gain. That never works.

It will work for a while, but they got caught. Rather than the *love of money*, which it says, “...by which some, *while* striving after *riches*, were seduced from the faith, and have impaled themselves with many sorrows” (v 10).

I remember a man who had a terrible gambling habit. He could not keep himself from driving up to casinos and taking family money and tithing money and trying to increase it, but only lose it. Then you have the cycle that happens, and you want to go at again so you can make up for what you have lost. Those are exactly the kind of people that the casino owners love. “...and have impaled themselves with many sorrows,”

You know that impaling means *to thrust a sword clear up into your innards to your brain beginning from your buttock!* That’s what impaled means! Paul is being very descriptive as to what happens spiritually when people get involved in that.

(go to the next track)

Verse 11: “But you, O man of God, flee these things and... [Our goals are to] ...pursue righteousness, Godliness, faith, love, endurance and meekness. **Fight the good fight of the faith!**....” (vs 11-12). That’s what we are to do.

Hebrews 13:5: “...for He has said, **‘In no way will I ever leave you; no—I will never forsake you in any way.’**” That is really quite a profound way of saying it.

We need to understand that all of these other things that Paul is talking about here concerning fornication adulterating and things like this. What are you trying to do with those things for those who try and do it? *Trying to help yourself!* Satisfy the self! Build the ego! Build whatever it is and that cuts off faith. Rather than trusting in God—regardless of

the circumstances that we are in—“...**‘In no way will I ever leave you; no—I will never forsake you in any way.’**” That’s what we need to realize.

Let’s see how similar this is. God also does this: He says in another place, *if you forsake Him, He will forsake you!* Of course, in the process of forsaking Him there will be many trials and difficulties to wake you up so that you won’t do it, but if you do, He will forsake you. That’s the worst condition that can possibly be—if God forsakes someone! But you have to forsake God first. Christ gives the promise that He will never leave us, ever!

- He’s personally called us!
- He has personally chosen us!
- He has given us the Holy Spirit!

Joshua 1:5: “No man shall be able to stand before you all the days of your life.... [withstand you or stand against you] ...As I was with Moses, so I will be with you. **I will not fail you nor forsake you.**”

Whenever you get down or discouraged, this is the place to go and claim this promise—Heb. 13 and Jos. 1. Claim the promise! God has promised—hasn’t He? God has spoken it. ***He will not leave you or forsake you!*** Then we have in Psa. 71 when you’re old and gray God is not going to forget you. When you’re weak and feeble God is not going to forget you. He is *with* you! ***He will not ever leave you or forsake you!***

Verse 6: “Be strong and of good courage...” Don’t worry about things! Don’t fret about things! Put them in God’s hands. Do what you need to do, but be: “...strong and of good courage...”—a positive aspect in everything that you do, regardless of the circumstances. We can claim the promise:

Romans 8:28: “All things work together for good to those who love God and are called according to His purpose.” That’s another promise! Combine that with us.] ...for you shall divide for an inheritance to this people the land which I swore to their fathers to give it to them.”

He repeats it, v 7: “Only be strong and very courageous so that you may observe to do according to all the Law, which My servant Moses commanded you....” We can add to that all that Jesus has commanded us!

The same thing, because Jesus said, ***‘nor will I ever leave you; no, I will never forsake you ever!’*** What does that do? *That takes care of all the discouragement. That takes care of all the troubles and problems.*

“...Do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left... [we’ve heard that before] ...so that you may prosper wherever you go. This Book of the Law shall not depart out of your mouth... [same thing of the New Testament] ...but you shall meditate therein day and night...” (vs 7-8). Isn’t that the whole purpose of the New Covenant, to have it written in our heart and mind? How does it get there? *By*:

- meditation
- study
- prayer
- obedience
- doing the things that God wants us to
 - ✓ by fighting sin
 - ✓ by overcoming
 - ✓ by going through the circumstances that we do and still end up following God

“...so that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it, for then you shall make your way prosperous...” (v 8)—rather than the love of money; rather than coveting. Wait on God, He’ll provide!

“...and then you shall have good success. Have I not commanded you?.... [here it is a third time]: ...**Be strong and of good courage. Do not be afraid...** [regardless of the circumstances] ...neither be dismayed... [discouraged and frustrated] ...**for the LORD your God is with you in all places where you go**” (vs 8-9). Let’s add to that: *Having the Holy Spirit of God, Christ is with you wherever you go!*

Is that not true? *Yes!* That’s why we need to have great encouragement even in the face of terrible things that are going to come on the world and they will affect our lives, too. What this does, this gives us a spiritual shield as it were; a spiritual insulation as it were; so that we do not allow these things to affect us and take us down. They can affect us and turn us toward God and to good, or we can let it affect us and take us down. Paul is preparing them. Remember, as we have discussed, the book of Hebrews is preparing them for the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple and how they need to face that and then live their lives through it and out of it and beyond it. That’s why it’s so important for us at the end-time that we also do the same thing.

What I want you to do is take all of these things and you can do some more in-depth Bible study covering these things, covering the different Scriptures of it. Get out your handy-dandy concordance and go through it, or if you’ve got a computer concordance go through that. If you’ve got comparative Scriptures and things like that, go through it; that will help you with it.

Psalms 118:1: “O, give thanks to the LORD...” You do that! You go to Christ and say, ‘Thank You, Lord, that you have promised:

- You will never leave me
- You will never forsake me
- You will never desert me’

Even in the most trying and difficult times.

Remember the 23rd Psa., which are the words of Christ as He was on the cross! ‘The Lord is My Shepherd, I shall not want...’ That is *lack anything*. He says, ‘**Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, You are with Me, and Your rod and Your staff comfort Me.**’ That’s all a part of ‘Christ will never leave us or forsake us.’ We thank God:

“...for He is good because His steadfast love endures forever. Let Israel now say that His steadfast love endures forever. Let the house of Aaron now say that His steadfast love endures forever. Let those who fear the LORD now say that His steadfast love endures for” (vs 1-4).

This is a sample prayer for us. When you are confronted with a situation or problem that is too much for you to bear, and I guarantee that we’ll all go through that. I’ve been through that. I know others who have been through that. This is what we do:

Verse 5: “I called upon the LORD in distress; the LORD answered me, and set me in a large place.” Gives you peace of mind. Gives you space away from the problems and difficulties. As long as you call upon the Lord, take it to Him, because He won’t leave you or forsake you.

Verse 6: “The LORD is on my side...” That’s provided you’re on the Lord’s side. If you’re His, you’re on His side. Is that not true? *Yes, indeed!*

“...I will not fear what can man do to me?” (v 6). With the Spirit of God, you are guaranteed—by being faithful unto death—you’re going to live forever! That’s a guarantee! That’s what we need to hang onto here.

Verse 7: “The LORD is for me as my helper; therefore I will look in triumph upon those who hate me.” God is going to take care of them. Putting the enemies in God’s hand is a whole lot better than you trying to take them on yourself. Let God fight the battle! That’s what it says.

Verse 8: “It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in man. It is better to trust in the LORD than to trust in princes.... [notice, this is about Christ]: ...All the nations surround me... [that

was depicted in the crucifixion] ...but in the name of the LORD I will destroy them. They surround me; yea, they surround me, but in the name of the LORD I will destroy them” (vs 8-11).

- God is there to fight for you!
- God is there to help you!

That’s why there is the love of God and no fear!

Hebrews 13:6: “So then, let us boldly say, ‘The Lord is my Helper, and I will not be afraid.... [Matt. 10:28] ...What can man do to me?’”

He can take your physical life, but if he does, you’re guaranteed eternal life. So what have they really done? *They prematurely cause the body to die!* But they cannot take eternal life from you, because that comes from God. What can man really do to you? *Nothing!* There may be a time of suffering and difficulty and pain, but what have they really accomplished? *Nothing!* God is going to resurrect you. Then I wonder what it’s going to be like when it comes time for whomever did what they did to you is resurrected and you say, ‘Hello, I am here. Remember me?’ Maybe that will be something that will lead them to repentance. ***There’s nothing that they can do!***

Verse 7: “Remember your leaders who have spoken the Word of God to you, considering the outcome of *their* conduct; *and* imitate *their* faith.” Let’s read this in the *King James* because the *King James* translates this entirely incorrectly to bolster a higher hierarchical system of church government. Everyone who believes in a hierarchical church government, when they give a sermon on church government they always go to:

King James Version of v 7: “Remember them **who have the rule over you...**”—that’s how it’s brought out. *No!*

Verse 7 (FV): “**Remember your leaders who have spoken the Word of God to you**, considering the outcome of their conduct... [Not the rule!] ...and imitate *their* faith.”

That’s why it is very, very important for all teachers, elders and ministers—and yea, if you proclaim yourself an apostle—you’d better humble yourselves so that maybe you might be, otherwise you put yourself on a course of destruction before God. However, ***you do not rule the brethren of God!*** We’ve got a booklet on that: *Is the Ministry the Government of God? No, it is not!* Christ is the Head of the government of God of Whom we all come under.

- we are to teach

- we are to help
- we are to instruct
- we are to protect from false prophets and false brethren

Yes, we’re all to do that! But it is by example and it is by teaching and that’s what is important. The important phrase here is this: “**...who have spoken the Word of God to you...**” If they speak the Word of God to you, what are they going to do? *Teach you the right way!*

Here’s the reason, v 8: “Jesus Christ *is* the same yesterday, and today, and forever.” Paul is telling us He was God before He came to the earth. That’s verifying that He was God manifested in the flesh *yesterday*; that is in all of His teachings in the Gospels. *Yesterday* is quite all inclusive. *Today*—as Paul is writing this—is still the same. Paul is saying he’s not teaching anything different than what Jesus Christ did, and *forever!* That’s why it says there in Mal. 3:7 that ‘I, the Lord, change not.’ What is the first lie that comes from the pulpit? *Christ changed!*

If you don’t remember v 8—“Jesus Christ *is* the same yesterday, and today, and forever” and v 5: “...‘In no way will I ever leave you; no—I will never forsake you in any way.’” Then the proper kind of leadership which comes from God to help perfect the saints and so forth; if you get your mind off of it. What is the whole focus of the book of Hebrews? *To get your mind on Christ!* Just like it starts out in Heb. 1 and ends up in Heb. 12 and 13:

Verse 9: “Do not be carried about by all kinds of strange doctrines.... [strange teaching] ...For *it is good for* the heart to be confirmed by grace *and* not *by* foods, which have brought no *spiritual* benefit to those who have been preoccupied *with them.*” Now he’s getting into the temple rituals and the different things that they had there.

Verse 10: “We have an altar from which those who are serving the *present earthly* tabernacle do not have authority to eat.” By the time Paul was writing this, they had already rejected Jesus Christ. This also shows you cannot take a mixture of Christ with the Judaism of the past.

Note sermon series: *Scripturalism vs Judaism*; book: *Code of Jewish Law*—you will never, never understand what it means in the New Testament concerning works of law unless you have a copy of *Code of Jewish Law* and know what all the customs and laws that the Jews added to it and, which they try and emulate from the temple. When you read that it is the greatest eye-opener you have ever seen to understand the difference between Judaism and Scripturalism. It is a misnomer to say

that the Church of God through Christ grew out of normative Judaism, which is what the scholars call it. It was a rejection of Judaism beginning with John the Baptist.

They do not have the authority to come to the altar of God in heaven above through the animal sacrifices and the various offerings that they had there.

Verse 11: “For *pertaining to* those animals whose blood is brought into the Holy places by the high priest for *a sin offering*...” That has to do with Atonement. We have the blood of Christ, that’s what it’s talking about, the whole book of Hebrews.

“...the bodies of all these are burned outside the camp” (v 11). As you read in the Old Testament, whenever there was a sin offering the blood was poured out upon the altar. On the Day of Atonement, special sacrifices were given for the priesthood, and then the blood of the goat—which was for the Lord—was sprinkled on the altar for the forgiveness of sin. But the bodies were taken out and burned outside the camp.

If you look at it this way: On your left hand is the Temple Mount, coming down from the Temple Mount is the Valley of Kidron. There’s a bridge that goes across the Valley of Kidron and you go up a steep path up the hill of the Mt. of Olives. Up directly across from the temple, looking back right into the temple area to the area of burnt offerings was what was called the Miphkad Altar, and that Miphkad Altar was the place where they took all the sin offerings and they were burned to ashes there. Then there was a special big conduit where they would periodically take the ashes of all of those animals that were burned for a sin offering and they would push it down through that conduit and the ashes would fall down into the Valley of Kidron.

Why is this important? *Because close to that Miphkad Altar was where Jesus Christ was crucified!* That’s why Paul is making this comparison here. He makes it in:

Verse 12: “For this reason, Jesus, in order that He might sanctify the people by His own blood, also suffered outside the gate. So then, let us go forward to Him outside the camp, bearing His reproach” (vs 12-13). Come to Christ and His blood and His sacrifice.

Verse 14: “For we do not have a continuing city here *on earth*; rather, we are seeking the one that is coming. Accordingly, let us offer *the* sacrifice of praise continually to God through Him...” (vs 14-15). Rather than all the rituals; rather than the rote

memorized prayers and so forth.

Just to give you an example: Everything for the whole year in the Roman Catholic Church is set by a missal for that year. Missal does not mean something you shoot off into the heavens as people would think of today. Missal was a book containing the outline of every Scripture, every prayer, every litany of saints, every Mass that was to be said, every Scripture that the priest was to read, the congregation was to recite back. Likewise with the Old Covenant. Every day had a prescribed sacrifice. Every sin had a prescribed sacrifice. They had prescribed prayers that they would do and so forth.

What Paul is saying here is that when we come to Christ through Him *our worship is from our heart*. The praise toward God rather than all this rote physical thing. Come continually to God, through Him,

“...that is, *with the* fruit of *our* lips openly professing *our faith* in His name” (v 15). This is just a summary of how we live by faith and serve God by faith, believe Christ, believe in His sacrifice and everything, and to understand what God is telling us. It is a spiritual thing.

God is more concerned about your heart and your mind and your conversion and your attitude toward God and the Holy Spirit that you have so that you can grow in grace and knowledge and bring forth the fruits of the Spirit, rather than all these physical things. This is what Paul is saying. Remember, this was written just before the destruction of the temple to prepare them so that when it’s gone, here’s what you do:

Verse 17: “Follow your leaders, and be submissive, because they are looking out for your spiritual well-being, as *those who must be* ready to give an account *to God* in order that they may do this with joy, and not *with* groaning because that *would be* unprofitable for you.”

What he’s saying here is help make the life of your minister a little more comfortable by not being so cantankerous and antagonistic and not solving the problems of your own sins in your own life. Many times we have had not such joyful times in church, but we all overcome it in time.

Then Paul starts ending the whole epistle, v 18: “Pray for us; for we are certain that we have a clear conscience, in all things desiring to conduct ourselves well.... [he was still in prison] ...Now, I am earnestly exhorting *you* to do this more diligently that I may be sent back to you more quickly” (vs 18-19). So that he can come back and see them.

Then he closes off very much like many of the other epistles, v 20: “And *may* the God of peace, Who raised our Lord Jesus from among *the* dead—that great Shepherd of the sheep—through *the* blood of *the* everlasting covenant, perfect you in every good work in order that you may do His will...” (vs 20-21).

Note sermon: *How are You Perfected in Christ?* What does that mean? The New Testament talks an awful lot about it. Here Paul ends up with it.

“...accomplishing **in you...**” (v 21). Not accomplishing *by* you; not the works that you may do outside, which are fine, but the greatest work is the work *inside* that He may accomplish in you!

“...that which *is* well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to Whom *be the* glory into the ages of eternity. Amen” (v 21). That essentially ends the whole epistle.

Then he tacks on at the end, v 22: “Now, I admonish you, brethren, to patiently listen to this message of exhortation, for I have written to you in only a few words.” It took us 41 sermons! What is written is only in a ‘few’ words. Each one of the words in the book of Hebrews is fully weighted by all the rest of Scripture. That’s what makes it such a profound and important book.

Verse 23: “*I want you to* know that our brother Timothy has been released; with whom, if he comes soon enough, I will see you.”

In other words, what he’s saying, spiritually he’s going to see them through Timothy, if he goes to see them and comes back to Paul, he’ll bring a report. He’s saying that’s as good as ‘me seeing you.’ Today we could accomplish this a whole lot differently. We could have video conferencing and see everybody. That’s coming to that very quickly because of these cell phones they have are actually video cameras and you can do that. They are now selling video-phones that run like cell phones with pictures. They do have that you can see each other. Remember this: whenever you answer the phone now, if you have one of those, quickly have a comb handy. If you’re not clothed, don’t answer the phone, it may not be too comely.

Verse 24: “Greet all your leaders, and all the saints. Those from Italy send greetings to you.... [Where was he? *In Italy!* Where was he at the time he was in Italy? *Under house arrest!*] ...*May God’s* grace *be* with all of you. Amen” (vs 24-25).

To finish off this series in the book of Hebrews, go ahead and read straight through the whole thing. Just let the Word of God talk to you,

lead you and help you understand.

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

Scriptural References:

- 1) Hebrews 13: 1-3, 1
- 2) Romans 13:8-10
- 3) Matthew 24:9-13
- 4) Hebrews 13:2
- 5) Romans 12:12-16
- 6) Matthew 25:34-46
- 7) Hebrews 13:3-5
- 8) 1 Timothy 6:6-12
- 9) Hebrews 13:5
- 10) Joshua 1:5-6
- 11) Romans 8:28
- 12) Joshua 1:6-9
- 13) Psalm 118:1-11
- 14) Hebrews 13:6-8, 5, 9-15, 17-25

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- John 13:34; 15
- Galatians 2
- Acts 28
- 2 Timothy 4
- Psalm 71
- Romans 8:28
- Psalm 23
- Matthew 10:28
- Malachi 3:7

Also referenced:

- Booklet: *Is the Ministry the Government of God?*
- Book: *Code of Jewish Law* by Ganzfried & Goldin
- Sermon Series: *Scripturalism vs Judaism*
- Sermon: *How Are You Perfected in Christ?*

FRC: bo
Transcribed: 6-22-11
Reformatted/Corrected: January 2017

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